



ASEAN BIODIASPORA VIRTUAL CENTER

DISEASE ALERT

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First alert: 21 January 2025 | **Marburg Virus Disease (MVD) in Tanzania**

Sub-Locations Affected

Kagera Region (Biharamulo and Muleba Districts)

Event Description

On January 20, 2025, Tanzania's president, alongside the World Health Organization (WHO) Director General, said that one sample from a remote part of northern Tanzania tested positive for Marburg disease, a highly infectious virus.



Source: <https://nyanzadaily.co.ke/tanzania-reports-marburg-virus-outbreak-as-who-issues-alert/>

Epidemiological Information

- On January 10, 2025, the WHO received initial reports of six Marburg Virus Disease (MVD) cases, with samples collected for laboratory testing.
- On January 11, 2025, nine cases including eight deaths remained under investigation. The case fatality ratio (CFR) stands at 89% in the two districts of Biharamulo and Muleba. Samples from two patients have been collected and sent to the National Public Health Laboratory for testing, with results awaiting official confirmation. Contacts, including healthcare professionals, have been identified and are being monitored in both districts. Symptoms observed in the affected individuals included headache, high fever, back pain, diarrhea, blood vomiting (haematemesis), general malaise, and external bleeding in the later stages of the illness.
- On January 14, 2025, the WHO released a risk assessment to inform of a suspected MVD outbreak in the Kagera region of the United Republic of Tanzania.

- However, shortly after Tanzanian health officials reported that three samples (collected from individuals under investigation) had returned negative results for MVD.
- On January 20, 2025, **the government of Tanzania confirmed an MVD outbreak** preceded by the WHO media briefing. There is limited information on how or if the number of affected/deaths changed since January 14, 2025, however, **health officials confirmed one case of MVD** while twenty-five other samples were negative.

Response Measure

- Efforts have been made in disease surveillance, testing, treatment, infection prevention and control, case management, and raising public awareness within communities to help prevent the further spread of the virus.
- National rapid response teams have been dispatched to actively address and treat the impacted regions.
- Tanzania's handling of the Marburg virus disease (MVD) in 2023 has led to the development of a more robust response system. The World Health Organization (WHO) emphasized the necessity of effective public health strategies to stop the disease's transmission. Collaborative efforts among the Tanzanian government, WHO, and both international and regional partners have proven vital, as recent outbreaks have been effectively managed through comprehensive measures that include surveillance, testing, infection control, contact tracing, clinical care, and public awareness campaigns.
- WHO has pledged US\$3 million from its Contingency Fund for Emergencies to support the response.
- No restrictions on international travel or trade are currently advised, reflecting confidence in Tanzania's response measures.

Sources:

1. BlueDot (Event Alert), issued on January 15, 2025.
2. BlueDot (Event Alert), issued on January 20, 2025.
3. All Africa. (2025, January 20). *Tanzania Confirms Outbreak of Marburg Virus Disease*. Retrieved January 21, 2025, from <https://indianexpress.com/article/news-today/sample-tanzania-tests-positive-marburg-disease-confirm-who-fears-9789388/>
4. Indian Express. (2025, January 20). *Sample from remote Tanzanian region tests positive for Marburg disease, confirming WHO fears*. Retrieved January 21, 2025, from <https://indianexpress.com/article/news-today/sample-tanzania-tests-positive-marburg-disease-confirm-who-fears-9789388/>