

Beat: Health

## **USAID INVESTS OVER \$15 MILLION TO FIGHT THE SPREAD OF ZIKA**

### **21 INNOVATIONS IN DEVELOPMENT**

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**USPA NEWS** - USAID Invests Over \$15 Million to Accelerate Development and Deployment of 21 Innovations to Combat the Spread of Zika

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#### **USAID INVESTS OVER \$15 MILION TO ACCELERATE DEVELOPMENT AND DEPLOYMENT OF 21 INNOVATIONS TO COMBAT SPREAD OF ZIKA VIRUS-----**

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) announced today 21 potentially game changing solutions to mitigate the spread and impact of the Zika virus. These award nominees underwent a rigorous review process, and have been selected for accelerated development, testing and deployment. The award nominees range from deployment of mosquitoes infected with Wolbachia, a naturally-occurring bacteria that prevents the spread of disease to humans; to low-cost, insecticide-treated sandals; to a cell phone app that measures wing-beat frequency to not only distinguish different types of mosquitoes but potentially identify whether they are carrying disease. These innovations will complement USAID's broader Zika response efforts, which are focused on mosquito control, educational campaigns about prevention, and maternal and child health interventions. USAID launched the Combating Zika and Future Threats Grand Challenge in April 2016 to invest up to \$30 million in groundbreaking innovations from around the world to both address the current Zika outbreak and improve our ability to prevent, detect, and respond to future infectious disease outbreaks. In just nine weeks, USAID received nearly 900 submissions from across the globe in response to the Challenge. Since early 2016, the Obama Administration has been working to combat Zika, a virus primarily spread by mosquitoes that has been linked to birth defects and other concerning health outcomes. The United States has been engaged in a whole-of-government strategy that also includes efforts to support laboratory capacity, the development of diagnostics and vaccines, and mapping the spread of the infection. The U.S. Agency for International Development's Grand Challenge for Development initiative crowd-sources solutions to solve clearly-defined problem sets, engaging the world in a quest to discover, incubate, test, and accelerate innovative solutions that have the potential to solve the world's greatest development challenges.

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