

c Yellow fever in Angola

The Angolan Minister of Health in a press statement on Wednesday 20th January 2016 reported that 23 confirmed cases and seven deaths from yellow fever had occurred among Eritrean and Congolese citizens living in the municipality of Viana, in Luanda. Cases were diagnosed through initial tests conducted by the National Institute for Communicable Diseases. The statement indicated that of a total of the twenty-three (23) reported cases and seven deaths, three severe cases are under special surveillance while the remaining thirteen had been cleared. Among the cases, 22 are male and one is female, aged 20 to 46 years old. The first case was recorded on the 5th December 2015. Up to now, no cases among national citizens have been reported. The World Health Organization is working with the Ministry of Health in the investigation and management of these cases. A vaccination campaign in Viana, Luanda is being planned, in order to protect children, pregnant women, health professionals and the local community. Angola is considered endemic for yellow fever, although there have been no

recent outbreaks. Vaccination is mandatory for travellers to the country, and for all those travelling from Angola to South Africa.

Yellow fever is an arbovirus of the *Flavivirus* genus. It infects monkeys, and is transmitted by *Aedes* mosquitoes from animals to humans in sylvatic (rural) and urban cycles. Three to six days after infection, persons enter an acute phase characterised by fever, muscle pain and generalised non-specific symptoms. Resolution of this phase occurs after 3-4 days. Subsequently, a minority of patients enter a second, more toxic phase characterised by fever, jaundice, bleeding, kidney impairment, and death within 15 days. Yellow fever is preventable by vaccination. The introduction of yellow fever into a suburban location may herald the onset of an urban cycle, with outbreak potential. Timely vaccination campaigns are essential, as protective immunity takes at least 10 days to develop.

Source: Division of Public Health Surveillance and Response, NICD-NHLS (outbreak@nicd.ac.za)