

Success
story

Caribbean Zika Prevention and Response Project

Keeping communities clean to fight the bite of mosquitos

Caribbean Red Cross Societies



Volunteers in Barbados Red Cross join together with community member to clear a community of mosquito breeding sites

We've all had the experience of being bitten by a mosquito. We also know that in some places mosquitoes are more present than others. Aside from spraying ourselves with mosquito repellent, what can we do stop the bites?

Mosquitos that carry Zika, dengue and chikungunya like to live near humans. We provide them with blood meals and places for them to breed. Mosquito eggs, which can turn quickly from egg to flying mosquito in around a week, get laid in the small amounts of water that can accumulate in trash left around where humans live and tanks and barrels that are not covered or regularly cleaned.

Cleaning up communities has been central to the fight against diseases carried by the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito in Red Cross' work around the globe, but how does it get practically done? Red Cross National Societies from the Caribbean region developed the "How to do a Community Clean-up" guide in September 2019 to help answer this question.

"All of the National Societies in our region have been working at the community level to reduce the risk of the *Aedes* mosquito. But we found that many others wanted to understand what the best way to do a clean up was. It is a logistical undertaking that needs more than academic theory. And no-one can tell us better how to do this than the project managers and field officers themselves" said Chantal



Making sure volunteers and staff have the right equipment to carry out community clean-up activities is a key step of the process laid out by Red Cross National Societies

Braithwaite, Senior Public Health Officer for the IFRC Caribbean Country Cluster Support Team in Trinidad and Tobago.

The short guide is a combination of experiences brought together by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent (IFRC) Caribbean Country Cluster Office. The simple and easy-to-adopt 13 step process was developed by Caribbean National Societies who were asked to order, vote, and add what was missing from previous guides. These Red Cross National Societies have all gained significant experience in community clean-ups with over 60 community clean ups performed in the last year alone.

The guide also draws on the content explained in the Zika, Dengue and Chikungunya Toolkit, which lays out a community risk mapping process to drive longer term behaviour change.

The “How to do a Community Clean-up” guide was developed thanks to the Red Cross National Societies from Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, the Bahamas, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, St Kitts and Nevis, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago who provided recommendations, technical support and collaboration during the process. Clean-up activities are supported by USAID through IFRC’s Caribbean Zika Prevention and Response Project.

ZIKA VIRUS
Caribbean Zika Prevention & Response

How to do a Community Clean-up
Lowering Aedes mosquito populations

Combating mosquito risks with clean-ups

The Aedes aegypti mosquito spreads Dengue, Chikungunya and Zika virus. It prefers to live near humans where female mosquitoes can find places to lay their eggs and a blood meal.

Community clean-ups aim to reduce mosquito populations by reducing the number of places that mosquitoes can lay eggs.

This guidance was made by Caribbean National Societies involved in the Caribbean Zika Prevention and Response Project. It integrates field experience of community clean-up, the Zika, Dengue, Chikungunya Toolkit, and feedback gathered from community clean-up organizers.

The 13 step guide explains how to clean-up communities and encourage behaviour change to reduce the risk for Dengue, Chikungunya, Zika and other Aedes aegypti mosquito borne diseases.

STEP 1: Consult the community

Consult community leaders, and local government, local sanitation departments and community groups. Let them know where, why and with whom you want to do a clean-up. Use the initial contact to see if and how they would like to be involved (see Step 3: Establish the clean-up committee).

STEP 2: Choose a location

Choose a location where your impact will be the greatest.

When choosing a site try to focus on:

- Urban areas where there is a known mosquito risk – this information is often available from the Minister of Environment or Vector control department.
- Near schools or public spaces (where people may spend time outside)
- Areas with poorer water and sanitation.
- Safety and security

Where does all the trash go?

Different Sanitation Departments have different policies. Contact stakeholders to understand the process for trash removal in your country or parish and request pick-up assistance on the day of the clean-up.

You may also need to approach private waste removal companies for assistance. Pick-up trucks that are the property of residents and/or neighbourhood businesses can be used, but the use of pickup trucks will limit capacity for each vehicle and require more trips to the dump.

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International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

The “How to do a community clean-up” guide was a communal effort of Caribbean Red Cross National Societies



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