Session 3
Regional Efforts for Combating Zika Virus in Latin America and the Caribbean

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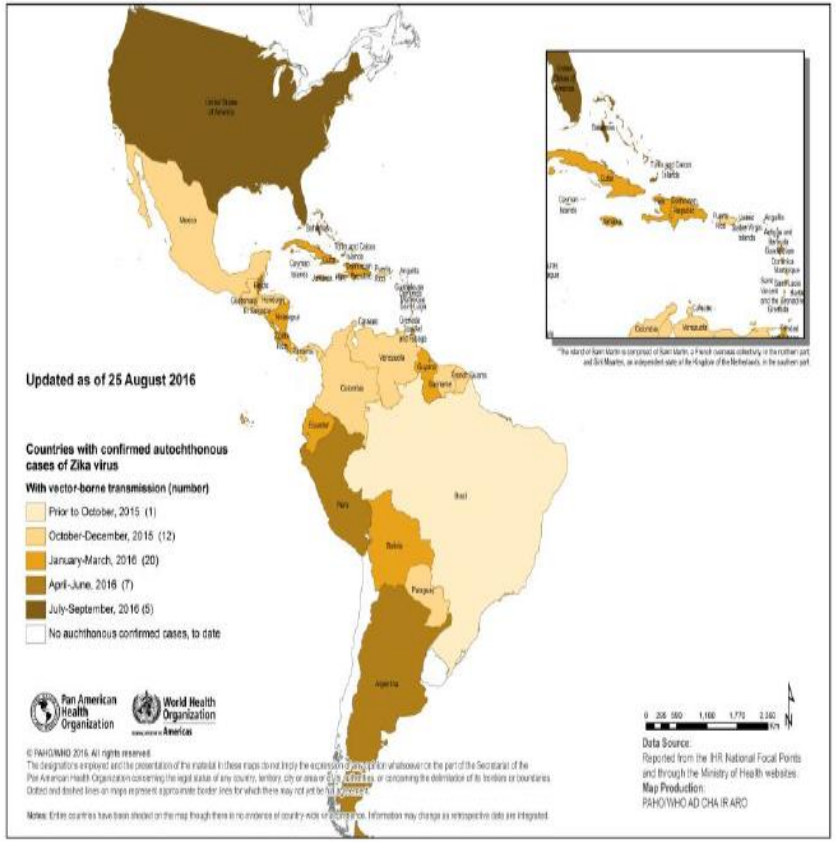
TC Regional Programme: Response to unforeseen needs

Targeted emergency response:

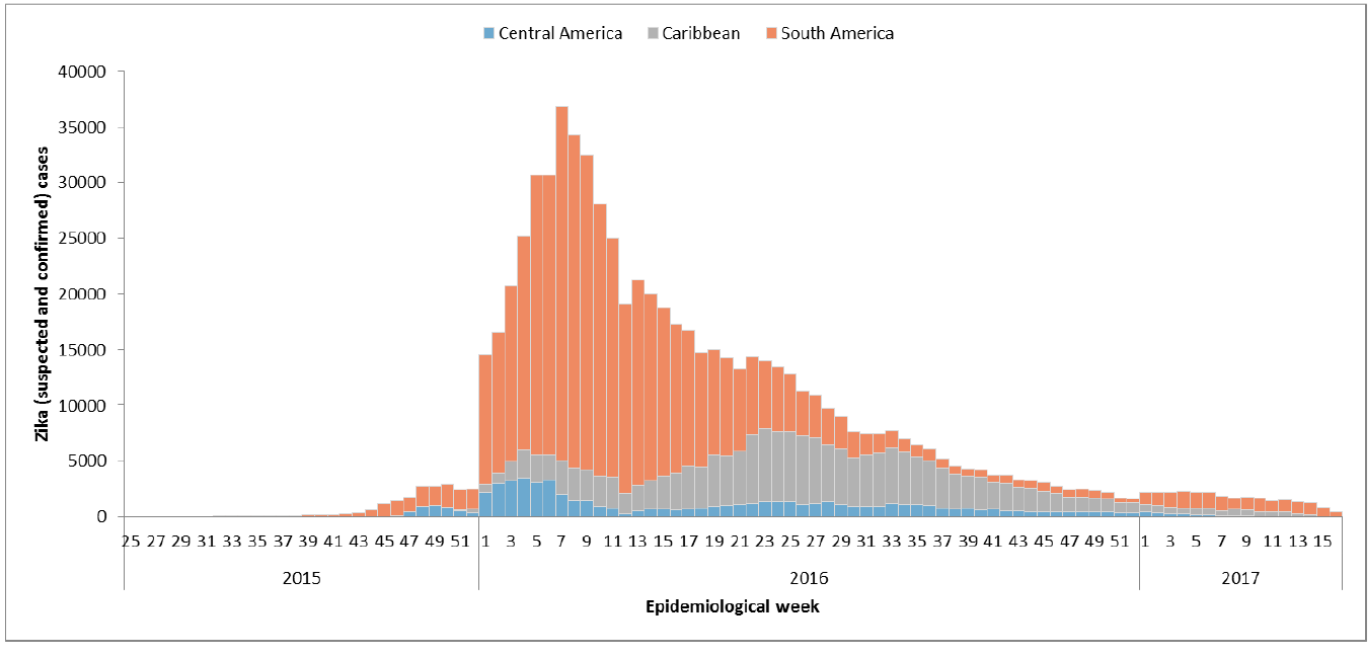
- Latin America and the Caribbean faced an outbreak of Zika virus, WHO declared an international public health emergency in Feb 2016
- 45 countries and territories with confirmed autochthonous cases

Figure 1. Countries and territories in the Americas with confirmed autochthonous (vector-borne) Zika virus cases, 2015-2016.



TC Regional Programme: Response to unforeseen needs

Figure 2. Distribution of suspected and confirmed Zika cases by epidemiological week and sub-region. Region of the Americas, 2016 – 2017 (as of EW 16).[15]



Source: Data provided by countries and territories and reproduced by PAHO/WHO

WHO declared on 7 April 2016 that "based on a growing body of preliminary research, there is Scientific consensus that Zika virus is a cause of microcephaly and Guillain-Barré syndrome".

Regional Response to Fight Zika

Regional level Approach:

1) Short-term: Prompt virus detection

- Strengthen diagnostic capacity in MSs: Scientists and technicians trained on the use of reverse transcription–polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR)
- RT-PCR detection systems equipment provided to national laboratories

2) Mid-term: Vector control

- Launched a 4-year regional project: 19 countries
- Target: Established area-wide integrated vector management approach with a SIT component to control *Aedes* mosquito populations transmitting Dengue, Chikungunya and, particularly Zika.

3) Common strategic vision:

- Global issue needs the engagement of all concerned parties (commitment, funding, logistics, etc.); including:
  - Detection: Through molecular testing RT-PCR, nuclear-derived diagnostic technique
  - Control: Most effective technical means to tackle the emergency: The sterile insect technique (SIT): a proven and robust technology successfully applied against several viral diseases including Chikungunya, Dengue and, more recently, Zika.

Cooperation Modalities and Partnerships

MULTILATERAL

-Strategic Alliances

- WHO/PAHO
- FAO (MOSCAMED)

SOUTH-SOUTH

-Networking

-Member States' established capabilities shared

-Collaboration focused on sub-regions: *Central America and the Caribbean

NORTH-SOUTH

-Support provided by USA, Japan and France

-Bilateral collaboration: USDA

TRIANGULAR

-Training provided by experts from the region

-Interregional collaboration: Participation of African countries in regional activities

Key Future Milestones

- Regional network enhanced
- Strong ties with strategic partners at national, regional and international levels
- Capabilities strengthened in both virus detection and control
- Sustainability of institutions enhanced