

Yemen cholera outbreak shows signs of slowing: UN

June 27 2017



Scanning electron microscope image of *Vibrio cholerae*. Credit: Wikipedia

A cholera outbreak in Yemen, which has claimed 1,400 lives in two months, shows tentative signs of slowing as fatality rates drop by half, the World Health Organization said on Tuesday.

Nearly 219,000 suspected cases have been registered since April 27 and more than 1,400 people have died, the UN agency said.

The collapse of Yemen's infrastructure after more than two years of war between the Saudi-backed government and Shiite rebels who control the capital has made for a "perfect storm for cholera," the WHO's senior emergency adviser for Yemen, Ahmed Zouiten, said.

But [fatality rates](#) have dropped from 1.7 percent in early May to 0.6 percent now, he added.

He attributed the fall to emergency intervention by health workers.

Reported cases of cholera have also dropped in recent days with 39,000 over the past week compared with an average of 41,000 in previous weeks.

But Zouiten cautioned that the decline in numbers might be due to underreporting over the Muslim Eid al-Fitr holiday.

He said the total number of cases could still double before the outbreak ends.

The United Nations has warned 300,000 people could contract the highly contagious infection by September.

Hospitals have struggled to cope with the [outbreak](#). The war has left less than half of the impoverished country's medical facilities functional.

It has also pushed Yemen to the brink of famine, with some 17 million people—two-thirds of the population—uncertain of where their next meal will come from, according to the World Food Programme.

© 2017 AFP

Citation: Yemen cholera outbreak shows signs of slowing: UN (2017, June 27) retrieved 3 July 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2017-06-yemen-cholera-outbreak.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.