

Cholera 'stabilising' DR Congo capital: MSF

January 24 2018

A cholera outbreak in the DR Congo capital Kinshasa is stabilising and moving in a downward trend, the charity Medecins Sans Frontieres said on Wednesday.

The latest outbreak has affected 23 of the 26 provinces in the vast central African country since 2017, with "55,000 people falling ill... and around 1,190 deaths", according to MSF, also known as Doctors Without Borders.

"The situation (in Kinshasa) is stable with a [downward trend](#), but it does not exclude vigilance, because the epidemic is not yet eliminated," said Jean Liyolongo, MSF emergency coordinator.

Since the end of November, MSF has recorded a total of 826 [cholera](#) cases and 32 deaths.

"We reached the peak in week one (first week of January) when we exceeded 200 cases of cholera," before falling back to 150 cases in the third week in the capital, said Doctor Maria Mashako, an assistant medical coordinator.

The [cholera outbreak](#) followed torrential rain and widespread flooding in Kinshasa, Africa's third largest city, in early January.

Cholera is a highly [contagious bacterial infection](#), which can kill within hours if left untreated.

It thrives in conditions of [poor sanitation](#) and contaminated water or food, and spreads quickly in the teeming and ramshackle capital.

Many area of the city are slums with little or no access to sanitation or electricity.

MSF has said it was the worst cholera epidemic in the country since 1994.

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