



## Press Release

### United Nations Zika Response Multi-Partner Trust Fund Launched

New York, 6 May 2016 – United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has established the United Nations Zika Response Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF) to finance critical unfunded priorities in the response to the Zika outbreak. The trust fund provides a rapid, flexible and accountable platform to support a coordinated response from the UN system and partners.

Urgent funds are required to support the implementation of national response plans and address the broader social and economic challenges that lie ahead. The UN Zika Response MPTF will directly support the Zika Strategic Response Framework, developed by the World Health Organization (WHO) in consultation with UN agencies, partners, and international epidemiological experts.

Donors contribute to a central point and an Advisory Committee directs funds to the highest-priority activities in the affected countries. Member States, regional organizations, inter-governmental organizations, businesses and individuals can make contributions through <http://mptf.undp.org/zika>.

The Zika virus is spreading rapidly. Since January 2015, 61 countries and territories have reported local transmission of Zika virus. The recent rise in the spread of Zika virus in some countries has been accompanied by an unprecedented rise in the number of children being born with unusually small heads — identified as microcephaly. Several countries have also reported an increase in Guillain-Barré syndrome — a neurological disorder that can lead to paralysis and death.

On 1 February 2016, WHO announced that the cluster of cases of microcephaly and other neurological disorders, in particular Guillain-Barré syndrome, constituted a Public Health Emergency of International Concern. There is now scientific consensus that Zika virus is linked to severe foetal malformations and serious disorders of the central nervous system and is a cause of microcephaly and Guillain-Barré syndrome.

The Zika Strategic Response Framework aims to investigate and respond to the cluster of microcephaly and other neurological complications linked to Zika virus, increase preventive measures, communicate risks and provide care and support to those affected.

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