

# Somalia

**Prolonged armed conflict and violence, large-scale population displacement, outbreaks of disease and intense natural disasters, including droughts, floods and**

**cyclones, remain key drivers of humanitarian needs in Somalia.**

International Medical Corps has worked in Somalia for 30 years, providing services that build local capacity and offer emergency relief in health, nutrition, protection, and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) for vulnerable and marginalized populations.



## In Somalia, an estimated 2.6 million people are internally displaced due to conflict and climate-related conditions.

As a result of droughts and floods, vulnerable communities are predisposed to food crises and outbreaks of disease, such as acute watery diarrhea, cholera and acute malnutrition. Of the 5.9 million people in need of humanitarian assistance, more than 2.7 million require lifesaving essential healthcare and nutrition services. Over several decades, International Medical Corps has leveraged robust working relationships with local communities and authorities to offer relief to highly vulnerable populations across Somalia.



## HEALTHCARE

In Somalia's conflict-affected areas, access to basic healthcare remains a challenge. Through 31 health facilities, International Medical Corps provides primary and secondary healthcare services to more than 810,000 beneficiaries in four Somali regions: Banadir, Bay, Middle Shabelle and Mudug. Our five mobile teams across Somalia work to ensure that we meet the health needs of those in hard-to-reach areas.

International Medical Corps offers the following healthcare services in Somalia:

- ▶ outpatient and inpatient consultations for common morbidities;
- ▶ routine immunization for children under five, and pregnant women;
- ▶ antenatal and postnatal care, including nutrition screening and referral for pregnant and lactating women;
- ▶ promotion of birth spacing and provision of modern family-planning methods;

- ▶ clinical management of rape, including psychosocial support for survivors;
- ▶ comprehensive and primary emergency obstetric and neonatal care;
- ▶ health education and promotion in communities and health facilities;
- ▶ response to emergency outbreaks, including acute watery diarrhea, measles, population displacements and COVID-19, and referral services;
- ▶ screening and clinical case management of COVID-19 patients; and
- ▶ community awareness and key messaging on COVID-19.

International Medical Corps implements innovative interventions to reduce Somalia's morbidity and mortality rates, increase community engagement and improve health monitoring and evaluation. Drawing on our vast experience in providing lifesaving healthcare services in the country, we consistently share lessons learned and best practices with partners and key stakeholders.



## WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE (WASH)

Poor sanitation and hygiene practices and a lack of access to safe water can lead to outbreaks of disease. International Medical Corps offers WASH services to more than 120,000 beneficiaries in four regions: Banadir, Bay, Middle Shabelle and Mudug. We conduct hygiene promotion activities, household visits and mass awareness-raising sessions to educate local communities about their role in preventing waterborne and hygiene-related diseases. We inform each community about critical handwashing practices, hygienic latrine usage, safe water chains and solid waste disposal. In addition, we distribute hygiene kits for internally displaced populations and host communities to ensure that hygiene and health standards are maintained.

International Medical Corps also strives to ensure that local communities can access safe and clean water and improved sanitation facilities. We introduced a community-led sanitation approach in six riverine villages in Jowhar to eradicate open defecation. We routinely construct ventilated pit latrines to serve internally displaced persons (IDPs). We rehabilitate shallow wells and pipeline connections in IDP camps and health facilities to provide safe drinking water to communities. Finally, we advocate for the formation of hygiene clubs in schools and local WASH committees, and recruit solid-waste management volunteers who can serve as advocates for change in their communities. With the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic, WASH interventions have become especially important. This is why we work to raise awareness on the importance of handwashing and provide vulnerable communities with water and soap to enable handwashing.

## NUTRITION

International Medical Corps implements nutrition programs in three regions in south central Somalia: Bay, Galmudug and Middle Shabelle. We work toward a common goal of reducing malnutrition in children under five and in pregnant and lactating women. Besides providing direct nutrition services, we focus on building capacity on nutrition, changing social behavior and conducting advocacy.

Nutrition services provided by International Medical Corps in Somalia include:

- ▶ nutrition screening and growth monitoring for children under five;
- ▶ inpatient and outpatient management of severe and moderate acute malnutrition, integrated with health, WASH and protection services;
- ▶ maternal, infant and young-child nutrition counseling;
- ▶ health and nutrition education and promotion at facility and community levels;
- ▶ training on COVID-19 safety and prevention guidelines; and
- ▶ screening and clinical case management of COVID-19 cases.



## PROTECTION

International Medical Corps' protection programs aim to help communities improve mental and psychosocial wellbeing and rebuild social structures as part of recovery from disaster.

Our psychosocial programming provides accessible, non-stigmatizing assistance through focused individual interventions, as well as community-based approaches delivered at women's and girls' safe spaces (WGSS). Our WGSS in Jowhar, Baidoa and Mogadishu districts provide women and girls from displaced families and other vulnerable communities with the coping mechanisms and skills they need to rebuild self-sufficiency as they work toward recovering from emotionally distressing experiences. Our approach focuses on building strong linkages between community-based psychosocial support and comprehensive mental health case management at health facilities.

Our gender-based violence (GBV) program makes comprehensive clinical and non-clinical case management available to survivors at our health facilities in Baidoa, Jowhar and Mogadishu. We provide survivors of rape, intimate partner violence, forced marriage, female genital mutilation and other forms of physical violence with access to safe, confidential management of injuries, along with psychosocial support and follow-up care.

In Galkacyo, we also mitigate the risks of GBV by reducing the distance to water sources and building gender-segregated latrines.

International Medical Corps is working with communities in Somalia to address social stigma and change attitudes toward GBV and psychosocial support through community-outreach protection teams. These teams help raise awareness of GBV risk factors and access to GBV services while helping communities identify and adopt community protection strategies.



## CAPACITY BUILDING

Within Somalia, International Medical Corps has extensive experience providing training. We build local health professionals' capacity in clinical and non-clinical areas, enabling them to provide more specialized services. We are committed to supporting the Somalia Ministry of Health (MoH) through training and on-the-job mentoring of MoH staff, conducted in line with the Somali national curriculum and internationally accredited guidelines, including recommendations from the World Health Organization (WHO).

Topics of our training include:

- ▶ case management;
- ▶ surgery;
- ▶ infection prevention and control (IPC);

- ▶ community health programming;
- ▶ integrated management of acute malnutrition (IMAM);
- ▶ mental health and psychosocial support services (MHPSS);
- ▶ GBV prevention and response; and
- ▶ community-led total sanitation (CLTS).

By training and working with community organizations—such as health center committees, WASH committees and mother-to-mother support groups—International Medical Corps strengthens local capacity to respond to emergency public health needs across Somalia. We also build female health workers' capacity to provide preventative education and follow up with households on existing health issues. Our goal is to ensure that local communities have the capacity to take care of basic health issues on their own.



[www.InternationalMedicalCorps.org](http://www.InternationalMedicalCorps.org)

A pre-eminent first responder since 1984, International Medical Corps delivers emergency medical and related services to those affected by conflict, disaster and disease, no matter where they are, no matter what the conditions. We also train people in their communities, providing them with the skills they need to recover, chart their own path to self-reliance and become effective first responders themselves.

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