



## ZIKA PROGRAM

### EL SALVADOR

*UPDATED MARCH 2020*

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 least 19 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 El Salvador'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 arbovirus outbreaks. Over the course of the project, the targeted geographic areas experienced as much as a 50% reduction in the amount of containers with live mosquito pupae and larvae. This work was complemented by a partnership with the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) that supported the Ministry of Health in adapting regional guidelines for integrated vector management, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), with entomological surveillance tools and training.

#### MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH AND SERVICE DELIVERY INTERVENTIONS

USAID integrated high quality, evidence-based Zika services and guidelines into El Salvador'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, the Social Security Institute, and 124 health care facilities at the provincial, regional, and national reference levels to help providers integrate Zika prevention,

diagnosis, and care into routine health services. As a result, the percent of newborns properly screened for microcephaly in ASSS support facilities increased from 4% to 90% from 2018 to 2019. The Support for International Family Planning Organizations project with International Planned Parenthood Federation (SIFPO-IPPF) worked with its country member association, Asociación Demográfica Salvadoreña, to improve access to health services for women of reproductive age in communities at risk of Zika, as well as to build providers' capacity to deliver quality-Zika related health and psychological support services. Meanwhile, UNICEF strengthened national systems to ensure access to quality maternal support resources for families affected by Zika. Service delivery efforts in El Salvador 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 and condoms to prevent sexual transmission of Zika to pregnant women through the Global Health Supply Chain Program. A USAID-funded pregnancy cohort study conducted by the CDC has contributed to knowledge of how Zika is impacting pregnant women and their infants in El Salvador

**SOCIAL AND BEHAVIOR CHANGE COMMUNICATION**

As USAID learned more about Zika, it 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 project (HC3) conducted formative research and mapping of programmatic efforts to inform national Zika social behavior change strategies. The Breakthrough ACTION and Breakthrough RESEARCH projects continued this work with the Salvadoran government to design, evaluate and implement high quality, evidence-based SBC interventions for Zika. The SIFPOI project with Population Services International (SIFPO-SI) disseminated educational materials aimed at reaching pregnant women and women of reproductive age with information about Zika and its risks. An estimated 6.2 million individuals of reproductive age were reached with Zika messaging

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

USAID leveraged community partnerships and leadership to disseminate key Zika information and *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes through two primary projects. Implemented by Save the Children, the Community Action against Zika (CAZ) project worked to reduce Zika risks among the most vulnerable through community-based prevention strategies aimed at increasing the adoption of preventive behaviors and enhancing community capacity to respond to the outbreak. Similarly, the Zika Community Response (ZICORE) Project, implemented by Medical Care Development International, built capacity at the local government level and with community-based organizations, women's groups, youth and school groups, and churches, to respond to Zika. 5,600 volunteers were trained and mobilized in the community-level Zika response in El Salvador.



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