
**BUREAU FOR DEMOCRACY, CONFLICT, AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE (DCHA)
OFFICE OF U.S. FOREIGN DISASTER ASSISTANCE (OFDA)****WATER, SANITATION, AND HYGIENE SECTOR UPDATE – JUNE 2010****SECTOR OVERVIEW**

Water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) programs frequently represent critical components of the USAID/OFDA response to rapid-onset disasters and complex emergencies, as disaster-affected populations are more susceptible to illness and death from waterborne and communicable diseases. WASH interventions include latrine construction, hand washing promotion, safe drinking water and healthy sanitation practice education, and safe drinking water provision. In Fiscal Year (FY) 2009, USAID/OFDA provided nearly \$99 million for WASH programs in 34 countries. In addition, between October 2009 and May 2010, USAID/OFDA provided nearly \$47.5 million to support WASH activities in 25 countries. To promote sustainability, USAID/OFDA links emergency activities with transition and development programs funded by other offices in USAID and incorporates institutional partners—such as local governments—in program planning and implementation.

RESPONDING TO WASH NEEDS IN HAITI

On January 12, 2010, a magnitude 7.0 earthquake struck southern Haiti, killing an estimated 230,000 people and affecting approximately 3 million others, according to U.N. and Government of Haiti (GoH) estimates. During the response, the GoH National Direction for Potable Water and Sanitation (DINEPA) directed the WASH Cluster response—a leadership role that USAID/OFDA supports and one that was paramount to ensuring a successful and lasting impact. As of April 23, USAID/OFDA had provided nearly \$28 million to 17 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and U.N. agencies implementing WASH activities in earthquake-affected areas of Haiti—one of the largest donor responses to date. Working in partnership with DINEPA, USAID/OFDA-supported NGO and U.N. agency implementing partners provided safe drinking water to approximately 1.3 million people daily as of early May.

In addition, USAID/OFDA partners have provided sanitation services in earthquake-affected areas and host communities, as well as implemented hygiene promotion activities that encouraged safe hygiene behaviors intended to provide beneficiaries with health knowledge that they will retain beyond the immediate aftermath of the disaster. USAID/OFDA has also delivered 86,592 hygiene kits, 116,600 water containers, and 22 water bladders to support the WASH needs of at least 433,000 beneficiaries.

PREVENTIVE WASH INTERVENTIONS IN BULAWAYO, ZIMBABWE

From August 2008 to July 2009, Africa's largest cholera outbreak in 15 years struck Zimbabwe, resulting in nearly 4,300 deaths and nearly 98,600 cholera cases nationwide. The case of Bulawayo, Zimbabwe's second-largest city, demonstrates the merits of community-based WASH interventions. For the past several years, Bulawayo has suffered from an inconsistent water supply and a poorly functioning sewage system. In 2007, the city suffered a diarrheal disease outbreak as a result of a severe water shortage that prompted relief agencies, including USAID/OFDA, to increase WASH intervention activities. Since 2007, USAID/OFDA-supported programs in Bulawayo have included hygiene promotion; social mobilization to increase community reporting of cholera cases and sewage system breaks; and distribution of water purification materials, water storage tanks, water containers, and hygiene supplies. During the cholera outbreak, the metropolitan Bulawayo area recorded 445 cases and only 18 deaths, rates significantly lower than other urban centers. By comparison, Harare, the capital, and Harare's high-density suburbs recorded nearly 19,600 cases and more than 650 deaths. Several factors played a part in keeping Bulawayo's rates comparatively low; among them were USAID/OFDA support for WASH activities in Bulawayo in FY 2009 and in previous years.

USAID/OFDA CONTACTS

Trevor White, WASH Advisor, (202) 712-5052 or trewwhite@usaid.gov
Peter Wallis, WASH Advisor, pwallis@ofda.gov