

Record yellow fever vaccination campaign in DR Congo: WHO

September 3 2016

Almost eight million people in the Democratic Republic of Congo capital Kinshasa have been vaccinated against yellow fever in under two weeks, the World Health Organisation announced Friday.

"WHO commends the Government of the DRC for this significant achievement to roll out such a complex campaign in such a short period of time," said Dr Yokouide Allarangar, the world health body's representative in the country.

There is no specific treatment for yellow fever, a viral haemorrhagic disease transmitted in urban settings mainly by the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito, which also spreads Zika, dengue and chikungunya.

The disease can have a mortality rate of up to 50 percent, but is often not considered as big a threat as Ebola or Zika, since there has long been a very efficient vaccine against it.

However the percentage of people immunised against [yellow fever](#) remains low in many parts of Africa.

The massive vaccination campaign in Kinshasa used an "emergency vaccine"—one fifth of the full dose—"as a short-term emergency measure to reach as many people as possible given limited supplies of the vaccine," WHO said in a statement.

A total of 7.7 million people in the Congolese capital were vaccinated.

Normally such a campaign would take six months, it added.

The [campaign](#) was carried out by the country's health ministry, the WHO and more than 50 global partners, with vaccination centres at more than 8000 locations across the country—cities and remote border areas.

Over 1.5 million people were vaccinated outside the capital.

In neighbouring Angola a similar vaccination effort is underway, and around three million people have been vaccinated there since mid-August.

Yellow fever has been raging in Angola since December, especially in the capital Luanda, where there have been 3,552 suspected cases, 875 confirmed cases and 355 deaths.

The epidemic in both countries appears to have subsided, the WHO said, with no new cases reported for over a month.

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