

Dengue epidemic hits Angola for first time

8 May 2013

An epidemic of dengue fever has broken out in oil-rich Angola for the first time, the World Health Organisation (WHO) said Wednesday.

The outbreak hit the capital Luanda and surrounding areas, WHO country representative Hernando Agudelo Ospina told AFP.

"Since March, Angolan authorities have recorded 128 cases of dengue fever in Luanda province, the first time an epidemic of this disease has hit the country," he said.

"The government has taken the necessary measures to stem the epidemic."

Fumigations are underway and research has begun to identify the strain of the mosquito-borne virus, he said.

While the disease is endemic to Angola, there are no records of an epidemic in the country.

The WHO warned in January that the mosquito-borne disease had global "epidemic potential", saying it had registered a 30-fold increase in the last 50 years to two million cases annually, due to [climate change](#) and increased travel.

Dengue causes [high fever](#), headaches, itching and joint pains. At an advanced stage it can lead to haemorrhaging and death.

The illness affects between 50 and 100 million people in the tropics and subtropics each year, resulting in fever, muscle and joint ache.

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