



DOMINICAN REPUBLIC ZIKA PROGRAM

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In February 2016, the World Health Organization declared that clusters of Zika-associated microcephaly and other neurological disorders detected in Brazil constituted a Public Health Emergency of International Concern. USAID has been responding to the Zika virus epidemic and its devastating effects in at-risk countries throughout Latin America and the Caribbean since June 2016. The overall USAID Zika program is expected to end by June 2020.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

By investing in Zika prevention, control and innovation USAID has helped strengthen the Dominican Republic's capacity to respond to the recent epidemic and future disease threats. USAID's focus is to protect individuals, particularly pregnant women, from Zika by:

- Controlling mosquitoes that spread the virus;
- Increasing awareness of how the virus is transmitted and how to prevent infection;
- Supporting health services for potentially affected women and children; and
- Working with USG counterparts to support disease detection and surveillance.

VECTOR MANAGEMENT

Through the Zika AIRS Project (ZAP), USAID actively reduced populations of the mosquito that carries Zika by building national and provincial capacity to conduct vector control and surveillance for Zika and future mosquito-borne outbreaks. ZAP conducted a larviciding campaign in a targeted geographic area, resulting in an 84% reduction of containers with live mosquito pupae in that area. This work was complemented by USAID's partnerships with the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) that supported the Ministry of Health to adapt regional guidelines for integrated vector management, and the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), to improve entomological surveillance tools and training.



Maternal and Child Health & Service Delivery

USAID integrated high quality, evidence-based Zika services and guidelines into the Dominican Republic's existing family planning, antenatal, obstetric and newborn care systems. The Applying Science to Strengthen and Improve Systems (ASSIST) project worked with the Ministry of Health and 17 hospitals at the provincial, regional, and national levels. Early in the response, the Support for International Family Planning Organizations II (SIFPO II-IPPF) project worked with its member association, PROFAMILIA, to improve access to health services for women of reproductive age in communities at risk of Zika. Across all partners, more than 2,800 health professionals were trained to provide Zika prevention counseling to women of reproductive age. Meanwhile, UNICEF strengthened national systems to ensure access to quality care and support resources for families affected by Zika. Service delivery efforts in the Dominican Republic received additional support from guidelines and reference materials developed by the Maternal and Child Survival Program and from the procurement and delivery of personal mosquito repellent as well as condoms to prevent sexual transmission of Zika to pregnant women through the Global Health Supply Chain Program. Through the Consolidating Logistics for Assistive Technology Supply and Provision II (CLASP II) project, USAID donated pediatric assistive devices to increase mobility for children affected by Zika.

SOCIAL AND BEHAVIOR CHANGE COMMUNICATION

As new evidence on Zika emerged, USAID worked at the national, regional and local levels to inform people of how the virus is transmitted and how to prevent infection. In 2016, the Health Communication Capacity Collaborative (HC3) project conducted formative research and mapping of programmatic efforts to inform national Zika social behavior change (SBC) strategies. The Breakthrough ACTION and Breakthrough RESEARCH projects continued this work with the Dominican Government to design, evaluate and implement high quality, evidence-based SBC interventions for Zika prevention. SIFPO II – Population Services International (SIFPO II-PSI) worked through its local network in the Dominican Republic, Society for Family Health, to develop and disseminate educational materials and mass media campaigns aimed at reaching pregnant women and women of reproductive age with preventive information about Zika and its risks.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

USAID leveraged community partners and leadership to disseminate key Zika prevention messages and reduce *Aedes aegypti* mosquito populations through larval control interventions in homes and community clean-up campaigns. Implemented by Save the Children and working with the Dominican Red Cross and Mujeres en Desarrollo Dominicana, the Community Action against Zika (CAZ) project worked to reduce Zika risks among the most vulnerable through community-based prevention in 28 municipalities in nine provinces in the Dominican Republic. Over 2,400 volunteers were trained and mobilized in the community-level Zika response in the Dominican Republic.

INNOVATIONS

With funding from USAID, the CDC conducted six Zika-related activities with components in the Dominican Republic. These activities included an emergency response needs assessment with accompanying technical assistance; laboratory strengthening; vector control and surveillance capacity building; pilot testing of an innovative mobile survey application; and a field epidemiology training program.

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