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AFRICA/ZIMBABWE - Typhoid, dysentery, cholera and malnutrition are the causes of infrastructure insecurity

Harare (Agenzia Fides) - The diseases caused by contaminated water, such as typhoid, dysentery and diarrhea, are creating great concern in Zimbabwe. A possible revival of the cholera epidemic that in 2008 - 2009 killed more than 4 000 people and infected another 100 thousand in the country is feared. According to statistics, one third of the population living in rural areas drink from unprotected water sources, exposing themselves to the risk of waterborne diseases. Although the incidence of cholera has declined compared to previous years, in 2011 there were localized outbreaks caused by water, health, precarious hygiene infrastructures. Recently hundreds of cases of typhoid in the capital Harare have been recorded, especially in the overcrowded district of Dzivarasekwa. According to the latest data from the Zimbabwe Weekly Epidemiological Bulletin, dysentery and diarrhea are reaching epidemic levels, although no cases of cholera have been confirmed. In Chipinge and other parts of the eastern province of Manicaland health authorities are carefully monitoring a suspected outbreak of cholera, but nothing has officially been confirmed. In some rural areas, although the situation has improved and the incidence of cholera emergency has decreased throughout the country, there are still highly vulnerable areas, such as Chipinge and Chiredzi in the eastern and southern parts of Zimbabwe. The chronic and acute malnutrition rates among children are respectively 34% and 2.4%. (AP) (Agenzia Fides 20/12/2011)

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