

El Salvador Project Coordinator Recruitment for CDC Supported Project

Position Information

Epidemiologist/Project Coordinator

Contractor Position

Dengue Branch, Division of Vector Borne Diseases, CDC

Background

Chikungunya, dengue, yellow fever, Zika and other viruses transmitted by mosquitoes are serious health threats in the U.S. and globally. The public health response to the spread of these arboviruses throughout the tropics, where their mosquito vectors thrive, has been hampered by a lack of sustainable and effective interventions to prevent arboviral infections at the community level. Several vector control strategies that have failed to curb disease incidence, continue to be employed despite the absence of robust evidence for their effectiveness or optimal implementation. Novel approaches to arbovirus control are now available, but evidence of their impact on reducing infection incidence is limited.

New techniques in mosquito control show promise for enhanced disease prevention. These include releasing *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes with the bacteria *Wolbachia* to decrease their capacity to transmit viruses that has been shown in a randomized cluster trial to have an efficacy against dengue of 78%. However, there is currently no concise and scalable implementation protocol and clear metrics to monitor implementation success.

Because of the high prevalence of mosquito-borne viruses in Central America and the known threat of importation or expansion of these viruses into the United States, the Division of Vector Borne Diseases (DVBD) is supporting the implementation of an arbovirus control program in El Salvador. This is a unique opportunity to design and pilot a comprehensive dengue control program that will include: 1) implementation of *Wolbachia* replacement in a 20 km² area of Santa Ana, 2) strengthening laboratory capacity for the diagnosis of arboviruses; 3) strengthening enhanced and traditional surveillance for dengue and other arboviruses; and 4) enhance outbreak preparedness and control.

The objectives of the project are:

- Evaluate the implementation of *Wolbachia* replacement in the department of Santa Ana in partnership with the World Mosquito Program.
- Establish clinic-based enhanced surveillance infrastructure to monitor dengue and other arboviral disease trends, contribute to measure the impact of vector control strategies and eventually evaluate dengue vaccine acceptability and uptake.

Position

One-year term appointment with a possibility of extension depending on the availability of funding.

Duty Location

San Salvador, El Salvador

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Qualifications:

- Masters or PhD in Public Health, Global Health, Epidemiology or equivalent.
- Experience in project management, field studies and epidemiological analyses.
- Experience in epidemiology of infectious diseases.
- Proficiency in speaking and writing English and Spanish.
- Strong interpersonal skills and experience working with multidisciplinary teams.
- Experience working with international organizations, Ministries of Health, etc.
- Demonstrated ability to collaborate in team projects and handle multiple priorities in a fast-paced research environment.
- Experience with data analyses and use of statistical software.
- Experience in writing and communicating research or surveillance findings.

Duties

- Serve as primary point of contact for project related queries for the Ministry of Health of El Salvador, Instituto Nacional de Salud Publica, World Mosquito Program, the Puerto Rico Vector Control Unit, CDC Central America, CDC Division of Vector Borne Diseases, COMISCA, PAHO and other stakeholders.
- Coordinate project implementation.
- Develop protocols for in depth interviews and focus groups to map stakeholders and conduct a baseline on Wolbachia acceptability.
- Develop standard operating procedures (SOPs) for project activities.
- Monitor project progress and update milestones and deliverables.
- Conduct operations oversight of acute febrile illness surveillance sites in El Salvador.
- Conduct oversight of Wolbachia mosquito releases in the intervention areas.
- Produce monthly reports on progress, potential obstacles, unresolved concerns.
- Conduct site visit to project sites.
- Conduct data analyses and reports.

Additional Information

This position will be with a private company through a contract with CDC. It will require 15% travel. It will require working outside of regular hours due to time zone differences between partners, and activities requiring oversight during nights and weekends. Compensation and benefits will be determined based on qualifications and experience.

All applicants should submit a cover letter and CV to Nicole Medina at moi6@cdc.gov. Please apply no later than April 31, 2018.