SUMMARY

- From 1 January 2007 to 6 April 2016, Zika virus transmission was documented in a total of 62 countries and territories. Five of these (Cook Islands, French Polynesia, ISLA DE PASCUA – Chile, YAP (Federated States of Micronesia) and New Caledonia) reported a Zika virus outbreak that has terminated. Six countries have now reported locally acquired infection through sexual transmission (Argentina, Chile, France, Italy, New Zealand and the United States of America). Viet Nam is the country to most recently report mosquito-borne Zika virus transmission.

- In the Region of the Americas, the geographical distribution of Zika virus has steadily widened since the presence of the virus was confirmed in 2015. Mosquito-borne Zika virus transmission has been reported in 33 countries and territories of this region.

- From 2007, mosquito-borne Zika virus cases have been reported in 17 countries and areas of the Western Pacific Region.

- Microcephaly and other fetal malformations potentially associated with Zika virus infection or suggestive of congenital infection have been reported in Brazil (1046 cases), Cabo Verde (two cases), Colombia (seven cases), French Polynesia (eight cases), Martinique (three cases) and Panama (one case). Two additional cases, each linked to a stay in Brazil, were detected in the United States of America and Slovenia.

- In the context of Zika virus circulation, 13 countries or territories worldwide have reported an increased incidence of Guillain-Barré syndrome (GBS) and/or laboratory confirmation of a Zika virus infection among GBS cases.

- Based on a growing body of preliminary research, there is scientific consensus that Zika virus is a cause of microcephaly and Guillain-Barré syndrome.

- The global prevention and control strategy launched by the World Health Organization (WHO) as a Strategic Response Framework encompasses surveillance, response activities and research. This situation report is organized under those headings.
I. SURVEILLANCE

Incidence of Zika virus

- From 1 January 2007 to 6 April 2016, Zika virus transmission was documented in a total of 62 countries and territories (Fig. 1; Table 1). Five of these (Cook Islands, French Polynesia, ISLA DE PASCUA – Chile, YAP (Federated States of Micronesia) and New Caledonia) reported a Zika virus outbreak that has terminated. Six countries (Argentina, Chile, France, Italy, New Zealand and the United States of America) have reported locally acquired infection through sexual transmission. Viet Nam is the country to most recently report mosquito-borne Zika virus transmission.

- Zika virus has spread rapidly across the Americas. By 6 April 2016, 33 countries and territories in the Region of the Americas reported mosquito-borne transmission of the virus and three cases of sexual transmission. The reported rate of spread of Zika virus across South and Central America accelerated from October 2015 onwards (Fig. 2).

- From 1 October 2015 to 26 March 2016, Colombia reported 58 790 suspected cases of Zika virus. The outbreak seems to have peaked during the week to 7 February 2016 and is now in decline. The number of laboratory confirmed cases is 2603.¹

### Table 1. Classification of Zika virus transmission in 62 countries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>WHO Regional Office</th>
<th>Country / territory / area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Countries experiencing a first outbreak of Zika virus, with no previous evidence of circulation, and with ongoing transmission by mosquitoes (42)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFRO (1)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Cabo Verde</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AMRO/PAHO (33)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Aruba*, Barbados, Brazil, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), BONAIRE – Netherlands*, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Curaçao*, Dominica*, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, French Guiana, Guadeloupe, Guatemala, Guyana*, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Martinique, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Puerto Rico, Saint Martin, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines*, Sint Maarten*, Suriname, Trinidad &amp; Tobago*, United States Virgin Islands, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEARO (1)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Maldives*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WPRO (7)</td>
<td></td>
<td>American Samoa, Fiji*, Marshall Islands*, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Vanuatu*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Countries where there is evidence of Zika virus transmission in the past, with or without ongoing transmission (15)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFRO (1)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Gabon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEARO (3)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Bangladesh, Indonesia, Thailand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WPRO (10)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Cambodia, Cook Islands, French Polynesia, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Micronesia (Federated States of), New Caledonia, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Viet Nam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAHO (1)</td>
<td></td>
<td>ISLA DE PASCUA –Chile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Countries with evidence of person-to-person transmission of Zika virus, other than mosquito-borne transmission (6)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AMRO/PAHO (3)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Argentina, Chile, United States of America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EURO (2)</td>
<td></td>
<td>France, Italy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WPRO (1)</td>
<td></td>
<td>New Zealand</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Classification of countries listed is in line with the WHO Surveillance Guidelines on Zika virus, microcephaly and Guillain-Barré syndrome and with the emerging framework for risk analysis.*

Countries fall into five categories, three of which are represented in the table above:

- **Countries experiencing a first outbreak of Zika virus, with no previous evidence of circulation, and with ongoing transmission by mosquitoes:** countries where Zika virus has recently been introduced, with no evidence of circulation in the past and where there is ongoing transmission. These countries present a high risk of Guillain-Barré syndrome, microcephaly and other neurological disorders associated with Zika virus.

- **Countries where there is evidence of Zika virus transmission in the past, with or without ongoing transmission:** this group includes countries that are not experiencing a first outbreak and where transmission has occurred at low levels in the past, and where transmission may or may not be ongoing. This table lists countries that have experienced outbreaks after 2007, all countries with evidence of infection prior to 2007 are listed in [http://www.who.int/bulletin/online_first/16-171082.pdf](http://www.who.int/bulletin/online_first/16-171082.pdf).

- **Countries at risk of mosquito-borne Zika virus transmission:** countries with competent mosquito vectors, but where vector-borne transmission of Zika virus has never been documented. These countries are at risk of introduction of the virus and further circulation through vector-borne transmission (not listed in the Table above).

- **Countries with no risk of mosquito borne Zika virus transmission:** countries without competent vectors, based on current knowledge and known vector distribution. These countries are at risk of importation of cases but are at no risk of vector-borne transmission (not listed in the Table above).

- **Countries with person-to-person transmission of Zika virus, with or without competent mosquito vectors:** these countries demonstrated transmission by modes other than mosquito vectors (e.g. through sexual contact).

* Additional information needed to better characterise the intensity of transmission.

**Note:**

- Categories one and two are mutually exclusive.

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Figure 2. Timeline of introduction of Zika virus in the Americas, 2015-2016

Available information does not permit measurement of the risk of infection in any country; the variation in transmission intensity among countries is therefore NOT represented on this map. Zika virus is not necessarily present throughout the countries/territories shaded in this map. Countries where sexual transmission occurred are not represented in this map.
Figure 3. Countries, territories and areas reporting Zika virus, 2007-2016.

*These reports do not exclude the possibility that Zika virus is present in other countries, notably in Africa and Asia.
From 2007, locally acquired Zika virus cases have been reported in 18 countries and territories in the Western Pacific Region, including one instance of sexual transmission in New Zealand. Nine of these countries and areas have reported mosquito-borne Zika virus infections in 2016 (American Samoa, Fiji, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Samoa, Tonga and Viet Nam).

Cabo Verde, in the African Region, has reported that as of 5 April 2016, preliminary analysis of the 801 samples from suspected cases of Zika virus disease identified 206 confirmed cases of Zika virus. Confirmed cases were detected in Santiago, the most affected island, Fogo, Maio Brava and Boa Vista. Distribution of suspected and confirmed cases over time showed that the first confirmed cases were identified in the week to 30 August 2015, peaked in the week to 1 November 2015 and incidence is now in decline. From October 2015 to March 2016, 87 pregnant women were tested for Zika virus and 19 were found positive either with Zika virus genome or anti-Zika virus IgM antibodies.

Incidence of microcephaly

Between 22 October 2015 and 2 April 2016 a total of 6906 cases of microcephaly and/or central nervous system (CNS) malformation were reported by Brazil. This contrasts with the period from 2001 to 2014, when an average of 163 microcephaly cases was recorded nationwide per year. A detailed description of this sharp increase is provided in a published paper.³

Of the 6906 cases of microcephaly and/or CNS malformations reported in Brazil, investigations have been concluded for 2860 cases and 1046 were suggestive of congenital infection (Table 2).⁴

Microcephaly and/or CNS malformation cases have been detected in 21 out of 27 states in Brazil, but the reported increase is concentrated in the northeast region (Fig. 4).

Among the 6906 cases of microcephaly and/or CNS malformation reported in Brazil, 227 child deaths occurred after birth or during pregnancy (including miscarriage or stillbirth); 51 of these had microcephaly and/or CNS malformation suggestive of congenital infection, 148 remain under investigation and 28 were discarded.

An outbreak of Zika virus in French Polynesia was followed by an increase in the number of CNS malformations in children born between March 2014 and May 2015.⁵ A total of 19 cases was reported including eight microcephaly cases during that period. This represents an increase compared to the national average of 0-2 cases per year. A recently published study estimated the risk to be 95 cases of microcephaly per 10 000 women infected during the first trimester.

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¹[http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/65/wr/mm6509e2er.htm?s_cid=mm6509e2er_w]
Table 2. Countries, territories and areas reporting microcephaly and /or CNS malformation cases potentially associated with Zika virus infection.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reporting country</th>
<th>Number of microcephaly and /or CNS malformation cases suggestive of congenital infections or potentially associated with a Zika virus infection</th>
<th>Probable location of infection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>1046</td>
<td>Brazil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cabo Verde</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Cabo Verde</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colombia</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Colombia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French Polynesia</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>French Polynesia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martinique</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Martinique</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panama</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Panama</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovenia</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Brazil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States of America</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Brazil</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4. Distribution of microcephaly and /or CNS malformation cases suggestive of congenital infections in Brazil (1046 cases reported up to 6 April 2016)

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In the context of the Cabo Verde Zika virus outbreak, two microcephaly cases were reported. For the first case, samples from both the mother and the infant exhibited anti-Zika virus IgG antibodies confirmed by seroneutralization, while for the second case preliminary test of the woman’s serum yielded positive results for Zika virus IgM antibodies.

On 30 March, Colombia reported 50 live births with microcephaly between 4 January 2016 and 20 March 2016. This number represents an increase compared to the historical annual average expected (140 per year). Of the 50 cases registered, 18 were discarded. So far, seven of the remaining 32 cases presented Zika virus positive results by real-time PCR (Table 2). The investigation is ongoing and further information is expected.

Incidence of Guillain-Barré syndrome (GBS)

In the context of Zika virus circulation 13 countries or territories worldwide have reported increased GBS incidence and/or laboratory confirmation of a Zika virus infection among GBS cases (Table 3).

Table 3. Countries, territories or areas reporting Guillain-Barré syndrome (GBS) potentially related to Zika virus infection.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Country / territory / area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reported increase in incidence of GBS cases, with at least one GBS case with confirmed Zika virus infection</td>
<td>Brazil, Colombia, Dominican Republic, El Salvador*, French Polynesia, Honduras, Suriname, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No increase in GBS incidence reported, with at least one GBS case with confirmed Zika virus infection</td>
<td>French Guiana, Haiti*, Martinique, Panama, Puerto Rico</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*GBS cases with previous history of Zika virus infection were reported by the International Health Regulations (2005) National Focal Point in United States of America.

Between October 2013 and April 2014, French Polynesia experienced the first Zika virus outbreak ever recorded in the country. During the outbreak, 42 patients were admitted to a hospital with GBS. This represents a 20-fold increase in incidence of GBS in French Polynesia compared with the previous four years. A published formal analysis of these data (a case-control study) showed a strong association between Zika infection and GBS. All 42 GBS cases were also confirmed for a Zika virus infection. Based on a 66% attack rate of Zika virus infection in the general population (judged from a serological survey), the risk of GBS was estimated to be 0.24 per 1000 Zika virus infections.

In 2015, 42 GBS cases were reported in the Brazilian state of Bahia, among which 26 (62%) had a history of symptoms consistent with Zika virus infection. A total of 1708 cases of GBS were registered nationwide, representing a 19% increase from the previous year (1439 cases of GBS in 2014), though not all states reported an increase in incidence.

From 1 December 2015 to 26 March 2016, Colombia reported 401 cases with neurological syndromes and clinical symptoms of Zika virus infection, of which 270 are

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8 [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(16)00562-6](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(16)00562-6)

GBS cases. To date, 18 of those cases were tested positive for Zika virus by RT-PCR. In the context of polio surveillance, there has been a report of 35 acute flaccid paralysis cases, which can be caused by GBS, in children under 15 years old with a clinical history of Zika virus infection between 14 September 2015 and 19 March 2016.

- El Salvador recorded 135 GBS cases from 5 December 2015 to 22 March 2016, including five deaths, while the annual average number of GBS cases is 169. One GBS case has been laboratory confirmed for Zika virus infection.
- On 29 January 2016, Suriname reported an increased incidence of GBS: 10 GBS cases reported in 2015 and four GBS cases were reported during the first weeks of 2016, while Suriname registers on average approximately four cases GBS per year. A Zika virus infection was confirmed by RT-PCR in two of the GBS cases reported in 2015.
- The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela has also reported an increased incidence of GBS. Between 12 December 2015 and 9 March 2016, 578 GBS cases were reported, from which 235 presented symptoms consistent with Zika virus infection. In 2016, six GBS cases were confirmed by RT-PCR for Zika virus infection.
- The Dominican Republic has reported 11 GBS cases with history of Zika-like illness from 6 to 20 March 2016. Six of these cases are children aged under 15 years and the remaining five are people aged over 50 years. Zika virus infection has been confirmed by RT-PCR in one GBS case, a one-year-old child and resident of the National District. The patient evolved favourably and has been discharged from the hospital.
- GBS cases with laboratory confirmed Zika virus infections were also reported from French Guiana (two cases), Haiti (one case), Honduras (one case), Martinique (six cases), Panama (two cases) and Puerto Rico (one case).
- Two reports, published in March 2016, describe other neurological disorders associated with Zika virus infection: a 15-year-old girl in Guadeloupe who developed an acute myelitis, a disorder caused by inflammation of the spinal cord, and in an 81-year-old man a case of meningoencephalitis, an inflammatory process involving both the brain and meninges. These reports highlight the need to better understand the range of neurological disorders associated with Zika virus infection.

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10 Reverse transcriptase polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR).
11 http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(16)00644-9/fulltext
II. RESPONSE

- The principal activities being undertaken jointly by WHO and international, regional and national partners in response to this public health emergency are laid out in Table 4.
- WHO and partners are working together to develop and maintain the Joint Operations Plan that combines activities within the six main areas of work; coordination, surveillance, care, vector control, risk communication and community engagement, and research at the global, regional and country level.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Public health risk communication and community engagement activities | - Activate networks of social science experts to advise on community engagement.  
- Coordinate and collaborate with partners on risk communication messaging and community engagement for Zika.  
- Develop communication and knowledge packs and associated training on Zika and all related and evolving issues for communication experts.  
- Engage communities to communicate risks associated with Zika virus disease and promote vector control, personal protection measures, reduce anxiety, address stigma, and dispel rumours and cultural misperceptions.  
- Disseminate material on Zika and potentially associated complications for key audience such as women of reproductive age, pregnant women, health workers, clinicians, and travel and transport sector stakeholders.  
- Conduct social science research to understand perceptions, attitudes, expectations and behaviours regarding fertility decisions, contraception, abortion, pregnancy care and care of infants with microcephaly and persons with GBS.  
- Support countries to monitor impact of risk communications. |
| Vector control and personal protection against mosquitoes | - Regularly update and disseminate guidelines/recommendations on emergency *Aedes* spp. mosquito control and surveillance.  
- Support insecticide resistance monitoring activities.  
- Support countries in vector surveillance and control, including provision of equipment, insecticides, personal protection equipment (PPE) and training. |
| Care for those affected and advice for their caregivers | - Assess and support existing capacity and needs for health system strengthening, particularly around antenatal, birth and postnatal care, neurological and mental health services, and contraception and safe abortion.  
- Map access barriers limiting women’s capacity to protect themselves against unintended pregnancy.  
- Develop guidance for: families affected by microcephaly, GBS or other neurological conditions; women suspected or confirmed to have Zika virus infection, including women wanting to get pregnant, pregnant women and women who are breastfeeding; health workers on Zika virus health care, blood transfusion services, tools for triage of suspected Zika virus, chikungunya and dengue cases; and for health services management following a Zika virus outbreak.  
- Provide technical support to countries on health service delivery refinements and national level planning to support anticipated increases in service needs.  
- Procure and provide equipment and supplies for prioritized countries and territories to prepare their healthcare facilities in provision of specialized care for complications of Zika virus. |
One application for mobile devices has been released by WHO to help Zika responders and health care providers access key information, guidelines and tools. Versions in English, Portuguese and Spanish are available for Android and IOS.¹³ This platform will also house future training and briefing videos.

WHO, PAHO, IFRC and UNICEF are working with partners to heighten community engagement support. A joint document on risk communication and community engagement for Zika virus prevention and control was published and is available for use by field teams in English and Spanish.¹⁴

On 23 March, PAHO released two public service messages in Spanish, English and Portuguese featuring the Sesame Street Muppets to educate families in Latin America and the Caribbean about preventing mosquito bites.¹⁵

WHO, in collaboration with Zika response partners, has developed a Knowledge Attitude and Practices (KAP) survey resource pack as part of the Zika Strategic Response Framework. The resource pack is intended to be used by affected and at-risk countries, WHO, UN agencies and NGOs who plan to conduct KAP surveys in a community setting with adult respondents. It provides a bank of key questions in the domains of knowledge, attitudes and practices. It is intended that partners will identify key areas for investigation according to their operational priorities, select the most relevant questions and update them to reflect national and sub-national contexts. WHO will also coordinate the mapping of operational research on community perceptions and needs as results from the KAP surveys become available. The resource pack is currently available in English and it is being translated into Spanish and Portuguese.

Media mapping tools for all affected or at risk countries are being developed by The Communicating with Disaster Affected Communities (CDAC) network to better engage local reporters.

UNESCO, IFRC and WHO together developed and disseminated radio spots on Zika virus risk communication for local use in English, French, Portuguese and Spanish.¹⁶

WHO has developed new advice and information on diverse topics in the context of Zika virus.¹⁷ WHO’s latest information materials, news and resources to support risk communication, and community engagement are available online.¹⁸

¹⁷ See resources listed at end of report.
III. RESEARCH

- Public health research is critical for establishing the causal link between Zika virus infection in pregnant women and congenital abnormalities in their babies and for understanding the pathogenesis of Zika virus infection. Technical assistance is being coordinated with various partner agencies globally and in affected countries to identify and answer critical questions (Table 5).
- The Emergency Use Assessment and Listing for Zika diagnostic tests was activated, and a call for submission was published.¹⁹
- WHO convened several meetings among global experts on Zika and related topics during March 2016 to discuss evidence, answer pressing scientific questions and provide practical guidance to support countries responding to the outbreak and to cases of neurological disorders.
- WHO will continue to lead the harmonisation, collection, review and analysis of data.
- Five key priority areas have been defined for public health research:
  1. Establish causality between Zika virus infection and neurological disorders (in fetus, neonates, infants and adults): development of a causality framework and of a systematic review
  2. Risk of adverse outcomes of pregnancy in women infected with Zika virus and follow-up of babies and infants: establish a cohort of pregnant women
  3. Explore sexual transmission of Zika virus: establish a cohort of men and women and test regularly body fluids for the presence of Zika virus
  4. Vector control research: evaluate interventions based on community and resistance of the vectors, develop surveillance system
  5. Public health system research: evaluate the preparedness of health system to manage babies with microcephaly and assist their families, to manage patients with GBS; to evaluate the availability of contraception in health services to respond to the demand and assess abortion services.

Table 5. Strategic Response Framework and Joint Operational Response Plan: research and development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Fast-track research and development of new products including diagnostics, vaccines and therapeutics. | - Identify research gaps and prioritize needs for products.  
- Support the conduct of research related to Zika virus diagnostics, therapeutics, vaccines and novel vector control approaches  
- Convene research actors and stakeholders.  
- Coordinate introduction of products after assessment and evaluation.  
- Coordinate supportive research activities including regulatory support and data sharing mechanisms. |

¹⁹ http://www.who.int/diagnostics_laboratory/eual-zika-virus/160211invitation_to_mx_of_Zika_virus_diagnostics_v2.pdf?ua=1
1. Epidemiology and Laboratory

**Surveillance**
1.1 Zika virus case definition
1.2 Surveillance of Zika virus

**Laboratory**
1.3 Laboratory testing for Zika virus

2. Management of Complications

2.1 Prevention of potential sexual transmission of Zika virus
2.2 Pregnancy management in the context of Zika virus
2.3 Assessment of infants with microcephaly in the context of Zika virus
2.4 Identification and management of Guillain-Barré syndrome in the context of Zika virus
2.5 Breastfeeding in the context of Zika virus
2.6 Psychosocial support for pregnant women and for families with microcephaly and other neurological complications in the context of Zika virus infection

3. Vector Control

3.1 Monitoring and managing insecticide resistance in Aedes populations
3.2 Entomological surveillance for Aedes spp. in the context of Zika virus
3.3 Protecting the occupational health and safety of workers in emergency vector control of Aedes mosquitos

4. Risk Communication and Community Engagement

4.1 Risk communications for Zika virus
4.2 Knowledge, Attitudes and Practice surveys: Zika virus disease and potential complications

5. Health Systems

5.1 Maintaining a safe and adequate blood supply during Zika virus outbreaks

6. International Health Regulations

6.1 Aircraft disinsection for mosquito control

7. General Information

**Factsheets**

7.1 Zika virus
7.2 Microcephaly
7.3 Guillain-Barré syndrome

**General information**

7.4 Zika virus and potential complications: Questions and answers
7.5 Zika virus and safe blood supply: Questions and answers
7.6 Dispelling rumours around Zika and microcephaly
7.7 Information for travellers visiting Zika affected countries
7.8 Zika virus: video questions and answers
7.9 Zika Strategic Response Framework & Join Operations Plan
7.10 Zika virus disease timeline

**Information on research and data sharing**

7.11 WHO involvement in Zika R&D
7.12 Data sharing in public health emergencies: a call to researchers
7.13 Zika Open