**Disease Transmission Terminology**

**Vector:** any organism capable of carrying a pathogen from one organism to another; vector-borne diseases can be transmitted from animals to humans (or from humans to humans) that have been bitten by an infected mosquito, tick or flea

**Pathogen:** a microorganism—such as a bacterium, virus or protozoan—that can cause disease

Example: *Aedes* mosquitoes are vectors that carry the dengue and chikungunya virus pathogens from an infected human to a non-infected human.

**Incidence:** occurrence, rate or frequency of a disease in a particular area; how often a disease occurs in an area

Example: Incidence of vector-borne diseases has increased worldwide since the early 1800s.

**Distribution:** geographic area where a disease occurs, such as a country, state, city or town
**Local Transmission** occurs when a mosquito bites someone who is infected with the virus and then bites another person. A disease becomes established in a new area once local mosquitoes start transmitting it from infected to non-infected human residents.

**Imported Cases:** An imported case occurs when a person contracts the virus in one country and transports it to another country where the disease is not present. Most epidemics start with an infected individual carrying a disease to a new area where a suitable vector exists.