

Mali



The Republic of Mali is a landlocked nation in West Africa and home to the famed ancient city of Timbuktu.

In its golden age in the 1300s, Mali flourished as a regional trading Empire that drew scholars in mathematics, astronomy, literature, and art, who established Mali as an important center of learning and culture was. After the empire declined, Mali became a colony of France in the late 19th century and did not claim independence until 1960. Since independence, the country had transitioned from a one-party rule to a multiparty democracy, but in 2012 the elected government was toppled in a military coup that eventually led to the rise of Al-Qaeda-affiliated groups in northern parts of the country. International Medical Corps in Mali is focused on training so that local residents can become their own best First Responders. We maintain a presence in Bamako, Bougouni-Sikasso, Segou, Timbuktu, and Gourma-Rharous districts.



International Medical Corps has worked in Mali since 2013 following the coup d'état which caused mass displacement and the disruption of many public services including health care.

The violence and insecurity in the north aggravated already fragile health and nutritional conditions in the region and women and girls became increasingly exposed to acts of sexual violence. In response, International Medical Corps has been working in the most seriously affected communities in Timbuktu and Gourma-Rharous districts

with programs focused on health, nutrition, and protection. When Ebola spread to Mali in 2014, International Medical Corps worked to strengthen the country's health care system to quickly detect, contain, and respond to potential Ebola cases by training of health care workers, and other professionals in Ebola case management.

19 HEALTH FACILITIES
SUPPORTED



RESTORING ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE IN CONFLICT AREAS

Our health response in northern Mali promotes free, quality, curative, and preventive health services in areas severely affected by the recent war. Since 2013, International Medical Corps has helped local health care systems in Gourma-Rharous and Timbuktu districts regain self-reliance and credibility by rehabilitating and supplying community health centers, recruiting and training health workers, and

strengthening emergency response and disease surveillance. We have also enhanced water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) facilities in all health centers we support and provided equipment including water pumps and tanks, hand washing stations, and latrines.

PRIMARY AND SECONDARY HEALTH

Gender-based violence rates in Mali significantly increased during the recent conflict in the north. The harm caused by sexual violence goes beyond those directly affected, causing painful social disruptions within families and communities. Besides promoting clinical and psychosocial care in a confidential, competent, and compassionate manner, we focus on building community resilience and providing support to survivors through 19 health facilities in Gourma-Rharous and Timbuktu districts. We also address preventative steps. Our protection program is based on close partnership with community-based organizations, ensuring sustainability by training community volunteers and local health staff, and designing referral paths to other relevant services.

TRAINING OF HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS

International Medical Corps conducts training for health care personnel working in the facilities we support. We complement this training with on-the-job coaching and supervision to further strengthen the capacity of caregivers. In 2014 alone, we trained 251 health workers in emergency obstetric care, integrated management of childhood illnesses, clinical management and psychosocial support for GBV survivors, community management of acute malnutrition, and EVD response. Additionally, we trained 397 community health volunteers in health promotion, disease prevention and EVD response, screening and referral of malnourished children and pregnant and lactating women as well as in psychosocial care for GBV survivors and referral to the relevant services.



NUTRITION

International Medical Corps supports community health centers in the northern region of the country and their fight battling high rates of malnutrition by:

- Training health care providers in the treatment of malnutrition through a preventive and curative approach with focus on the community-based management of malnutrition
- Providing nutrition supplies and medication for adequate treatment of acute malnutrition in its different stages
- Strengthening referral system from community health centers to regional health facilities and hospitals
- Training community health volunteers in identifying malnourished children and pregnant and lactating women
- Promoting Care Groups, which use volunteers to encourage mothers to adopt practices known to improve the nutrition, and ultimately, the health of their children



POLIO ERADICATION IN NORTHERN MALI

Mali last had a polio case (vaccine-derived poliovirus type 2) in 2015 after a 19-month-old child traveled from Guinea to the capital Bamako, putting the country on high alert. International Medical Corps is helping strengthen surveillance systems for acute flaccid paralysis (AFP), the most common sign of acute polio used to diagnose cases, in the Gao Region in Northern Mali in Gao and Ansongo districts.

The program supports the regional Ministry of Health (MoH) in Gao to:

- i) Train MoH and private health workers working in the primary health care facilities on AFP surveillance to identify cases
- ii) Collect two stool samples within 24 hours from children exhibiting symptoms of the virus (maximum within two weeks of their appearance)
- iii) Send the samples to a laboratory for testing
- iv) Jointly document with the MoH all results, while referring suspect AFP cases for treatment if one tests positive

Through the training and improvement of surveillance systems, International Medical Corps will help ensure that no AFP case goes undetected in these two districts in Gao Region and move the country closer to a polio-free future.

EBOLA OUTBREAK RESPONSE IN MALI

In response to the Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) outbreak in West Africa, International Medical Corps provided classroom instruction and simulation training to medical and non-medical personnel from the public and private health systems, Malian Ministry of Health, partner agencies, and others. By the end of 2015, we trained over 2,200 medical and non-medical professionals from 62 public and 30 private health care facilities across the country. Most of the trainings were held at a center we built in the capital, Bamako, which was handed over the National Center for Disease Control in early 2016. The program also covered the training of trainers and included three rapid response teams in Bamako, Segou, and Sikasso regions that were equipped to transport any suspected Ebola patients and support local health facilities in case definition and infection prevention control.

Over the next five years, International Medical Corps, with support from the CDC as part of its Global Health Security Agenda, will collaborate with the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Rural Development to strengthen Mali's disease surveillance, information, and reporting systems. In the first year, International Medical Corps and its partners will work in Ségou and Sikasso regions to bolster baseline and event-based surveillance systems; improve coordination and capacity to respond and mitigate outbreaks; and improve reporting to the WHO and other organizations in emergencies.



Since its inception over 30 years ago, International Medical Corps' mission has been consistent: relieve the suffering of those impacted by war, natural disaster and disease, by delivering vital health care services that focus on training. This approach of helping people help themselves is critical to returning devastated populations to self-reliance.

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