

Congo declares yellow fever epidemic

June 20 2016

DR Congo on Monday declared a yellow fever outbreak in the capital Kinshasa, home to more than ten million people, and in two other western provinces.

Health Minister Kabange Numbi said 67 [cases](#)—including five fatalities—had been confirmed in the provinces of Kinshasa, Kongo central and Kwango after an inquiry into more than 1,000 suspect cases.

"The epidemic has hit 67 people. To date, five fatal cases have been registered," Numbi said.

He said the overwhelming majority of cases were linked to an Angolan outbreak that has killed more than 300 people since December.

Citing some 2,500 suspected cases in Angola, the World Health Organization said last month that cases of the deadly disease had spread to neighbouring Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya and even China.

Aid groups earlier this year voiced concern about poor [health](#) facilities and vaccine shortages limiting Angola's ability to cope with their first significant [outbreak](#) since 1986.

There is no specific treatment for yellow fever, a viral hemorrhagic disease transmitted by [infected mosquitoes](#) and found in tropical regions of Africa and Latin America's Amazon region.

The disease is transmitted by the same mosquitoes which spread Zika

and dengue.

Samples from suspected cases have been sent for analysis to laboratories of both the Congolese Institute for Biomedical Research and the Pasteur Institute in Dakar, Senegal.

Numbi appealed for fundraising efforts to bolster a campaign already under way against a disease whose spread the government has been monitoring on a weekly basis.

"One sole vaccine dose protects for life," he pointed out.

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