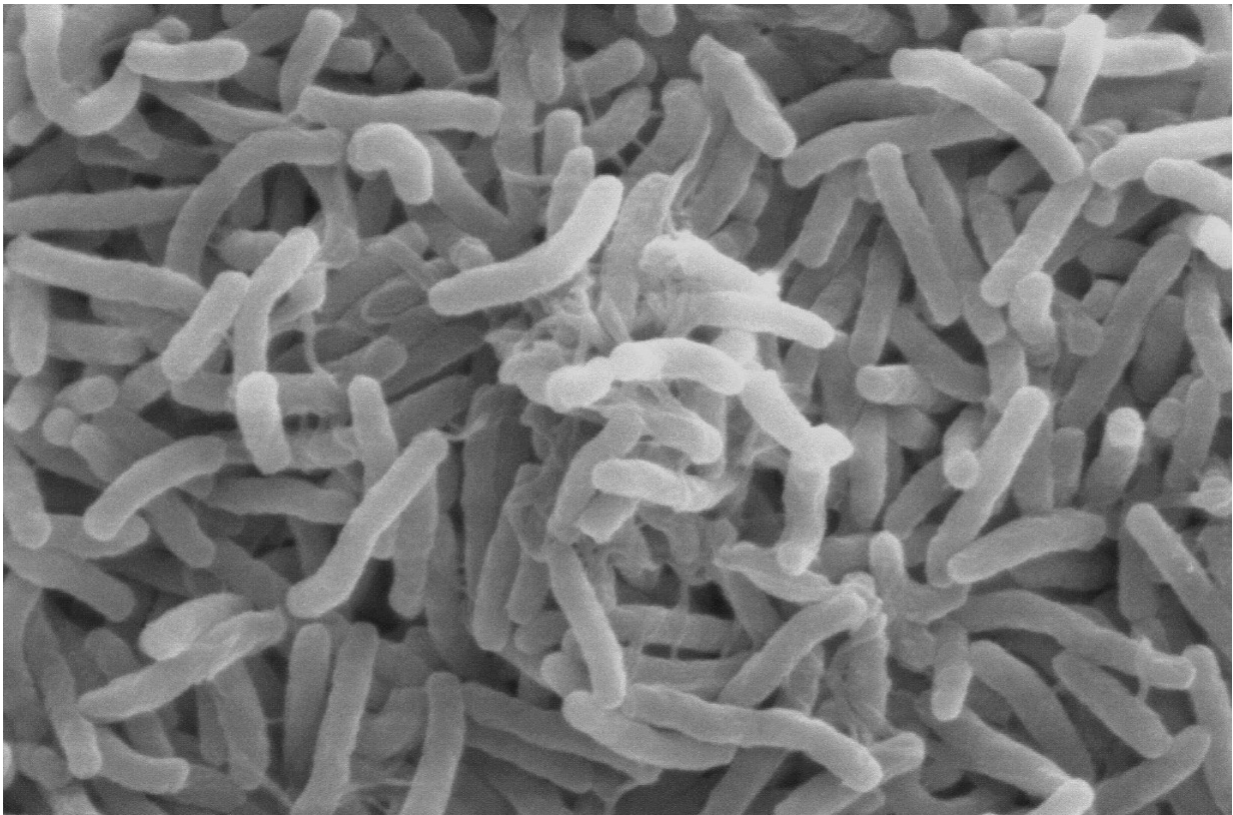


Cholera: worst epidemics of past decade

December 21 2017



Scanning electron microscope image of *Vibrio cholerae*. Credit: Wikipedia

The cholera epidemic in Yemen, where it is afflicting one million people according to the International Committee of the Red Cross, ranks among the world's worst of the past decade.

The World Health Organization warned in November that nearly 2,200 people in war-torn Yemen have so far died from the waterborne disease,

which has propagated rapidly due to deteriorating hygiene and sanitation conditions.

The following lists the deadliest outbreaks of the past 10 years:

Haiti: most virulent outbreak

The most virulent outbreak in modern times was in Haiti, where some 10,000 people have died and more than one million been infected since the epidemic broke out in October 2010.

The disease was introduced by infected Nepalese UN peacekeepers who were sent there after Haiti's devastating 2010 earthquake.

200,000 cases were registered in the impoverished Caribbean country in 2013.

DR Congo: an endemic problem

According to the United Nations, cholera has become a major public health problem in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Thousands of cases are recorded every year in many provinces of the vast central African country, which lacks basic infrastructure and where most of the population lives in poverty.

Cholera is endemic in DR Congo, but usually only affects the east of the country.

However, in 2016, when 700 people died, the infection spread west along the Congo river and reached Kinshasa for the first time in five years.

Since the start of 2017, some 500 cholera-linked deaths have been registered, according to the WHO.

Infections peaked in 2013 at 14,000 cases.

Scourge across Africa

- Somalia: Since the beginning of the year, 800 deaths have been recorded in Somalia, which is ravaged by drought and threatened with famine.
- Tanzania: Between August and November 2015, a major cholera [outbreak](#) infected nearly 10,000 people and killed 150 in 19 of the east African country's regions.
- South Sudan: In 2014, at least 167 people died following a cholera epidemic, as conflict drove some 1.3 million people from their homes.
- Central and East Africa: In 2011, a wave of [cholera](#) swept for several months across the region, mainly in Cameroon, Niger, Nigeria and Chad where more than 85,000 cases were recorded, with 2,466 deaths.
- Zimbabwe: From August 2008 to June 2009, an [epidemic](#) which ravaged the southern African nation during a major economic crisis infected more than 98,000 people and killed almost 4,300.
- Angola: In 2006, at least 68,585 people were infected in the worst [cholera epidemic](#) ever recorded in the southwestern African state. More than 2,750 [people](#) died across its 18 provinces. The disease has since re-emerged in the impoverished country, which has poor systems of drinking water and hygiene and limited access to health care.

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