



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**icddr,b and AmeriCares Launch Global Cholera Preparedness Initiative at  
2011 Clinton Global Initiative**

***Rapid response teams will aid victims of epidemics worldwide***

**New York, NY** – icddr,b and the US humanitarian organisation, AmeriCares are joining forces to launch a Global Cholera Preparedness programme in the hope of preventing thousands of unnecessary deaths over the next two years. Every year there are as many as 5 million estimated cholera cases worldwide and over 100,000 deaths from the waterborne disease, which spreads rapidly in areas with overcrowding and poor sanitation.

The commitment, announced last night at the Clinton Global Initiative Annual Meeting in New York City and featured during a special session on effective disaster preparedness, combines the technical expertise of icddr,b with appropriate medical supplies and AmeriCares emergency response capabilities to enable timely and effective responses to outbreaks.

The two organisations collaborated to identify the necessary expertise and resources to save lives during cholera outbreaks. These include an assessment and diagnostic team for rapid deployment, a pre-positioned 'kit' with essential medicines and supplies to treat 15,000 patients suffering from cholera and other causes of acute watery diarrhea, and establishment of a model training and treatment center to train and reinforce best practices for managing a large-scale cholera outbreak.

“We are excited about this new partnership between icddr,b and AmeriCares, which combines our 50 years of expertise in responding to cholera epidemics with AmeriCares global reach and expertise in disaster response,” said Dr. Alejandro Cravioto, icddr,b’s Executive Director. “The challenge is to ensure that the strain of cholera is identified, that the correct supplies are available and that local people are trained in the most effective case management. That’s what we set out to achieve with this partnership.”

“This initiative will allow us to respond rapidly in the crucial first stages of cholera outbreaks and save thousands of lives in some of the world’s poorest places,” Curt Welling, President and CEO of AmeriCares added. “With proper treatment, 99 percent of cholera patients will survive.”

icddr,b pioneered the development of Oral Rehydration Solution (ORS), the most effective treatment of acute watery diarrhoea yet developed. For more than five decades, icddr,b has

delivered treatment and training to cholera-afflicted communities in Bangladesh. icddr,b teams of cholera experts have provided assistance and training across the globe in countries including Zimbabwe, Pakistan, Haiti, and, most recently, in Kenya and – most recently – Somalia.

AmeriCares has been responding to emergencies all over the globe for nearly 30 years, including delivering aid for disease epidemics like the recent cholera outbreak in Haiti. From floods and cyclones to tsunamis, nearly all of the emergencies AmeriCares responds to involve some form of medical aid to treat waterborne diseases.

Beyond global response, the commitment will enhance icddr,b's ability to respond to domestic humanitarian crises in Bangladesh, such as the 2009 Cyclone Aila, when incidences of cholera spike. It also will provide support and resources to icddr,b's Dhaka Hospital, which treats over 150,000 patients suffering from diarrhoeal diseases annually, as well as serving as a dynamic laboratory for testing and refining effective treatment protocols.

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#### **Notes to editors**

##### **About icddr,b**

For more than 50 years, icddr,b has provided practical, low-cost solutions to health problems that affect billions of people living in poverty in Bangladesh, its host country, and across the globe. Its unique proximity to the health challenges of the developing world, both urban and rural, allows for cutting-edge research that is relevant, rigorously tested, scalable in resource-limited settings, and, most importantly, improves health outcomes and well-being of individuals in low-income countries.

Daily exposure to cholera and AWD means that the team of doctors and nurses at icddr, b, dubbed the 'cholera warriors', are global experts in the management and treatment of cholera. Regularly called upon by the World Health Organization and local Ministries of Health, to share their expertise worldwide, an initial assessment team is currently investigating an outbreak in southern Somalia.

For more information, go to [www.icddrb.org](http://www.icddrb.org).

**About AmeriCares**

AmeriCares is a nonprofit global health and disaster relief organization which delivers medicines, medical supplies and aid to people in need around the world and across the United States. Every day, AmeriCares products are delivered to hospitals, clinics and community health programs worldwide, giving health care providers in the poorest regions of the world the means to deliver high-quality care. Since it was established in 1982, AmeriCares has distributed more than \$10 billion in humanitarian aid to 147 countries. For more information go to [www.americares.org](http://www.americares.org)

**About the Clinton Global Initiative (CGI)**

Established in 2005 by President Bill Clinton, the Clinton Global Initiative (CGI) convenes global leaders to devise and implement innovative solutions to some of the world's most pressing challenges. Since 2005, CGI Annual Meetings have brought together nearly 150 current and former heads of state, 18 Nobel Prize laureates, hundreds of leading CEOs, heads of foundations, major philanthropists, directors of the most effective nongovernmental organizations, and prominent members of the media. These CGI members have made nearly 2,000 commitments, which have already improved the lives of 300 million people in more than 180 countries. When fully funded and implemented, these commitments will be valued in excess of \$63 billion. The 2011 Annual Meeting will take place Sept. 20-22 in New York City.

This year, CGI also convened CGI America, a meeting focused on developing ideas for driving economic growth in the United States. The CGI community also includes CGI U, which hosts an annual meeting for undergraduate and graduate students, and CGI Lead, which engages a select group of young CGI members for leadership development and collective commitment-making. For more information, visit [www.clintonglobalinitiative.org](http://www.clintonglobalinitiative.org).