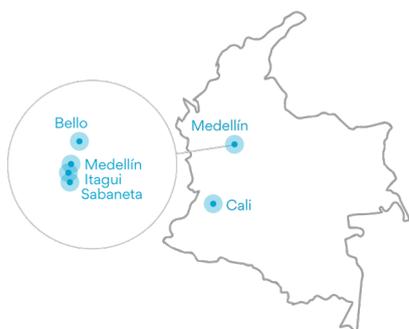




# COLOMBIA

June 2021



More than 25 million people are at risk of dengue, which is half of Colombia's population. A number of large-scale outbreaks have occurred in recent years. The number of Zika cases also increased rapidly following a global outbreak of the mosquito-borne disease in 2015.

In May 2015, the community of Paris, in the Bello neighbourhood, welcomed the country's first release of *Wolbachia* mosquitoes. This marked the first step towards establishing *Wolbachia* in the mosquito population and reducing the local transmission of mosquito-borne diseases.

A large-scale research trial is now underway in Bello and Medellín. As well as measuring the impact of *Wolbachia* on the transmission

of mosquito-borne diseases, this research is expected to demonstrate a significant reduction in the number of new cases of dengue, Zika and chikungunya.

Recently, three new cities have joined this initiative in Colombia: Cali in the Cauca Valley; and Itagüí in the Aburrá Valley.

In 2019, when the last epidemic peak was recorded, Cali reported around 15,000 cases of dengue, which accounted for about 15% of the total cases reported throughout Colombia. Cali has also been affected by the most recent outbreaks of Zika. In 2016, more than 15,000 cases of Zika were reported in the city.

	Project start	Community engagement	Release phase
<b>Medellín</b>	2016	2016	2017
<b>Bello</b>	2012	2014	2015 and 2017
<b>Cali</b>	2018	2019	2020

**4**  
project sites

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

**3,345,914**  
target population

**2100**  
supporting groups,  
companies and  
institutions

**PUBLIC ACCEPTANCE**  
measured by survey  
**93.5%** Bello (Paris)  
**90%** Bello (municipality)  
**97%** Medellín

**13,336**  
volunteers who  
released mosquitoes

**168**  
project staff

## MOSQUITO- BORNE DISEASE BURDEN IN COLOMBIA

Colombia has recorded a marked increase in suspected Dengue cases since 2014 and a notable upswing in 2019. Around 20% of the total cases reported in Colombia in 2016 came from Cali, where 15,000 cases of Zika were also reported.

“

She was sneezing and there was a stream of blood coming from her nose. She was coughing blood. No one knows how much I suffered looking at my daughter in bed, she was so unwell, pale and very thin. The World Mosquito Program is very important to me and it is excellent!

- Dora Carvajal Perez  
Medellin community member and mother of Asly



### Hector's story

Hector Álvarez is a school teacher in Bello, Colombia. He is helping to raise awareness about the World Mosquito Program in his community.

As a social science teacher, Hector is fascinated by the World Mosquito Program's Public Acceptance Model, which is used to inform and educate the public about the *Wolbachia* method.

Hector caught dengue in 2013 and had a high fever, so he has first-hand knowledge and experience of the disease. When he felt like he was choking, he had to be seen quickly by nurses and doctors. He tasted blood in all his food, and lost a lot of weight.

The World Mosquito Program is working with partners and communities in Colombia across Bello, Medellin and Cali, to protect people from the suffering caused by mosquito-borne diseases, such as dengue, Zika, chikungunya and yellow fever.

“

This program has really caught my attention. I became really interested in the Public Acceptance Model which works to educate and inform the public about the program. Where I can, I share information about the project and recommend that people learn about it as a way to combat this public health problem.

With the help of dedicated people like Hector, we will be able to achieve our vision of a world free from mosquito-borne diseases.

#### Partners and supporters



BILL & MELINDA GATES foundation



#### Further information:

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## About us

The World Mosquito Program is an international, not-for-profit initiative that works to protect the global community from mosquito-borne diseases including dengue, Zika, chikungunya and yellow fever.

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

Currently the World Mosquito Program works in 11 countries in Asia, the Pacific and the Americas. Our aim is to protect 50 million people over the next five years.

In addition to the Oceania Office in Melbourne, Australia, the World Mosquito Program has a regional Asian Hub in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam and plans for an Americas Hub in Panama City, Panama.

These hubs support projects in their respective regions and contribute to core global operations.

#### Contact us

