

Mozambique cholera cases surge tenfold after cyclone

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

Cholera cases in Mozambique have increased tenfold to 28,000 since the start of February, UNICEF said Tuesday, as the country reels from the impact of cyclone Freddy.

"More than 28,000 cases of cholera have now been recorded in Mozambique," Guy Taylor, spokesman for the UN children's agency in Mozambique, told a media briefing in Geneva.

"This is ten times the figure reported at the start of February, and more than half of cases are among children," he said, adding that cases continue to increase.

The disease has so far killed 123 people in Mozambique since late last year, according to the World Health Organization (WHO).

The interruption of water supplies, hygiene services and sanitation in the wake of the cyclone has created a perfect storm.

According to UNICEF, Freddy destroyed more than 100 [health facilities](#) and 250 water points, cutting off [clean water](#) for around 300,000 people mostly in central Mozambique.

The storm claimed at least 86 lives in the southern African nation, displacing tens of thousands of people in the country of 33 million people.

Food supplies could also become an issue as more than 390,000 hectares of land were affected by the storm that lashed southern Africa's mainland a second time.

The cyclone first struck southern Africa in late February, causing limited damage before making its deadly return.

Before Freddy struck, cholera was already ravaging Mozambique's neighbour, landlocked Malawi, which battled its deadliest outbreak on record.

More than 1,730 people have died from cholera out of more than 57,600 cases recorded there, according to the WHO.

Mozambique has received more than 2.4 million doses of oral cholera vaccine.

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