

## RESPOND

# SUCCESS STORY

### **RESPOND and the Uganda National Anthrax Taskforce collaborate to strengthen multi-sector planning and outbreak response**



*In early June 2010, over 80 hippos died of anthrax in Queen Elizabeth National Park, a popular safari location on the border of Lake George. The Uganda National Anthrax Taskforce, in collaboration with government ministries and other multilateral and bilateral stakeholders worked to contain the outbreak and prevent disease transmission to other animals and human populations.*

**RESPOND** is one of four partner projects of USAID's Emerging Pandemic Threats Program. RESPOND seeks to build local capacity of state and non-state actors to manage outbreaks of animal-borne diseases such as H1N1 flu and Ebola virus in hot-spot regions around the world.

**Queen Elizabeth Park, Uganda** – In June 2010, an Anthrax outbreak began in Queen Elizabeth Park and raged through the wildlife population, killing at least 132 hippos, 18 buffalos and other wildlife species by the end of the year. As a national response, the Uganda National Anthrax Taskforce partnered with USAID's RESPOND project to mount an integrated disease control effort that incorporated input from a multidisciplinary team of professionals. This partnership stemmed from the success of an earlier effort to respond to a 2004 Anthrax outbreak that killed several humans around the park, in addition to 300 hippos and numerous livestock.

RESPOND supported the efforts of the taskforce and members of the Ugandan Wildlife Authority and the Ministries of Health and Agriculture to conduct a cross-sector diagnostic capacity assessment. A truly "One Health" approach was utilized, including representation from various disciplines and Makerere University School of Veterinary Medicine and School of Public Health. Results from the assessment indicated an urgent need for increased anthrax diagnostic capacity in wildlife, livestock, and human laboratories around Queen Elizabeth Park. To catalyze coordinated action, RESPOND immediately funded the African Field Epidemiology Network (AFENET) to train 31 district wildlife, animal and public health officials in basic techniques in rapid diagnostic screening of anthrax using effective quick testing and microscopy.

While AFENET trained district-level first responders, RESPOND staff participated in multidisciplinary teams that provided disease containment response through carcass identification, sample collection, and safe disposal of diseased carcasses. The Ministry of Health coordinated with a livestock vaccination team from the Ministry of Agriculture to provide a public awareness campaign that reached 14,000 households at risk of infection.

This coordination among multiple sectors resulted in a well-coordinated "One Health" outbreak response that successfully avoided transmission from wildlife to livestock or humans.