



ZIKA PROGRAM

GUATEMALA

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-risk countries throughout Latin America and the Caribbean since 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 Guatemala’s capacity to respond to the recent epidemic and future disease threats. USAID’s focus has been 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 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 trained 457 field technicians and health professionals in vector control, entomology and insecticide resistance testing. This work was complemented by USAID’s partnerships with both 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), which provided entomological surveillance tools and training.

MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH INTERVENTIONS AND SERVICE DELIVERY

USAID integrated high quality, evidence-based Zika services and guidelines into Guatemala’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 389 health care facilities to help providers integrate Zika prevention, diagnosis, and care into routine health services. The Support for International Family Planning Organizations II – International Planned Parenthood federation (SIFPO II IPPF) project improved access to health services for women of reproductive age and built providers’ capacity to deliver quality Zika-related health and psychological support services. Across all partners, over 3,900 health providers 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 Guatemala received additional support from guidelines and reference materials developed by the Maternal and

Child Survival Program, the procurement and delivery of condoms to prevent sexual transmission of Zika among pregnant women through the Global Health Supply Chain Program, and the provision of wheelchairs to increase mobility for children affected by Zika through the Consolidating Logistics for Assistive Technology Supply and Provision II (CLASP II) project.

SOCIAL AND BEHAVIOR CHANGE COMMUNICATION

As information on Zika emerged, USAID adapted work at the national, regional and local levels to inform people of how the virus was transmitted and how to prevent infections. In 2016, the Health Communication Capacity Collaborative project 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 Guatemalan government to design, evaluate and implement high quality, evidence-based social and behavior change interventions for Zika prevention. The SIFPO II project with Population Services International (SIFPO II-PSI) launched a multi-channel mass media campaign for women of reproductive age and their partners with information about Zika and key prevention practices.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

USAID leveraged community partnerships and leadership to disseminate key Zika prevention messages and to battle *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes through low-cost interventions in homes and through community clean-up campaigns. The Zika Community Response Project, implemented by Medical Care Development International, built response capacity at the local government and with community-based organizations, women's groups, youth organizations, schools and churches in 42 communities.

INNOVATIONS

In 2016, USAID launched *Combating Zika and Future Threats: a Grand Challenge for Development*, which provided funding to 26 potentially game-changing solutions to Zika and future similar threats. In Guatemala, awardees Dimagi and TulaSalud tested innovative methods to identify and analyze data "cold-spots" before they become hot-spots for epidemics like Zika. With funding from USAID, the CDC conducted the following Zika-related activities in Guatemala: emergency response needs assessment with technical assistance; enhanced surveillance for neurological syndromes; enhanced Zika surveillance and a cohort study to examine adverse outcomes associated with infection during pregnancy.



Percentage of newborns
properly screened for
microcephaly in 2019
increased from 15% in
2017 to

93%



88,508

households visits by
trained technicians to
check for mosquito
breeding sites and apply
larvicides where needed

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