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Volunteers fight Zika in the aftermath of natural disasters

In the aftermath of Tropical Storm Bret which hit Trinidad and Tobago in June 2017, many areas were affected by heavy rains, flooding and landslides. With the rains, some areas reported an influx of mosquitoes. Volunteers, together with the Regional Corporations, carried out damage assessments and assisted affected residents in cleaning up their homes and businesses.

Akeisha Benjamin, Zika Project Coordinator with the Trinidad and Tobago Red Cross society (TTRCS) explains, "As people are cleaning up from the floods we are pushing the message to get rid of stagnant waters as quickly as possible, to eliminate mosquito breeding grounds. Given the fact that some people had to evacuate and go to shelters, we are encouraging affected persons to clean up quickly. We are also working with the Regional Corporations to spread the message." The focus of the project has primarily been on community and school's outreach in selected areas.

“ With the school community in mind, art and spoken word competitions on the topic of Zika were also launched to raise greater awareness.

Schools actively participated in these competitions towards the end of the school term, and prizes were distributed to the winners when school resumed. Volunteers have also pursued the use of social media to reach the population through this platform.

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



<https://media.ifrc.org/ifrc/2017/08/17/trinidad-tobago-red-cross-community-zika-free/>



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