Bangui/Brazzaville, 11 August 2016 – Amid an ongoing complex humanitarian crisis in the Central African Republic (CAR), the World Health Organization (WHO) and partners are working with the country's Ministry of Health respond to a cholera outbreak declared on 10 August 2016 with 46 confirmed cases and 13 deaths from Djoujou, Damara and Bangui cities.

"This cholera outbreak in villages along the banks of the Oubangui river simply compounds the already worrisome health security needs for the people in the CAR who have already suffered so much from the effects of a protracted humanitarian crisis due to war and displacement," said Dr Michel Yao, WR representative to CAR.

The reported cases are mainly from villages along the river bordering DRC's Equateur province where the index case fell sick after travel from DRC.

WHO is also assisting the government of DRC to respond to a cholera outbreak in the provinces of Equateur, Tshopo and Mongala provinces. Cholera is endemic in DRC.

WHO RESPONSE

WHO and the Ministry of Health and Sanitation have activated a cholera control command centre within the country's existing Emergency Operational Centre which includes all humanitarian partners on the ground with taskforces covering case management, surveillance, WASH, Risk Communication and Social Mobilization, Logistics, Security and management of dead bodies.

Patients who reached Bangui are being treated in a treatment center established with WHO support. Current treatment supplies are from stocks that were already pre-positioned as part of the country's cholera preparedness for the rainy season.

As part of the overall health partners response, a mobile MSF team is conducting water source treatment and community engagement activities in villages along the Oubangui river.

"The continuing crisis in the country including insecurity in some areas has exacerbated existing challenges with disease surveillance, which is essential to enable early detection and an efficient response to outbreaks such as cholera," warned Dr Michel Yao. "There is urgent need for additional resources to enhance disease surveillance as well as support to restore health services in a country with many public health threats"

http://www.afro.who.int/fr/republique-centrafricaine/press-materials/item/8889-who-heightens-health-response-to-cholera-outbreak-in-car.html
For more information on cholera, please the WHO fact sheet on cholera:

http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs107/en/