

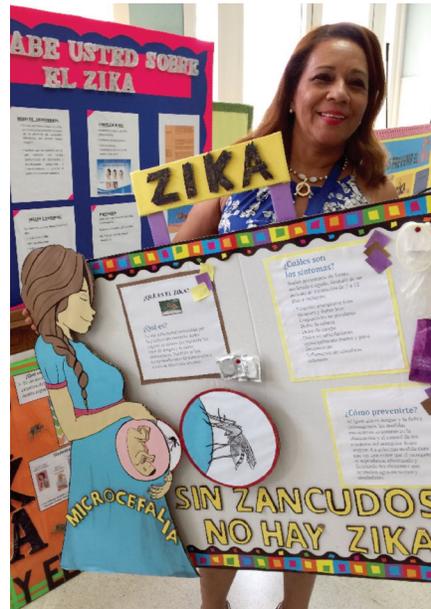


Improving Zika Prevention, Care, and Support for Affected Infants and Families

The USAID Applying Science to Strengthen and Improve Systems (ASSIST) Project builds the capacity of service delivery organizations in USAID-assisted countries to improve the effectiveness, efficiency, client-centeredness, safety, accessibility, and equity of the health and support services they provide by applying improvement methods to identify and address gaps in care. As part of USAID’s Zika response, ASSIST has been implementing health systems strengthening efforts in Latin America and the Caribbean to provide targeted support to health systems affected by the Zika virus.

ASSIST is working to improve the capacity of Zika-related health services to deliver consistent, evidence-based, respectful, high-quality care—with a focus on pregnant women, newborns, and women of reproductive age—by supporting Ministries of Health and Social Security Institutions to:

- Increase knowledge of Zika risks and prevention measures among health care providers and clients, such as the use of condoms in preventing sexual transmission of Zika during pregnancy
- Improve clinical detection of Zika virus infection during pregnancy and implementation of recommended care
- Improve clinical detection of congenital syndrome associated with the Zika virus in newborns and increase the number and proportion of affected infants receiving recommended care
- Strengthen the provision of quality psycho-emotional support services for women and families affected by Zika.



In 2016, USAID received \$366 million to respond to the Zika outbreak, largely in Latin America and the Caribbean. One of USAID’s goals is to improve service delivery and provide care and support to families affected by the virus. A USAID article and photo essay, published July 2017, focused on efforts to improve Zika-related services at an ASSIST-supported hospital in Honduras. See “In Zika’s Wake: Strengthening Skills of Health Workers in Honduras”: <https://usaidpubs.exposure.co/supporting-families-affected-by-zika>. Photo: Brendan Bannon for USAID, courtesy of Photoshare.

During FY16 and FY17, ASSIST conducted baseline assessments of Zika-related health care services, revised Zika-related clinical guidelines, trained health care providers on counseling skills, improved Zika-related clinical processes, launched an accredited course on Zika-related health care, and began implementing a Zika

quality improvement program to improve processes of care.

Where We Work

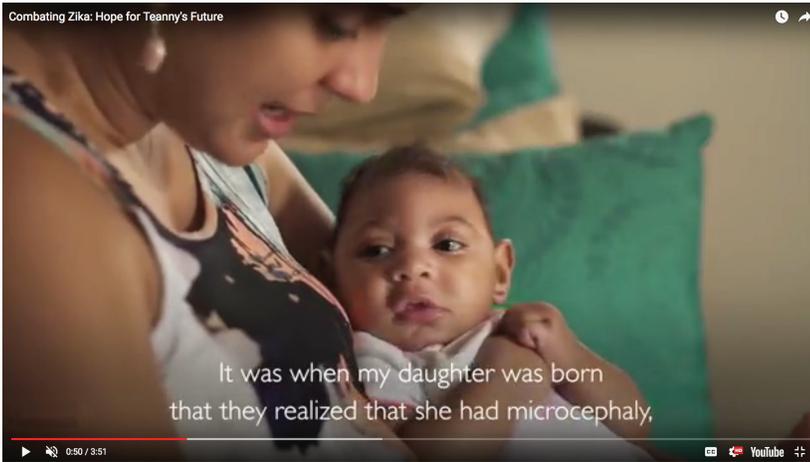
ASSIST initiated Zika activities in 2016 in four priority countries: Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras. In 2017, we expanded our efforts to Nicaragua and Paraguay, and early in 2018 to Ecuador and Jamaica. Activities in Peru are expected to begin in mid-2018.

Partnerships

Institutional and organizational partnerships have been key to our success. ASSIST has worked closely with the Ministries of Health and Social Security Institutions in each country to ensure that efforts to strengthen Zika care and health service delivery are institutionalized in national norms and protocols. We’ve coordinated closely with other USAID-funded projects and mechanisms to ensure that we leverage USAID resources in the Zika response. We’ve engaged the expertise of professional medical associations, like the American Academy of Pediatrics; other US government agencies, like the Centers for Disease Control; and international agencies, like the World Health Organization, to keep up-to-date on new Zika research and guidance. Our partners at FHI 360 are supporting monitoring, evaluation and learning within the Zika activity, while colleagues at the Institute for Healthcare Improvement are providing technical assistance in the development and implementation of quality improvement work. WI-HER, LLC supports gender integration.

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Still from a USAID-produced video “Combating Zika: Hope for Teanny’s Future” (<https://www.usaidassist.org/resources/combating-zika-hope-for-teannys-future>), which highlights the quality care an ASSIST-supported hospital in the Dominican Republic is providing for babies and families affected by Zika.

Online Resources

ASSIST Knowledge Portal:
[usaidassist.org/topics/zika](https://www.usaidassist.org/topics/zika)

Salud Materno Infantil – Zika:
maternoinfantil.org/zika

Results and Accomplishments

Improved outcomes	<p>In ASSIST-supported facilities (between June 2017 and February 2018):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The percentage of women receiving condoms in antenatal care, to prevent sexual transmission of Zika virus during pregnancy, has increased from 14% to 77% • The percentage of pregnant women being counseled on Zika signs, transmission pathways, risks, and prevention methods has increased from 17% to 87% • Screening for Zika signs and symptoms during routine antenatal care has increased from 6% to 80%. Screening of newborns for microcephaly has increased from 7% to 76% • During the last six months, demand for voluntary use of family planning methods has been consistently satisfied in over 95% of consultations
Quality Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trained and supported 197 quality improvement team coaches to guide 321 quality improvement teams in strengthening the delivery of Zika-related health services within 264 health care facilities. • ASSIST work has been organized at the regional and country levels into three collaboratives to spread learning and improvement within and across countries in: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Zika-related services in antenatal care, 2) Zika-related services in newborn care, and 3) Health services strengthening to provide care and support for children and families affected by Zika, including psycho-emotional support. • QI teams are also working to improve Zika-related counseling in voluntary and informed family planning. • Defined roles and responsibilities within country teams and at the regional level to support the collection, documentation and synthesis of learning.
Training	<p>7,660 health care providers have been trained by ASSIST in Zika knowledge and counseling skills as of February 2018, using materials we developed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zika virtual course: A six-module virtual course on addressing Zika in antenatal care (ANC), family planning (FP), and postpartum care was developed and implemented with support of tutors from the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) and local professional associations • Zika Counseling Guide: Preconception, prenatal, and postpartum counseling in the context of the Zika epidemic <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – English: https://www.usaidassist.org/resources/zika-counseling-guide – Spanish: https://www.usaidassist.org/resources/guia-de-consejeria-zika
Zika Knowledge Management and Technical Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organized an International Workshop on Strengthening Health Services to Fight Zika (Nov 28-30, 2017) to bring together over 100 USAID staff and implementing partners, government officials, and experts to share experiences, identify best practices, and articulate strategies to tackle the main challenges in assuring prevention, care and support to infants and families affected by Zika. • Hosted a series of webinars on different topics related to Zika care and prevention: https://vimeo.com/album/4505721 • Launched Zika web page as a Spanish-language resource for sharing news, information and other resources for healthcare providers in the region (www.maternoinfantil.org/zika)

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