



Red Cross Volunteer assisting a patient in a Sri Lanka Hospital (2017).
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In Sri Lanka volunteers mobilized to control spiraling dengue outbreak

Volunteers mobilized to support government efforts to stem the country's worst-ever outbreak of dengue virus disease and to provide medical assistance at overstretched hospitals.

Sri Lanka's Ministry of Health reported more than 87,600 suspected cases of the mosquito-borne infection in 2017, causing over 230 deaths. Dengue is endemic in Sri Lanka, but the number of infections this year was already about 38 per cent higher than 2016, when 55,150 people were diagnosed with dengue and 97 died. Experts say the virus is a particularly virulent strain that is new to Sri Lanka, and therefore immunity is low.

Teams of volunteers from the [Sri Lanka Red Cross Society](#) joined public health inspectors going house-to-house in Colombo and other areas to raise awareness about the disease, explain how to treat symptoms, prevent mosquito bites and get rid of waste and stagnant water. The volunteers also helped authorities to identify and clean mosquito breeding grounds. Moreover, in the province of Gampaha, volunteers provide patient care, laboratory support and administrative assistance at the overstretched Negombo Hospital.

This story is published as part of the campaign for [International Volunteer Day 2017: Volunteers Act First. Here. Everywhere.](#)



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