

THIS WEEK'S NEWS

NGOs Report Resurgence of Cholera in Haiti

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti
(OOSKANews Correspondent)
– There has been a resurgence of cholera in Haiti, with a health center in Labrousse seeing 80 new cases of the water-borne disease last month alone, according to Zachary Brehmer, director of research at water and sanitation NGO International Action.

Other NGOs working in Haiti have reported increased cases of the deadly waterborne disease, with the World Health Organization (WHO) reporting more than 18,000 new cases in the capital city, Port-au-Prince, between May 2 and June 12.

Haiti's Ministry of Public Health and Population have reported more than 50,000 new cases in the same time period.

The resurgence is being attributed to the rainy season and flooding that has facilitated the spread of the bacterial disease.

"There are no public sewage treatment or disposal systems anywhere in Haiti," Brehmer told OOSKANews.

As a result, drinking water is easily contaminated. International Action has been working extensively to provide more Haitians with clean drinking water.

"As of June 2011, we protect 66 communities which are home to half a million Haitians. We safeguard public water tanks, four hospitals and clinics, six orphanages and 115 schools from waterborne diseases," Brehmer said in an e-mail.

The NGO supplies granular chlorine and chlorinators throughout Haiti. The organization says it has

"enough granular chlorine in Port-au-Prince to provide disinfected water to every Haitian for six to nine months."

"We are donating this chlorine to missions, churches, schools and NGOs... We want a consortium of groups to respond to this cholera epidemic. Through this network, our group plans to provide water throughout Haiti. Already nine organizations have agreed to pick up chlorine to provide disinfected water for over 469,282 Haitians," said Brehmer.

International Action installed 21 chlorinators in May and another four chlorinators with water tanks in Drouillard in June, in partnership

with Haiti's National Directorate for Water and Sanitation, the Red Cross and Action Against Hunger.

"While the immediate goal is to provide temporary relief for areas afflicted from cholera, the long term goal is to create a usable network. Through this network, we hope that we will receive more requests from communities in need of long-term water treatment.

"One of the biggest difficulties for community leaders is to know who to reach out to when they need assistance. Our goal is that this network will allow communities outside our current reach to know that we exist and that we can help," Brehmer said.

Residents Protest Against Dam Project in Veracruz

SIERRA DE ZONGOLICA, Mexico
(OOSKANews Correspondent)
-- Residents of the Sierra de Zongolica in Mexico's Veracruz state are protesting construction of a hydroelectric dam in the area being built by Electricidad del Golfo S.A de C.V.

Residents say that work on the project is violating conventions of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which states that indigenous communities should not be forcibly removed from their land, or should be compensated if they are.

The law applies in this case as their way of life and subsistence farming are being affected.

Newspaper Diario Noticias reported that several Nahua villages have been severely affected, as the Alpatlahuaya River is being irreversibly damaged and they will lose access to water. They said that this goes against their constitutional right to access natural resources in their territory, as well as their right to water.

Residents are also appealing on the grounds that they were not able to participate in the decision to carry out the project, which goes against conventions of the International Labor Organization (ILO).

They also said their rights to live in peace, freedom and security have been violated, as they are suffering

Article continued on page 6