What is cholera, and how can you get it?
Cholera is an infection of the intestinal tract that is caused by a bacterium. You can get cholera by drinking contaminated food or water that carries the bacterium. If cholera does not get treated it can develop into potentially deadly diarrhea quickly.

Why do you think it has been so difficult to get rid of cholera globally?
Cholera is highly contagious, which means that one sick person can easily infect somebody else. Cholera bacteria are hardy, and can even survive in salty water. You can get infected just by swimming in water that contains the bacteria. Plus, there are still millions of people without adequate means of sanitation or access to safe drinking water in the world (especially in sub-Saharan Africa). There is a vaccine against cholera, but it only works for a limited amount of time, and there is not enough of it to vaccinate everyone who is at risk.

What other factors can contribute to people getting cholera?
Poverty, lack of education and knowledge of proper hygiene, lack of scientific understanding, political conflict, climatic changes.

What methods are usually used to prevent cholera?
Mostly, interventions aim at increasing access to clean and safe drinking water, improving sanitation, and educating people about proper hygiene (WaSH approach). Also, a temporary vaccine is available, but not for everybody.

How can we make these efforts more efficient and effective?
By focusing on disease hotspots where people are at much higher risk of getting the disease. This is why we developed a map that assigned risks levels to areas in sub-Saharan Africa. This map will allow us to focus our disease prevention efforts on areas with higher incidences of the disease.