

Fast Facts on the
U.S. Government's work in

HAITI



CHOLERA

Background Information

On Oct. 21, 2010, in the aftermath of the devastating January 2010 earthquake, the Haitian Ministry of Health and Population confirmed cases of cholera for the first time in at least a century. The U.S. Government was already on the ground, helping Haiti build sustainable health systems to detect and combat the spread of communicable diseases and therefore was in position to quickly respond. At the request of the Government of Haiti, the U.S. Government immediately began working with the Haitian Ministry of Health, the National Directorate for Potable Water and Sanitation (DINEPA), and the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) to lessen the severity of the outbreak.

Since the peak of the outbreak in 2011, there has been a steady decrease in the number of cholera cases (Table 1). **In 2011 there were 352,033 reported cases however during 2014 there were 29,256 reported cases, a 91% reduction. The case fatality rate of hospitalized cases remained at 1%.**

In the first five months of 2015, **16,208 cases and 136 deaths (CFR for hospitalized cases, 0.80%)** were reported. However, in part due to recent localized outbreaks, the reported cases so far in 2015 represent a three-fold increase as compared to the same time period in 2014 (5,572 cases in 2014). MSPP and partners respond to localized outbreaks through local response teams to assist with investigation of cases and water contamination, provide WASH education and water treatment products.

Accomplishments

The U.S. Government, through the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), provided expertise and more than \$95 million during the emergency phase of the cholera response by:

- Supporting cholera prevention and treatment efforts through social marketing and distribution of drinking water purification products, oral rehydration salts (which prevent dehydration in patients with acute, watery diarrhea), and soap for washing hands and household items.



- Working side-by-side with the Ministry of Health and other partners to establish a national system for tracking cases of cholera, responding to cholera outbreaks, and routinely testing suspected cases of cholera at the National Public Health Laboratory.
- Supporting treatment for cholera and other diarrheal diseases at public and non-governmental organization health facilities nationwide at the height of the epidemic.
- Providing technical assistance and support to DINEPA to improve its capacity to provide clean water, sanitation, and improved hygiene (WASH).
- Providing training for 264 Communal Potable Water Technicians (TEPACs) who are deployed to all 133 rural communes outside of Port-au-Prince, where they monitor community water system operations and disinfection.
- Developing cholera education materials to train more than 6,000 community health workers to conduct outreach activities on cholera prevention and treatment throughout Haiti.
- Improving access to clean water in communities by providing support to drill new wells, repair others, and promote safe household water practices.
- Support to national level chlorination program for rural piped water systems initiated: starting with 107 systems, working with Ministry of the Health to evaluate various aspects of the recent oral cholera vaccine campaign.

Challenges Ahead

Access to clean water and availability of sanitation systems are limited in Haiti, and cholera is likely to persist until access to adequate water and sanitation improves. The U.S. Government is committed to strengthening the Haitian healthcare system to prevent and contain future outbreaks and treat those who become ill.

In line with the Ministry of Health's desire to integrate cholera prevention and treatment into overall health programming, the U.S. Government is working more broadly on the prevention and treatment of all causes of diarrheal diseases. To reduce vulnerability to cholera and other diarrheal diseases, the U.S. Government is providing the Government of Haiti and other partners with support to improve access to treated drinking water at the community and household levels in urban and rural communities. In addition, the U.S. Government, in collaboration with PAHO, UNICEF, and the Governments of Haiti and the Dominican Republic, helped launch the Coalition for the Elimination of Cholera on the island of Hispaniola, which aims to coordinate and leverage WASH efforts that contribute to the elimination of cholera on the island.