



PACMOSSI

Pacific Mosquito Surveillance
Strengthening for Impact

MEDIA RELEASE

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Participants from 11 Pacific Island Countries will receive training on techniques to tackle dengue mosquitoes at the Fiji Centre for Disease Control in Suva, Fiji

Resisting Resistance: Training Pacific Health Professionals to Tackle Dengue Mosquitoes

Suva, Fiji – 25 November 2024: The 2024 PacMOSSI hands-on training for insecticide resistance in *Aedes* mosquitoes begins today in Suva, Fiji. This intensive, week-long program brings together nominated public health professionals from 11 Pacific Island countries, equipping them with critical knowledge and practical skills for monitoring and mitigating insecticide resistance—a key factor in effective vector control strategies.

Resistance of mosquitoes to insecticides is a critical challenge for public health. As mosquitoes become resistant, common control methods like insecticide sprays lose their effectiveness. This makes it harder to combat diseases like dengue, Zika and chikungunya. Monitoring and understanding resistance patterns is crucial for selecting the right tools and strategies to control mosquito populations and protect communities. Without addressing resistance, efforts to reduce mosquito-borne diseases could be severely undermined.

Hosted by the Fiji Ministry of Health and Medical Services, the *Aedes* resistance training is being conducted in collaboration with James Cook University, The Pacific Community (SPC), the QIMR Berghofer Medical Research Institute and Beyond Essential Systems. Through this partnership, participants will receive comprehensive instruction that integrates classroom learning with lab and field-based activities.

At the opening ceremony, Acting Chief Health Inspector of the Fiji Ministry of Health and Medical Services Mr Luke Vonotabua said *“Mosquito-borne diseases are a burden not only to Fiji but to all of our neighbours. So far this year, Fiji, Samoa, Tokelau and French Polynesia have declared dengue outbreaks. To put an end to this, we need to work together. We need to have a well-trained workforce who are equipped with the resources to be able to respond to health threats when needed”*.

“This training is an important component of broader initiatives of the PacMOSSI consortium” said Dr Amanda Murphy, PacMOSSI Coordinator, James Cook University. *“By empowering local staff with techniques, supplies and data systems for resistance monitoring, we are fostering stronger vector control programs across the Pacific.”*

The training curriculum covers essential areas such as:

- Identifying mosquito species to understand their local distributions.
- Collecting larvae and raising *Aedes* mosquitoes in insectaries for testing.
- Performing WHO tube tests to determine their susceptibility to insecticides.
- Using resistance data for effective intervention planning.

“This training is very important for my country,” said Tabomoa Tinte from the Kiribati Ministry of Health and Medical Services. *“We have arboviruses that cause human disease, and resistance monitoring will help inform decisions on effective insecticides to control mosquitoes.”*

The training will run from 25 to 29 November, concluding with participants ready to apply their skills in local settings and contribute to national and regional data on insecticide resistance. This data is essential for informing public health strategies and ensuring effective mosquito control measures.

For more information about the 2024 PacMOSSI training or other initiatives, please:

- **See:** www.pacmossi.org
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Pacific Mosquito Surveillance Strengthening for Impact (PacMOSSI) is a consortium supporting Pacific Island Countries and areas to combat mosquito-borne diseases through strengthened surveillance and control. It is coordinated by James Cook University in collaboration with The Pacific Community and other international partners like the QIMR Berghofer Medical Research Institute and Beyond Essential Systems.

PacMOSSI is supported by the Australian Government through Partnerships for a Healthy Region, the French Government, the New Zealand Government and the European Union.

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