During a disaster, water can become contaminated, sanitation services go down, health care systems are crippled, malnutrition rises, and people resort to unsafe hygiene practices. Each of these increases the risk of diseases like cholera, a fast-spreading waterborne disease that can cause severe vomiting and diarrhea, and even death. Cholera is not only preventable, but is very treatable if people get help right away.

**Combating Cholera During Disasters**

*Cholera quick facts*

- Cholera spreads through contaminated water and food
- Most people have no symptoms, but still spread the disease
- 10-20 percent of people have severe symptoms
- Without treatment, severe cases can cause death within hours
- 80 percent of cases can be treated with rehydration

*How USAID fights cholera outbreaks*

**Prevention:**
- Chlorinate water supplies
- Provide hygiene kits
- Support cholera prevention education campaigns, focusing on:
  - Safe food handling
  - Safe water
  - Handwashing

**Treatment:**
- Provide medical supplies (IVs, oral rehydration salts, beds, disinfectant)
- Support treatment centers
- Train community health workers
- Conduct disease surveillance
- Support partners to send rapid response teams to treat patients