

Afghanistan



International Medical Corps was established in 1984 by volunteer doctors and nurses to address the critical need for medical care in war-torn Afghanistan during the Soviet occupation.

We are still there, delivering services that improve the health, livelihood and social standing of nearly

3.5 million people. International Medical Corps operates a broad range of assistance programs for Afghanistan's most vulnerable groups, including the internally displaced, refugees, returnees, host communities, women and children. Our main activities in Afghanistan include providing primary healthcare, training, health education, emergency response, mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) and protection services, community empowerment, and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) services.

Decades of uninterrupted civil war and a lack of education and employment opportunities for women have taken their toll on Afghanistan's population and health infrastructure.

Continued armed conflict makes security tenuous for civilians, who often find it difficult to obtain basic services when much of the country is inaccessible due to rugged terrain, poor infrastructure and unstable security conditions. Despite these challenges, International Medical Corps continues to support Afghanistan's healthcare needs.

Current programs across Afghanistan include primary healthcare, WASH, MHPSS, protection and treatment services, as well as emergency response, which includes non-food items, tents, winterization kits, steps to reduce risks from disasters, and COVID-19 pandemic prevention and treatment services.



35 HEALTH FACILITIES

WHERE WE WORK

- A BAGHLAN**
- B BALKH**
- C BAMYAN**
- D DIKUNDI**
- E FARYAB**
- F JAWZJAN**
- G KABUL**
- H KUNAR**
- I KUNDUZ**
- J LAGHMAN**
- K NANGARHAR**
- L NURISTAN**
- M PAKTIKA**
- N SAMANGAN**
- O SAR-E-PUL**



In 2021, International Medical Corps programs in Afghanistan improved the health of nearly 63,000 children under 5.





INTEGRATED HEALTH CARE AND NUTRITION

International Medical Corps uses mobile health units, fixed health centers and first-aid trauma posts (FATPs) to provide primary and community healthcare and lifesaving medical services in Kabul, Kunar, Nuristan and Paktika provinces. In 2021, we provided 195,319 health consultations, including emergency trauma-care services to 20,247 people affected by conflict. In addition, we offered reproductive health services—including antenatal care, delivery assistance, postnatal care and family planning—to 11,990 women.

International Medical Corps also provided lifesaving pharmaceuticals and medical supplies to Nangahar Regional Hospital for one month, enabling us to conduct emergency lifesaving trauma care and obstetrical services for more than 115,000 Afghans.

International Medical Corps supports three hospitals and two comprehensive health centers in Nuristan Province, providing lifesaving medicines and medical supplies used in 1,294 major and minor surgeries during 2021.

PROTECTION SERVICES

International Medical Corps works to discourage attitudes and behavior that contribute to protection incidents in Afghanistan. We also use targeted social- and behavior-change activities, such as community dialogues and awareness sessions about protection and other issues—including mother and child health, vaccination and human rights—to achieve this goal and reduce the stigma of survivors.

The current government program to address the health sector's response to protection issues serves nine provinces—Baglan, Balkh, Bamyán, Dikundi, Fryab, Jawzjan, Kabul, Kunduz and Samangan. It ensures that both medical and psychosocial support are available to survivors through MHPSS centers and community-based support mechanisms. In partnership with the Ministry of Public Health, we have established a capacity-building plan to continue key protection activities in targeted communities. In 2021, we trained 382 health workers and other key actors on protection-related issues, and provided case-management and MHPSS services to 160,978 people, including psychosocial support and case management for 9,264 survivors and other vulnerable people.

Our 30 mobile teams operate in six provinces. Each team includes one or two psychosocial counselors, depending on their caseload, and one MHPSS counselor, a midwife and two health educators (one male and one female). Mobile teams enable us to reach remote areas where many returnees and IDPs are scattered. The teams engage in prevention and response work in these communities, conducting awareness-raising activities and providing services to men, women and girls.

Our health educators work to increase general knowledge of protection issues and the services available to address them. We engage with influential groups—including elders, school principals and religious leaders—to organize community dialogues. The teams also work closely with key actors, including local health facility staff, community focal points and MHPSS centers in each province to protect anonymity and arrange discrete referrals. We identify one

male and one female in each community who become focal points and facilitate referrals for our services.

Because we recognize case management as a important component of our response to protection, our mobile teams provide non-medical case management to survivors, following Inter-Agency Steering Committee guidelines.

MENTAL HEALTH AND PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT (MHPSS)

We provide MHPSS services to help individuals and communities rebuild social structures after an emergency or critical event. We train MHPSS counselors to detect mental health needs and provide support as part of an integrated mobile team. Training includes mental health case management, psychological first aid, and interpersonal therapy (IPT). Counselors offer both group and individual counseling to those exposed to distressing life experiences, such as armed conflict, natural disaster and displacement. They refer people with severe mental health conditions to appropriate health facilities.





WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE (WASH)

International Medical Corps provides WASH services to internally displaced persons (IDPs), returnees, host communities and refugees crossing from Pakistan into the Torkham, Achin and Batikot, Momandara Khogiani districts of Nangarhar province, and Sarkanai, Shegal and Noorgul districts of Kunar province. In 2021, we provided more than 42,580 people with hygiene-awareness information, built or restored 14 water supply networks and trained 147 WASH committee members on infection prevention and control (IPC) measures.

In 2021, we integrated COVID-19 awareness into our programming, reaching 348,124 people with awareness messaging and training eight vaccinators to provide COVID-19 vaccination in four health facilities of Kunar province. In addition, International Medical Corps provided 1,600 families with hygiene kits. Through our telehealth hotline at the 50-bed COVID-19 hospital in Paktika province, we provided COVID-related information to 2,838 people. Hotline staff members work in eight-hour shifts to provide around-the-clock service to the community.



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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