

DR Congo health system at breaking point: WHO

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The health system in the crisis-wracked Democratic Republic of Congo is now at breaking point, the World Health Organization warned Friday.

In particular, the eastern DR Congo faces increasing violence and insecurity, which is severely impacting on [public health](#), the WHO said.

The vast central African nation's [health system](#) and available resources are under pressure due to concurrent disease outbreaks, including some such as [yellow fever](#), cholera and malaria which are increasing due to recent natural disasters, the UN health agency said.

The WHO says 7.4 million people in the DRC need health assistance.

"The entire health system is currently at a breaking point," it said.

Armed groups have plagued much of the eastern DRC for three decades, a legacy of regional wars that flared in the 1990s and 2000s.

Almost one million people have fled their homes in eastern DRC so far this year, according to the United Nations, citing armed attacks against civilians and growing instability.

Since December, around 25,000 cholera cases and more than 136,000 measles cases have been reported in eastern DRC, including 2,000 measles deaths so far this year.

The eastern province of North Kivu accounts for half of the cholera cases since June last year, due to the conflict and the resulting displacement.

The WHO needs \$174 million this year to provide urgent health assistance in the DRC, but just \$23 million has been raised.

The agency said it had stepped up emergency health assistance in the eastern provinces, including on disease early warning and surveillance.

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