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ASIA EDITION

Australia commits $3 M to assist in elimination of dengue fever in Laos

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To help protect more communities from mosquito-borne diseases

Monash University's World Mosquito Programme (WMP) has received significant funding from the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade to fund research to manage the spread of mosquito-borne diseases in Laos.

The second phase of the project to combat mosquito-borne diseases in Laos, was announced by Prime Minister Albanese and Sonexay Siphandone, Prime Minister of the Lao People's Democratic Republic (PDR) at the ASEAN Special Summit. The signed agreement will strengthen ties between Australia and Laos to a Comprehensive Partnership.

The next phase of the World Mosquito Programme's Wolbachia method rollout in Laos will be implemented in partnership between the Lao PDR Ministry of Health and Save the Children to target the country's dengue hotspots.

The funding support from Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade will enable the project to help protect more communities from mosquito-borne diseases in the capital, Vientiane.

It follows a successful deployment of Wolbachia in the Chanthabouly & Xaysettha districts, which helped protect 32 villages with a combined population of 86,000 people. Releases concluded in August 2023, and public acceptance of the mosquito releases was 99 per cent.

Currently operational in 14 countries, the method of breeding and releasing mosquitoes with the Wolbachia bacteria has proven successful in reducing the transmission of dengue and other mosquito-borne diseases.