



SUCCESS STORY

Saying “NO” to Cholera

Successful prevention measures reduce the cholera incidence for vulnerable populations in South Kivu, DR Congo



[Insert Photo Credit]

Collaboration between USAID-funded projects AMITE and AXxes, in collaboration with PSI, promoted cholera prevention and distributed water purification treatments. This helped to reduce the incidence of cholera by 61%, especially among the vulnerable population of OVCs and PLWHAs.

IN SOUTH KIVU, DR CONGO, cholera occurs frequently – too frequently. In 2006, three outbreaks occurred, resulting in 2,778 cases and 24 deaths. Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) and Persons Living With HIV/Aids (PLWHA) are particularly susceptible to cholera due to their precarious health and socio-economic conditions. Therefore, when the third, and most serious, cholera outbreak of 2006 was declared, USAID took action through its existing projects and partners to protect these vulnerable populations.

In this case, the collaborating projects were the AMITE project to combat HIV/AIDS, the AXxes project to rebuild health zone capacity for primary health care interventions, and PSI. Together they planned and implemented emergency actions to prevent new cases of cholera via community education and targeted water-chlorination activities, especially for OVCs and PLWHAs.

CRS, the implementing partner for AXxes in South Kivu, AMITIE coordinated their interventions and resources which:

- Mobilized 56 Red Cross chlorinators to 19 strategically-selected water distribution points to treat water and to educate the community on cholera prevention.
- Printed and distributed (in French and Swahili) 8,000 “Key Cholera Prevention Messages” via AMITIE’s network of volunteers to the general public and to the targeted population of OVCs and PLWHAs.
- Trained and mobilized AMITIE Home Volunteers, in collaboration with PSI, to distribute packets of “PUR”, a water purification treatment, to PLWHA and OVC beneficiaries.

Within a few days the collaboration between AMITE, AXxes and PSI were protecting water drawn by the population and had distributed sufficient quantities of “PUR” so that every PLWHA could purify a 10-day supply of drinking water.

The results were impressive. In the health zone of Kadutu, the center of the epidemic, CRS AXxes recorded only seven cases of cholera following these jointly implemented activities. That works out to a cholera incidence among the AMITE-served population of .29% which is 61% lower than the while the .75%. rate in the general population.