

## Current major event

### Yellow fever in Africa: Implications for countries of Eastern Mediterranean Region

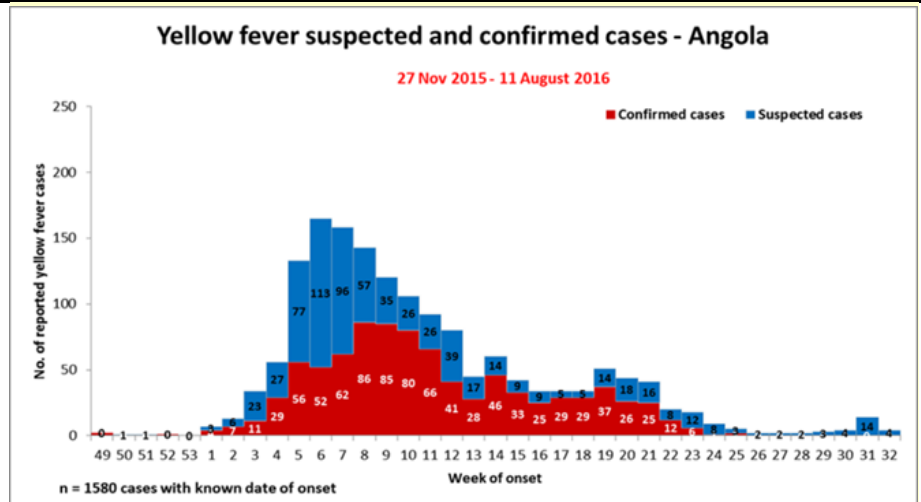
The Yellow Fever (YF) outbreak in Angola and Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) shows signs of slowing down. The heightened vigilance in the countries of the Eastern Mediterranean Region (EMR) to early detect any importation of cases need to be maintained despite the waning of the outbreak

### Editorial note

The current Yellow fever (YF) outbreaks in Angola and Democratic Republic of Congo are one of the worst in Africa. Although the event has not been declared as a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC), the event poses a global health security threats. Travel associated cases of YF without any local transmission have been reported in China (11 cases), Democratic Republic of Congo (10 cases) and Kenya (2 cases).

Amongst the countries of the EMR, a large number of Lebanese diaspora live in Angola and there is a strong trade connection between Lebanon and Angola. In addition, a number of other countries in the Region, such as Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt and some of the Gulf countries have air connection with Angola and DRC and passengers from these countries use these as transit point for their onward journey to other countries. Sudan, however, remains the only country in the Region with repeated outbreaks from YF and a number of susceptible pockets remain in the country where the ecological conditions favour the local transmission of YF.

Considering the risk of importation of YF cases to the countries in the Region through returnee travelers, it is of paramount importance for the countries to remain vigilant and keep maintaining stepped up surveillance for early detection of any suspected case of importation. These countries also need to ensure that appropriate laboratory diagnostic capacities are maintained all around for diagnosis of YF using molecular diagnostic techniques.



### Number of cases and deaths reported from Angola and DRC from YF

Country	Cases	Deaths	No of people vaccinated
Angola	3867	369	20 M
Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)	2269	16	14 M

Yellow fever is endemic in parts of South America and Africa. Outbreaks may occur in 30-50 year cycles in these endemic settings.

A number of countries in the Region are infested with *Aedes* mosquitoes and while Sudan remains at risk of transmission of YF, it is not clear whether introduction of the YF virus in any of the countries with known vectors such as the *Aedes* mosquitoes will trigger any local transmission. Given these uncertainties, it is prudent that the countries irrespective of risk heighten its public health alert system for early detection and diagnosis of any imported case of YF from either Angola or DRC.

Sudan and possibly Djibouti and Somalia remain vulnerable to local transmission of YF in the EMR following introduction or re-introduction of the virus. These countries need to consider introduction of YF vaccines in their routine immunization programmes so that there are no unimmunized cohorts which can put these countries at risk of major outbreaks of YF. The current situation in Africa is a lesson for the countries of EMR and every efforts should be taken to prevent repetition of what has now happened in Angola and DRC.

## Update on outbreaks

in the Eastern Mediterranean Region

MERS-CoV in Saudi Arabia;; Cholera in Somalia.

### Current public health events of international concern [cumulative N° of cases (deaths), CFR %]

#### Avian Influenza : 2006-2016

Egypt (A/H5N1)	[350 (117), 33.4%]
Egypt (A/H9N2)	[3 (0) ]

#### MERS-CoV: 2012-2016

Saudi Arabia	[1414 (601), 42.5%]
Bahrain	[1 (1), 100%]

#### Cholera : 2016

Somalia	[8838 (433), 4.9%]
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#### Yellow fever: 2015-2016

Angola	[3867 (369), 9.5%]
DRC	[2269 (16), 0.7%]

#### Lassa fever : 2015-2016

Nigeria	[273(149), 54.5%]
Benin	[54(28), 51.8%]

#### Avian Influenza A (H7N9) : 2013-2016

China	[775 (307), 36%]
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#### Avian Influenza A (H5N6) : 2016

China	[4 (0) ]
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#### Wild poliovirus: 2014-2016

Pakistan	[371(0) ]
Afghanistan	[54(0)]

#### Zika Virus Infection: 2007-2016

60 countries and territories have reported transmission so far