

# SRI LANKA



January 2022

The World Mosquito Program has partnered with the Sri Lankan Government to bring our *Wolbachia* method to local communities in Colombo.

In July 2017, the World Mosquito Program established a research partnership with the Ministry of Health and Indigenous Medical Services to examine new, more effective ways to protect communities from mosquito-borne diseases. Our project in Sri Lanka is implemented in the Colombo area, with the first mosquito releases taking place in 2020.

Supported by the Australian Government, the primary goal of this project is to pilot the implementation of our *Wolbachia* method in Sri Lanka. If successful, it could serve as a model for future large-scale implementation as a low-cost and self-sustaining method for the prevention of mosquito-borne diseases such as dengue, Zika, chikungunya and yellow fever.



**1**  
project site



size of the project  
**20 km<sup>2</sup>**



**230,551**  
population reached



**68**  
project staff

**PUBLIC ACCEPTANCE**  
measured by survey  
**99%** Nugegoda  
**98%** CMC D1



**3258**  
volunteers  
who released  
mosquitoes

**2**  
local partners  
and supporters



## MOSQUITO- BORNE DISEASE BURDEN IN SRI LANKA

With 25,000 cases reported in the first 6 months of 2019, the Sri Lankan dengue epidemic has emerged as a serious public health concern.

“

Dengue has become a major problem in Sri Lanka. I found out that the dengue epidemic can be eradicated using the *Wolbachia* method so I feel surprised and happy. I hope this method will be successful in our country.

KP Buddika Priyadarshan Wimalasekara  
Principal Stingers Preschool, Sri Lanka



### Suhail's story

At home in Colombo, 23-year-old Suhail knows a lot more about dengue now that nearly everyone in his family has had the mosquito-borne disease. He used to think that dengue was just a fever that comes and goes, to be treated with paracetamol, but now he knows that it can be life-threatening. Suhail's family treats dengue very seriously since one of his sisters passed away when she was just 9 months old after contracting the worst serotype of the disease. Suhail's father was working in Abu Dhabi and couldn't make it home in time. It was the first time Suhail had ever seen his dad cry.

Now whenever anyone in the family gets a fever, they get a blood test straight away – Suhail says that the first thing that comes into his head is “what if it is dengue?” When he gets bitten by a mosquito, he thinks: “What if that's a dengue mosquito? You can't tell the difference between a

“

We take this issue very seriously; it is very important to us. We have to communicate at meetings and in schools and workplaces, and to people who might live in isolated communities in the mountains. It's for the good of the whole community for people to be healthy.

normal mosquito and one that's carrying dengue.”

“If the *Wolbachia* method can reduce the threat of dengue, we can sleep peacefully, we won't have to worry so much about losing our loved ones.”

#### Partners and supporters



#### Further information:

Alex Jackson  
Media Relations Manager  
alex.jackson@worldmosquito.org

## About us

The World Mosquito Program (WMP) is a not-for-profit group of companies owned by Monash University that works to protect the global community from mosquito-borne diseases. The World Mosquito Program uses naturally occurring bacteria called *Wolbachia* to reduce the ability of mosquitoes to transmit viruses to humans.

Following decades of research and successful field trial results, the World Mosquito Program is currently partnering with communities in 11 countries around the world to implement our ground-breaking

solution. We have staff working in countries across Oceania, Asia, Europe, and the Americas, and offices established in Australia, Vietnam, France and Panama.

Our approach has widespread support from communities, governments, research institutes and philanthropic partners around the world. Through collaboration and innovation, we are making a difference to millions of lives.

A collaboration between:



#### Contact us

