

b The yellow fever outbreak in Angola and Democratic Republic of Congo

An epidemic of yellow fever (YF) is ongoing in Angola since January 2016. Laboratory investigation of suspected cases of viral haemorrhagic fever from Angola indicated that the outbreak was already in progress in December 2015. Despite intense mass vaccination efforts, human cases of YF are still being reported. In Angola, a cumulative total of 3552 suspected cases has been reported up to 1 July 2016 (Figure 1). The total includes 875 confirmed cases and 355 deaths (case-fatality rate of 10%). Confirmed cases have been reported from 16 of the 18 provinces with the majority from Luanda Province (487; 55.7%).

Since March 2016, a total of 1307 suspected cases of YF has been reported from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Clear epidemiological information from the outbreak is not yet available. Many cases have a travel history to Angola, but autochthonous transmission is likely as the provinces proximate to Angola seem to be affected. A number of cases may have been acquired in the city of Kinshasa, which is of concern because of its dense population of about ten million.

Due to the massive uptake of YF vaccine in a short period of time, vaccine shortages are being reported. More than 10 million people residing in Angola (40% of the population) have been vaccinated as of 10 June 2016. Dose-sparing has been recommended by the World Health

Organization to balance supply with demand. Dose-sparing entails administration of 1/5th of a dose per immunization. Currently, the dose-sparing regimen is only in effect in outbreak zones and does not effect travel-related vaccination.

Several cases of YF in travellers have been reported in Kenya and the People’s Republic of China. No cases of YF have been diagnosed in returning travellers to South Africa to date. Seven countries (Brazil, Chad, Colombia, Ghana, Guinea, Peru and Uganda) are currently reporting YF outbreaks or sporadic cases that are not linked to the Angolan outbreak.

Vaccination of travellers to YF endemic countries is required by international regulations. Travellers are required to be vaccinated at least 10 days before travel in order to develop protective immunity before their trips. Selected groups are exempted from YF vaccination, including infants less than 9 months of age, pregnant or otherwise immunocompromised individuals. For more advise in this regard please consult your travel clinic.

For more information, please visit: (WHO YF situation report) or <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices/watch/yellow-fever-democratic-republic-of-the-congo> (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention).

Source: Centre for Emerging and Zoonotic Diseases, NICD-NHLS; (januszp@nicd.ac.za)

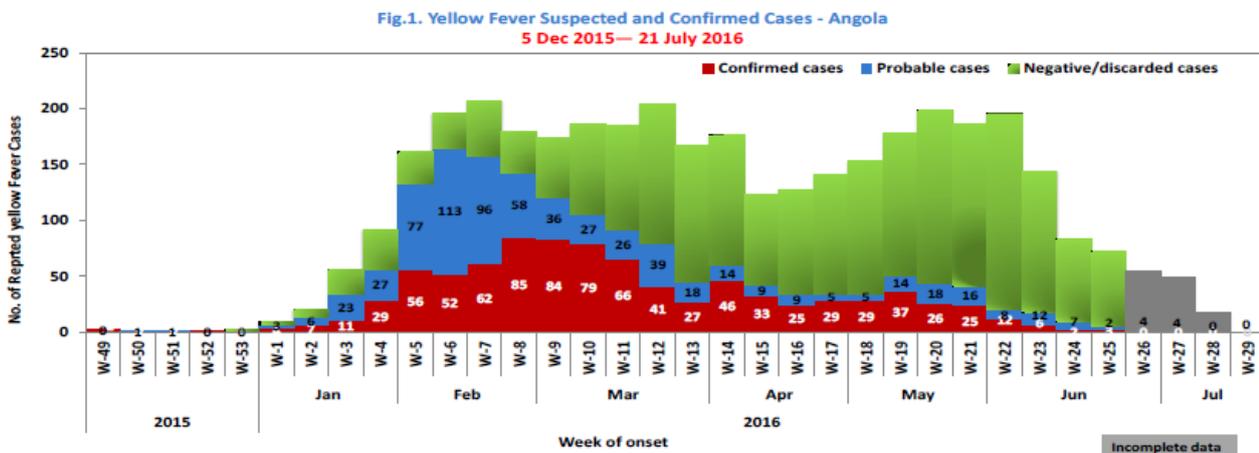


Figure 1. Epidemic curve of confirmed and suspected yellow fever cases in Angola as of 24 July 2016. Source: Yellow fever outbreak situation report 6 June 2016, incident management team, Ministry of Health Angola. <http://www.afro.who.int/en/yellow-fever/sitreps/item/8856-situation-report-yellow-fever-outbreak-in-angola-24-july-2016.html>