

# EL SALVADOR

August 2023



In 2022, the El Salvador Ministry of Public Health (MINSAL) reported that dengue cases tripled compared to the previous year, with more than 16,000 cases.

As part of the Ministry's efforts to combat this rising threat of mosquito-borne disease, it has joined forces with the World Mosquito Program (WMP). The "Wolbachia project" will be a first for the country and see *Wolbachia* mosquitoes released in three municipalities.

WMP's *Wolbachia* method will be deployed in an estimated area of 31Km<sup>2</sup>, where mosquito-borne incidence rates are the highest, and aims to protect close to 382,000 people.

The municipalities include Santa Ana, San Sebastián Salitrillo and Chalchuapa.

Awareness raising activities have started and releases are expected to start in January 2024, following community approval.



**3**  
project sites



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



**381,600**  
people reached

**2**  
local partners  
and supporters



“

With this new strategy in place, we're sure we'll achieve a reduction in incidence and prevalence of positive and suspected cases of dengue in our communities. Every year, they are crippled by new cases of suspected dengue.”

- Dr. Mauricio Canizalez,  
Western Regional Health Director of El Salvador.



External project collaborators include the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Puerto Rico Vector Control Unit (PRVCU).

Other mosquito-borne diseases such as Zika and chikungunya are well known to the Salvadoran population, with more than 100,000 chikungunya cases in 2014 and 75,000 in 2020.



## Education is key

Claudia Lara has seen the impact of dengue more than most. As a paediatrician with over 25 years experience working in El Salvador's capital city, San Salvador, she has witnessed the brutal consequences of major mosquito-borne outbreaks and the effects on young people and children.

The 54-year-old had always dreamed of becoming a doctor since she was a child, keen to be able to help others avoid suffering.

“Dengue continues and will always continue to be king in El Salvador.”

The paediatrician believes education, whether it is through mass communication on television, social networks, or through health promoters going door-to-door, is key to people learning to protect themselves from mosquito-borne diseases.

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“I think every Salvadoran knows the classic symptoms of dengue,” says Lara, who herself has suffered from the disease. “Dengue almost killed me — I got dengue hemorrhagic fever.”

### Partners and supporters



### Further information:

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## 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 14 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:

