

# South Sudan



**International Medical Corps began working in the conflict-ridden region of South Sudan in 1994, years before a 2011 national referendum led to the southern-most states of Sudan becoming an independent country.**

Today, amid ongoing violence, we work with the government of South Sudan to strengthen local healthcare capacity in five of the country's 10 states and deliver health services to nearly 1.3 million South Sudanese. Through 27 health facilities in urban and rural areas, International Medical Corps provides emergency preparedness, intervention and response, and basic healthcare and integrated services—from preventative care to emergency surgery. We also run programs to provide nutrition services, battle gender-based violence and support mental health.

Following decades of war, in 2011 South Sudan became independent. It remains the youngest country in the world.

Armed conflict broke out again in December 2013, claiming tens of thousands of lives before a fragile peace agreement took hold in the summer of 2015. In February 2020, a coalition government was created to end the deadly conflict and address South Sudan's immense poverty, massive displacement, chronic food and nutrition insecurity, and ongoing human rights violations.

Even so, communities in 2020 were hit hard by continuing conflict, a second consecutive year of major flooding and the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2021, people's physical and mental wellbeing, living standards and coping mechanisms are expected to deteriorate further. Today, 8.3 million South Sudanese are in dire need of support, including 1.6 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) and about 2.2 million refugees. Some 6 million people—half of the population—remain severely food-insecure, increasing their vulnerability to disease.

## HEALTH & DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT

International Medical Corps provides basic primary healthcare across Central Equatoria, Western Bahr el Ghazal, Jonglei and Upper Nile states. In displacement camps in Juba, Wau and Malakal, and in 20 static health facilities in Upper Nile and Jonglei States, International Medical Corps runs comprehensive health facilities that offer higher-level care, including surgery. Our primary health services in South Sudan include:

- ▶ Outpatient consultations for common communicable and noncommunicable diseases
- ▶ Maternal and child health, including antenatal and postnatal care, family planning, immunization and emergency obstetric care
- ▶ Specialized services for high-risk pregnancies and mental health needs
- ▶ Sexual and reproductive health services, including disease prevention and treatment, clinical management of rape and integrated case management for HIV/AIDS
- ▶ Infection prevention and control (IPC)
- ▶ Bed-net distribution and malaria treatment
- ▶ Community-based management of acute malnutrition
- ▶ Training and support for hospitals to increase healthcare capacity

## COVID-19 PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

International Medical Corps is at the forefront of COVID-19 prevention and response in the country, providing medical expertise, equipment, training, triage, surveillance, risk communication and treatment services—including health, nutrition and psychosocial services—in camps and urban/rural settings. International Medical Corps co-leads the COVID-19 Case Management, IPC, and Safe and Dignified Burial Working Group. With the Ministry of Health and the WHO, International Medical Corps co-manages three COVID-19 supportive-care facilities in the country—the Juba Infectious Disease Unit, and the Isolation Units at Malakal Teaching Hospital and Wau Al Muktah Primary Healthcare Center—that provide isolation and supportive care to moderate, severe and critical patients. We provide medical, nutritional and psychosocial support to suspected and confirmed COVID-19 patients in Juba, Malakal and Wau,

## WHERE WE WORK



## MATERNAL & CHILD HEALTH

South Sudan has one of the highest maternal mortality rates in the world. One in every 50 live births results in the death of the mother; with the country's high fertility rate, this means that each mother has a one-in-seven chance of dying in childbirth in her lifetime. One-quarter of South Sudanese children die from common, often preventable, childhood illnesses before they reach their fifth birthday. In an effort to improve the health of women and children, International Medical Corps has constructed facilities to support the following services:

- ▶ Antenatal and postnatal care
- ▶ Assisted deliveries
- ▶ Family planning (including proper birth spacing)
- ▶ Emergency obstetric care
- ▶ Prevention of mother-to-child transmission
- ▶ Immunization
- ▶ Midwifery schools to train and certify midwives and nurses for safer childbirth

and have IPC processes in place that enable our supported health facilities to continue lifesaving operations while ensuring the safety of staff, partners and beneficiaries.

As part of its COVID-19 response in South Sudan, International Medical Corps has:

- ▶ provided home-based and facility-based care to patients with suspected and confirmed COVID-19 cases;
- ▶ established triaging systems at the Juba, Malakal and Wau displacement camps to pre-sort patients symptomatically and reduce transmission in the wards;
- ▶ provided healthcare staff with on-the-job training and supportive supervision on COVID-19 case management, prevention and response;
- ▶ prepositioned COVID-19 medical commodities, including personal protective equipment (PPE), and trained healthcare workers and staff on their use; and
- ▶ provided COVID-19 preventive messages to communities, as well as information on how to recognize symptoms and when/where to seek medical assistance.

## NUTRITION

According to the December 2020 Acute Food Security and Acute Malnutrition Analysis for South Sudan, the acutely food-insecure population is expected to reach more than 6.35 million people, or 52.6% of the population. As agro-pastoralists, the population experiences a hunger gap during the dry season, which especially affects women and children. Through one stabilization center in Juba, and 17 outpatient therapeutic programs (OTPs) and targeted supplementary feeding program (TSFP) centers in Nyal and Malakal, International Medical Corps uses a community-based management of acute malnutrition model, along with a maternal, infant and young-child feeding approach, as curative and preventive measures, respectively. These approaches include only minimal inpatient care for severely malnourished children with complications (decreasing their exposure to other diseases) and outpatient care for severely malnourished children without complications (to decrease their recovery time).

From January 2020 to February 2021, we reached more than 69,500 malnourished children and almost 31,800 pregnant and lactating women with nutrition services. We also helped more than 400 mother support groups, which implement and advocate for nutrition and dietary behavior change at the community level. Finally, we worked with the Ministry of Health and community health workers to build capacity on nutrition education, disease prevention and health-systems strengthening.



## BUILDING SUSTAINABLE LOCAL HEALTH CAPACITY

South Sudan has fewer than 200 doctors to serve its population of more than 12 million. To increase access to care, International Medical Corps builds the capacity of South Sudan's health system through training programs that target health professionals and key community members.

These include:

- ▶ midwifery training for students at the National Training Institute at Kajo Keji, the National Midwifery School in Wau and the Juba College of Nursing and Midwifery;
- ▶ computer and data-collection training for staff working on health management information systems;
- ▶ training for community health management committees;
- ▶ refresher training for laboratory and clinical health professionals; and
- ▶ advanced training for operating-theater staff and radiological services.



**In 2011, when South Sudan declared independence, there were just eight midwives registered in the healthcare system. Since 2012, International Medical Corps' three training schools have graduated 159 nurses and 432 midwives.**



## MENTAL HEALTH AND PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT (MHPSS)

Depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), anxiety disorders and substance abuse are growing issues among conflict-affected populations in South Sudan. Though the health system as a whole in the county is inadequate, mental health services remain practically non-existent—there are only two trained practicing psychiatrists and one neuropsychiatrist in the entire country.

As a key provider of MHPSS services in South Sudan, International Medical Corps delivers pharmacological and psychosocial support services to those in need in three conflict-affected states: Upper Nile, Western Bahr el Ghazal and Central Equatoria. We co-chair the MHPSS Technical Working Group, contribute to national policy development and work to build the capacity of various key health actors to accommodate the growing demand for mental health services in the country.

## GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE (GBV)

Violence against women and girls is an endemic problem in South Sudan, exacerbated by ongoing conflict and chronic displacement. International Medical Corps puts GBV prevention and response at the core of its lifesaving interventions. Our programs are tailored to support and empower women and girls who are most affected by abuse and violence, and who face particular risks during and after armed conflict and natural disaster.

International Medical Corps' priority is to strengthen core services to survivors of GBV and other vulnerable women and girls in Western Bahr el Ghazal, Upper Nile, Unity and Jonglei. Our services include quality case management using a survivor-centered approach, along with counseling and psychosocial support to enhance healing and recovery. International Medical Corps works to ensure that survivors' holistic needs are met by providing multi-sectoral service, referring to health centers for clinical management of rape and to legal justice services based on the needs and wishes of survivors.

In addition, we run women- and girl-friendly spaces in Wau and Malakal displacement camps, and in communities in Nyal, Aburoc, Malakal Town and greater Wau. In these spaces, women and girls can socialize, make handicrafts and receive psychosocial support to empower them. We also offer economic empowerment and

livelihood activities to vulnerable women, helping them to start businesses. We implement GBV-prevention activities through gender discussions, the Engaging Men in Accountable Practices (EMAP) program and the Start, Awareness, Support and Action (SASA) mobilization approach. Further, we empower members of the wider community to promote women's equality, combating beliefs and practices that perpetuate different forms of GBV by conducting community sensitizations, house-to-house outreach and education sessions on how to identify and support survivors of GBV.

### TOTAL BENEFICIARIES REACHED WITH GBV INTERVENTIONS



**626,864** Females

**736,980** Males



## PARTNERSHIPS

International Medical Corps works in close collaboration with relevant national and international NGOs, community groups, donor agencies and host-country governments, cultivating strong relationships with them to maximize the impact of our programs. We also help strengthen local partner organizations to ensure the sustainability of interventions. International Medical Corps has been a lead or co-lead agency in various technical working groups in the country and has proven its ability to work strategically and in collaboration with diverse stakeholders.



[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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