

Recent Yellow Fever epidemics in Africa and South America

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Background: Despite the WHO's EYE strategy to eliminate yellow fever (YF) epidemics by 2026, outbreaks continue to surge across South America and Africa. This work aims to illustrate the recent dynamics of YF cases and outbreaks over the last ten years.

Methods: We conducted a retrospective analysis of YF cases in Africa (2015-2024) using data from WHO GHO, and YF cases and fatalities in the Americas (2015-2025) using data from WHO GHO and PAHO. Yearly data were harmonized across sources, accounting for non-available or incongruent values, and analyzed at country and continental levels. In South America, case fatality rates (CFRs) were calculated per country and year for complete datasets.

Results: In 2025, the Americas reported 301 YF cases, making it the third-highest year of the decade. On average, there were five times more cases per country than in the 2019–2024 period. Brazil (119), Colombia (118) and Peru (46) were the countries most affected. A CFR of 41% was calculated in 2025, compared to a range of 20–65% over the decade. In Africa, 2024 ranked fourth in terms of case numbers, with 447 cases, primarily in Ghana (150), Niger (96), and Sierra Leone (96). YF also re-emerged across both continents in countries that had reported very low activity over the past decade.

Conclusions: YF continues to circulate and may trigger new deadly outbreaks in parts of Africa and South America. Sustained vaccine coverage and surveillance in high-risk countries are essential to prevent a resurgence similar to the severe 2015–2018 epidemics.