

Dengue Cases in the Caribbean Increase Five-Fold in 10 Years



Bridgetown, June 5 (PL-RHC) -- Dengue cases in the Caribbean increased five-fold in the last decade, according to the Pan American Health Organisation (PAHO).

According to data presented this week at a high-level regional meeting on dengue hosted by PAHO, between 2009 and 2012, more than 1 million cases were reported annually, on average, with more than 33,900 severe cases and 835 deaths.

PAHO said that the 2013 was one of the worst years for dengue in the hemisphere's history, with 2.3 million cases, including 37,705 severe cases and 1,289 deaths.

By comparison, the number of cases reported in the region in 2003 was 517,617. Despite countries' efforts to control the disease, PAHO warned that dengue continues to spread due to unplanned urbanisation, lack of basic services in communities, poor management of the environment and climate change, among other reasons.

Espinal also called on all sectors of governments, communities and families to work together to fight the vector and control this disease that "knows no borders, discriminates against no one, and is everyone's problem, not just the health sector's," he said.

Despite the increasing incidence of dengue, PAHO said that the trend in fatality rates has been downward. Besides dengue, PAHO recalled that the *Aedes aegypti* also transmits the chikungunya virus and the yellow fever.

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