

## World Dengue Day

February 27th of 2019

### Concept Note

**United for a World Dengue Day that addresses the issue of dengue by gathering visions and actions, bringing together stakeholders and redirecting resources to fight the disease collectively for a greater impact.**

#### General Objective

World Dengue Day aims to bring together collective and coordinated actions for control, prevention and eradication of dengue among governments, healthcare professionals, NGOs, private sector, researchers, the general public and other key stakeholders. By gathering focus, attention and resources to address this public health burden, improved dengue crisis management and prevention at the individual, community and country levels can become a reality.

#### How Dengue is relevant to Ecuador?

In Ecuador, among vector-borne diseases, dengue represents a public health priority due to a large number of cases that occur every year. Since its appearance in 1988, several epidemic cycles of dengue have been recorded in the country, making Ecuador an endemic country throughout the year, especially in the rainy season<sup>1</sup>.

Due to this, Ecuador has been an example of targeted efforts to combat dengue, focusing on vector control. These efforts include campaigns such as “Campaña de Etapa Invernal” with chemical interventions through pesticides use; physical interventions through the elimination of breeder sites of the *Aedes Aegypti* mosquito; and information campaigns in the media<sup>2</sup> to mobilize and educate the general public in dengue prevention. Another outstanding example that puts Ecuador as a leading fighter against dengue is the integrated system of epidemiological surveillance SIVE-Alerta from the Ministry of Public Health.

We believe that under Ecuador’s support to promote a World Dengue Day, and especially now that Her Excellency Ms María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés acts as the current President of the United Nations General Assembly for the 73rd session, important advances can be made in the fight against dengue.

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<sup>1</sup>Ministerio de Salud Pública del Ecuador (2018). *Ecuador en alerta para prevenir el contagio del dengue*. Retrieved from <https://www.salud.gob.ec/estrategia-nacional-de-control-del-dengue/>

<sup>2</sup>Ministerio de Salud Pública del Ecuador (2018). *Inicia campaña para prevenir la influenza, dengue, zika y chikungunya*. Retrieved from <https://www.salud.gob.ec/nicia-campana-para-prevenir-la-influenza-dengue-zika-y-chikungunya/>

### Expected Outcomes

- a. Contribute to reach the 2030 SDG goal to “end the epidemics of AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and neglected tropical diseases and combat hepatitis, water-borne diseases and other communicable diseases”<sup>3</sup>.
- b. Contribute to WHO’s goals of reducing mortality and morbidity from dengue by 2020 by at least 50% and 25% respectively (using 2010 as the baseline)<sup>4</sup>.
- c. Dengue is recognised as a priority health topic by public health authorities and world leaders.
- d. Stakeholders are mobilised to take collective action to support the fight against dengue, in their communities or at the regional/global level.

### Background

Dengue is the fastest-growing mosquito-borne viral infection, and its impact today is 30 times greater than 50 years ago. There are an estimated 390 million dengue infections per year<sup>5</sup> with an economic impact on endemic countries of over US\$8 billion.

Dengue is not a neglected tropical disease, and it receives plenty of attention. Especially during risk-times or outbreaks. Then the natural question arises - why are we still so far from eradicating the disease? And the answer may be very simple: a fragmented approach to fighting dengue, that results in a fragmented, lesser impact.

The complexity of the disease demands a long-term systematic response and well-coordinated action among multi-sectoral partners from governmental and parastatal bodies, to the private sector, non-governmental bodies and grass-root communities. This would help augment prevention programmes, accelerate R&D for fast-diagnosis and treatment, help build individual knowledge, improve surveillance and outbreak response times, as well as improved care pathways. Only by working together we can help fight and finally eradicate this disease.

### Main Objectives

- a. Mobilize resources and stakeholders to highlight and encourage innovative and effective strategies for prevention, control, and eradication of dengue.
- b. Improve international cooperation and mobilize political support for better leadership and public health policies focused on dengue eradication.
- c. Capacity building for primary healthcare centres, as well as fast-tracked R&D for effective solutions along the care pathway (from prevention to diagnosis and treatment).
- d. Encourage the Member States to put in place or improve effective epidemiological surveillance systems, taking inspiration from current models already in place, thus controlling outbreak propagation and increasing interventions efficiency and response times.
- e. Understand the landscape, its initiatives, key players, organizations or people and set the foundation of an efficient ecosystem including sharing best practices and build on them.

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<sup>3</sup>United Nations (2015). Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. New York: UN Publishing.

<sup>4</sup>World Health Organization (2012). Global Strategy for Dengue Prevention and Control, 2012–2020 WHO, Geneva 2012.

<sup>5</sup>Bhatt S, Gething PW, Brady OJ, Messina JP, Farlow AW, Moyes CL et.al. (2013). The global distribution and burden of dengue. Nature;496:504-507.

### Proposed Activities

Each year a different theme would focus the conversations and activities around a key topic of the overall collective dengue prevention and management strategy. For example, to tackle a major global issue as well as showcasing Ecuador's leading position in the field, the theme in the first year could be "Winning the dengue fight. The power of surveillance and early-alert system in outbreak management".

- a. Forums around key issues on the topic of dengue: climate change & dengue, preventive methods, vector control & elimination, effective vaccines development, fast-tracking R&D in rapid diagnostics and treatments etc. This will offer selected Ambassadors, health leaders, policymakers and other key stakeholders the opportunity to exchange best practices and take concrete, collective actions towards eradication.
- b. Create and promote a "marketplace". NGOs, foundations and other interested parties would submit ideas for dengue eradication initiatives, while various funders & corporate organisations would support carefully curated strategies. In this way, the World Dengue Day is not only a way to raise awareness, but the perfect avenue to connect different players, reduce duplication of efforts in the field and promote a collective impact approach.
- c. Clinical education activities, based on WHO's strategy and guidelines of training on clinical management, diagnosis and vector control at the regional level. The application of standardised clinical management practices to warrant an acceleration of capacity building and training in this field would help reduce case-fatality rates to less than 1%.
- d. Working groups to support the creation of guidelines and handbooks for surveillance, case management, diagnosis, dengue prevention and control for the Member States.
- e. Creation and launch of national or regional - level initiatives for grassroot surveillance and reporting mechanisms.
- f. Celebrations of ambassadors, advocates and volunteers alongside the prevention and care continuum (vector control bodies, healthcare professionals, nurses, public health officials, etc.).