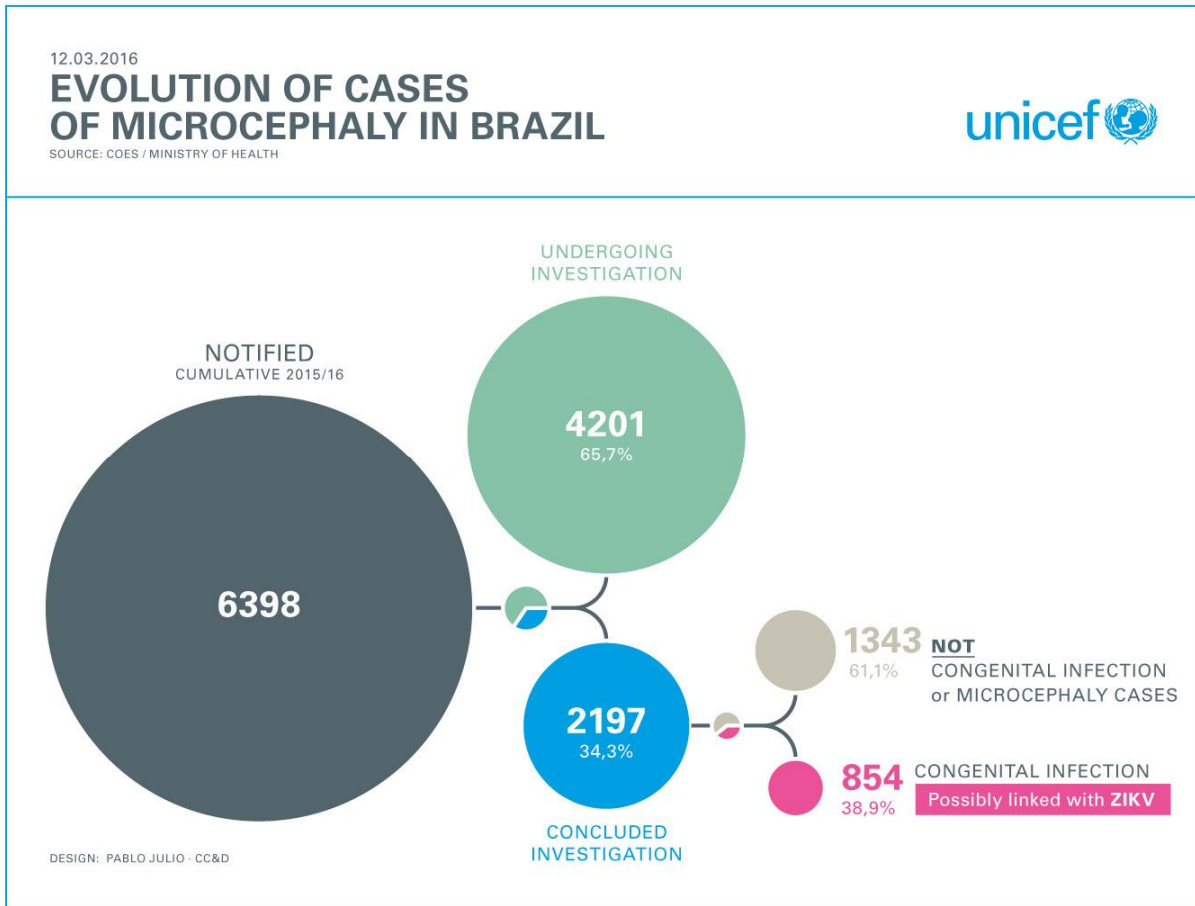


Brazil CO
ZIKA VIRUS
Situation Report
 16 March 2016



Highlights

- The Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Social Development launched, on 15 March, a strategy to accelerate the identification and diagnosis of children with suspected microcephaly. It also aims to guarantee welfare benefits to eligible families. The Federal Government will support States with an amount of R\$ 2,200 – USD 555 - for each suspected case notified. This financial resource must be invested on active search of children, transportation, lodging and diagnostic imaging for children with microcephaly.
- Municipalities started reporting the strategic actions implemented to fight *Aedes aegypti* in the Semi-arid region. In the State of Piauí, 241 participants – half of them, adolescents – of 80 municipalities attended the last capacity- building meeting of UNICEF Seal of Approval. These trainings are taking place in the Semi-arid region until 31 March and is part of UNICEF mobilization strategies to reduce the proliferation of the *Aedes aegypti* by eliminating its breeding grounds.

Situation Overview

Brazilian Ministry of Health's numbers shows there has been a sharp increase in the number of cases of microcephaly, related to the ZIKV among newborns in Brazil starting in October 2015 mainly in the northeast region. The Federal Government of Brazil has identified this issue as a priority, and President Dilma Rousseff launched a national plan of action to combat this virus in December 2015. Various ministries, governmental organizations including the police, army, firefighters and others, have been mobilized under the leadership of the Ministry of Health to support various activities related to prevention, communication, monitoring, capacity building, among others. UNICEF Brazil (BCO), in an effort to provide support and in response to a request for assistance, has developed a proposal to support governmental efforts to address the epidemic. The action plan is based mainly on vector control using the existing network with the Brazilian municipalities.

Brazilian government response

The Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Social Development signed on 15 March a ministerial ordinance establishing the *Rapid Action Strategy for Strengthening Attention to Health and Social Protection of Children with Microcephaly*. The ordinance support States to deploy active search strategies to identify cases of microcephaly confirmed or under investigation so far. The children found must be referred to rehabilitation services by May 31. The ordinance also aims to provide social protection and education to children and their families through the Continuous Cash Benefit (BPC) – federal cash transfer program that benefits poor people with disability. The Federal Government will also transfer to States R\$2,200 – USD 555 - for each suspected case notified. This amount must be use for active search of children, transportation, lodging and diagnostic imaging. The total investment expected is R\$ 10.9 million (USD 2.75 million).

UNICEF Brazil's Programme Response

Coordination

A key focus of UNICEF's action in Brazil is vector control, by joining forces with communities across the country to eliminate breeding grounds of the *Aedes aegypti*. UNICEF is conducting activities in close collaboration with the Ministries of Health (MoH) and of Education (MoE) as well as with PAHO, state and municipal governments to reach affected communities with the knowledge on how to reduce mosquito infection. UNICEF is also in continuous liaison with LACRO and HQ in coordinating efforts to enhance regional efforts and impacts. Google is now a key partner working to leverage the response plan in Brazil with innovative technologies and the support to capacity building and engagement initiatives focused on priority regions in Brazil.

Strategy

The UNICEF Brazil strategy is based on supporting government-led national plans and inter-agency priorities to reduce the number of breeding grounds. BCO is using three main strategies in the ZIKV response plan: Advocacy, Communications for Development and Monitoring. BCO's priorities are to reach the most vulnerable communities and strengthen prevention and protection initiatives. BCO's unique capillarity in Brazilian municipalities is a key component of our strategy. UNICEF is present in 84% of the municipalities classified at high-risk of mosquito infection so far. Therefore, BCO's role is centered in articulating among different government levels and engaging Brazilian civil society to breeding grounds.

Advocacy and Mobilization

UNICEF presented its plan to face the *Aedes aegypti* during the "Second Meeting of Health Managers of the Amazon", held in Belém, State of Pará, on 11 March. The Health Secretaries of the nine states of the region were attending the event.

Last week, 44 adolescents from the Transformation Agents group participated in a survey conducted by Pereira Passos Institute, in Rio de Janeiro, about strategies to fight the mosquito and to reduce the number of breeding grounds. This group is part of the Urban Centre Platform, an UNICEF's initiative. The purpose of the interview was to test two

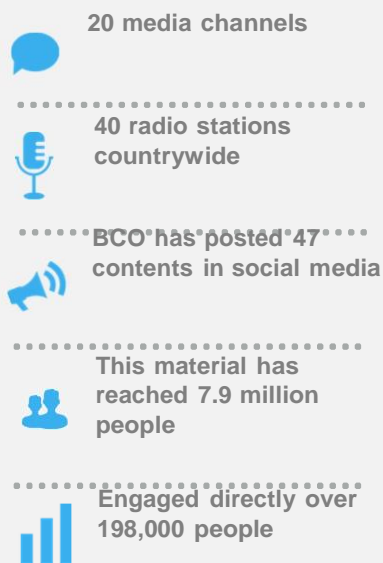
questions that could help identify what remains to be done to improve the control of *Aedes aegypti*, considering the individual's behavior and attitudes and the government action. More than half answered that, in an individual plan, people do not take the necessary care and precautions to protect themselves. On the other hand, the majority said the government has to provide repellent for those who cannot afford it and improve the inspection in wastelands and spraying in endemic areas. With a representative sample, the results can drive the focus of future communication and mobilization campaigns.

From 14 to 16 March, UNICEF trained 50 municipal managers of the State of Amazonas on the Strengthened Brazilian Family kit, a set of five albums that explain, simply and practically, the care that children require from gestation until the age of six. One of the workshop's focus was the control and prevention of the spread of the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito. Now these municipal managers will disseminate the acquired knowledge in their municipalities.

Communications and C4D

The Municipalities started reporting the strategic actions implemented to fight *Aedes aegypti* in the Semi-arid region. These municipalities participated of the last capacity building of UNICEF Seal of Approval and are already filling the virtual platform *Growing Together* with local strategic actions to reduce the number of breeding grounds and the mosquito infection. The platform is designed to help municipalities to reach better results by exchanging experiences, planning and implementation. In each one of the three virtual rooms, the articulators can publish information about strategic actions, pictures and evidences of good practices. These informations provide inputs for UNICEF evaluating the municipalities enrolled at the Seal of Approval. In the State of Piauí, 241 participants – half of them, adolescents – of 80 municipalities attended the last capacity-building meeting of UNICEF Seal of Approval. These trainings are taking place in Semi-arid region until 31 March and integrate UNICEF mobilization strategies to reduce the proliferation of the *Aedes aegypti*.

Media Numbers



Monitoring

The BCO response strategy includes an M&E pillar, which focuses on four areas: i) situation monitoring (evolving and potentially shifting trends in the epidemic, and in the spread of *Aedes aegypti* in the country); response monitoring (progress on Brazil's response to the crisis, including UNICEF's activities and added value); research (innovative research to generate data and evidence to support prevention and response efforts); and knowledge management (documentation and systematization of real-time information and data, as well as progress and results achieved by the response strategy). So far, this component has produced a series of bi-weekly SitReps, several maps for data visualization, methodological technical notes and sampling strategy proposals for research that will start in March.

Next SitRep: 23/03/2016

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