



GLOBAL TASK FORCE ON **CHOLERA CONTROL**

6th WASH Working Group Meeting Virtual Events 2021

Effective cholera prevention and control interventions are well known and rely to a great extent on the implementation of integrated and comprehensive approaches that involve activities both inside and outside of the health sector, including universal use of safe water and basic sanitation and improved hygiene practices.

The persistence of cholera today and the geographic and temporal pattern of cholera outbreaks show that, despite ongoing efforts, current strategies have failed to control cholera in endemic areas, let alone to prevent outbreaks. The vast majority of cholera control activities have been focused on emergency response to outbreaks, which reduces the number of cases and deaths but does not have significant effect on the prevention of cholera.

Long-term WASH programs are too few and do not regularly prioritize areas most affected by cholera. Worldwide, 844 million people still lack access to even a basic drinking water source, more than 2 billion drink water from sources that are faecally contaminated, and 2.4 billion are without basic sanitation facilities, exposing them to a range of water-related diseases including cholera.

Cholera is preventable with the tools we have today, putting the goal of ending it within reach. More proactive and targeted measures to prevent cholera through investments in WASH, improved health systems, and large-scale use of OCV for those most in need are urgently required.

It is critical that we use the opportunity to act now—when cholera control is within reach—to ensure access to the basic WASH solutions. Climate change, urbanization, and population growth will likely increase the risk of cholera in the coming years. The pressure on infrastructure will therefore continue to increase, likely worsening access to safe water and basic sanitation for the most vulnerable populations.

As the COVID-19 pandemic has again precluded any real chance of hosting the usually engaging annual WASH Working Group meeting in person, a series of 4 webinars of 90 minutes will allow to review, debate, and propose next steps for the future development of the

WASH pillar as an essential element of the Global Roadmap. This year, the WASH working group will discuss on the progress in implementing National Control Plans in two countries, present achievements and future priority areas for research related to WASH interventions for Cholera Control and Elimination, while its last session will be dedicated to technical issues affecting WASH interventions within Cholera Programming.

The overview of the 4 virtual events planned in lieu of the 6th annual meeting of the GTFCC WASH working is as follows:

Virtual Event #01: **Role of WASH interventions in Cholera control: focus on Zanzibar**
(24.02.2021, 3PM CET)

The objectives of this session are:

- Showcase progress in the implementation of the WASH pillar of the National Cholera Control Plans of Zanzibar
- Identify good practices and bottlenecks in WASH programming for Cholera Control by sharing lessons learned
- Provide a platform for exchange among stakeholders actively involved in Cholera Control

Virtual Event #02: **Role of WASH interventions in Cholera control: focus on Zambia**
(12.04.2021, 3PM CEST)

The objectives of this session are:

- Showcase progress in the implementation of the WASH pillar of the National Cholera Control Plans of Zambia
- Identify good practices and bottlenecks in WASH programming for Cholera Control by sharing lessons learned
- Provide a platform for exchange among stakeholders actively involved in Cholera Control

Virtual Event #03: **Update on research impacting WASH for Cholera control**
(07.07.2021, TBC)

The objectives of this session are:

- Take stock of new developments in the field of research on WASH and Cholera
- Identify gaps, define priority needs and potential partners for research on topics related to WASH for Cholera Control and Elimination
- Present the Research Agenda of the GTFCC, with a special focus on WASH related topics

Virtual Event #04: **Update on technical issues impacting implementation of WASH interventions for Cholera response and prevention**

(15.09.2021, TBC)

The objectives of this session are:

- Identify technical issues representing bottlenecks and/or opportunities for adequate WASH interventions for Cholera Control and Elimination
- Ensure that the linkages between the various working groups of the GTFCC are identified and developed