

Ebola death toll climbs to 2,461 out of 4,985 cases: WHO

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The deadliest Ebola epidemic on record has now infected nearly 5,000 people in west Africa and killed around half of them, the World Health Organization said Tuesday.

The UN health agency said a total of 4,985 people had been infected across five west African countries, and that 2,461 had died.

In the three hardest-hit countries of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, nearly half of the cases were recorded in the past three weeks, WHO said.

Here are the latest WHO numbers:

In Guinea, where the outbreak began at the start of the year, Ebola had as of September 13 claimed 595 lives, or 64 percent of the 936 people infected.

Thirty-three percent of those cases surfaced in the 21 days leading up to September 13.

In Liberia, which has been hardest-hit by the outbreak, 1,296 people had died from Ebola as of September 9, representing 54 percent of the 2,407 people infected.

A full 57 percent, or 1,383, of those cases were recorded during the three weeks before September 9.

In Sierra Leone, 562 people had died from Ebola by September 13, accounting for 35 percent of the 1,620 people infected.

Forty percent of those cases were recorded during the preceding 21 days.

Nigeria had meanwhile, as of September 13, seen eight Ebola deaths since the virus first arrived in the country with a Liberian finance ministry official who died in Lagos on July 25.

That amounts to 38 percent of the 21 cases. Six of those cases have emerged in the past three weeks.

Senegal's only confirmed Ebola case—a Guinean student who crossed the border just before it was closed on August 21—has recovered, but the country will not be declared transmission free before 42 days have passed since the case was recorded.

Separate outbreak

The Democratic Republic of Congo has meanwhile been hit by a separate Ebola outbreak, which as of September 14 had killed 39 people, including eight health workers, out of 66 cases.

There are five known distinct strains of Ebola, and the outbreak raging in west Africa stems from the Zaire strain.

That strain caused the world's first known Ebola outbreak in DR Congo in 1976, until now the deadliest on record, with 280 deaths.

The current DR Congo [outbreak](#) meanwhile is believed to come from two separate strains, the Zaire and the Sudan strain, which first surfaced in Sudan, also in 1976.

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