



*An International Medical Corps doctor examines a newly arrived infant in Kufra city at the southern region of Libya.*

In April 2023, a civil war erupted across Sudan, displacing more than 6 million people internally and causing more than 2 million more to flee into neighboring countries. The influx of Sudanese refugees fleeing to Libya has prompted warnings of an impending humanitarian disaster there, if aid is not urgently provided.<sup>1</sup>

## International Medical Corps Response

On June 2, International Medical Corps obtained official approval from the International Cooperation Office and the Emergency Committee of the Ministry of Health (MoH) to collaborate closely with its initiatives in Kufra, responding to the surge there in Sudanese refugees.

On June 3, we deployed a rapid response team, consisting of a medical doctor, nurse and field site officer, to Kufra city.

We have already prepositioned medical commodities for transportation to Kufra, and have transported the IT equipment and medical supplies necessary for health consultations in that location.

Based on our initial geographic survey, International Medical Corps has identified five private sites, known as “Mazraa,” that serve as camp-like environments for Sudanese refugees. These locations, which accommodate both families and individual males, are hosting approximately 15,000 people across all sites and receiving a daily influx of 250 to 300 new arrivals. Including those outside these sites, the estimated total refugee population is 45,000 people.

A survey of one of the locations showed the population to be is about 800 families, with an average of five members per family. Approximately 10% were over 50, and there were around 400 children. Food is not available unless purchased from local community members. There are no sanitation facilities, and no clean drinking water. Many cases of diarrhea have been reported, particularly among children and infants, which are likely related to contaminated water.

<sup>1</sup> <https://reliefweb.int/report/libya/profile-sudanese-migrants-libya-march-2024>

### FAST FACTS

- In April 2023, clashes erupted in multiple cities across Sudan, displacing more than 6 million people internally and leading more than 2 million more to cross into neighboring countries.
- The estimated total number of Sudanese refugees in Kufra is 45,000.
- The influx of Sudanese refugees fleeing to Libya has prompted warnings of an impending humanitarian disaster if aid is not urgently provided.
- Needs for health and mental health services, food, shelter, household goods for the homeless, and logistical support are urgently required.

### OUR FOOTPRINT

- International Medical Corps was the first international humanitarian organization in Libya when conflict began in 2011, and has since been providing critical health, nutrition, protection, mental health, and psychosocial support (MHPSS), and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) services.

### OUR RESPONSE

- Our rapid-response team has just completed a needs assessment in five sites.
- We deployed a rapid response team comprising a medical doctor, nurse and field site officer, to Kufra city.

According to the MoH Emergency Committee, the number of communicable diseases among refugees has risen significantly, with more than 780 confirmed cases of hepatitis B, 112 cases of HIV and 28 cases of tuberculosis. The number of refugees fleeing Sudan to Libya is expected to escalate dramatically due to the ongoing conflict in Sudan and the comparatively better economic situation in Libya.

Based on the analysis for the rapid need assessment conducted, International Medical Corps has determined that there are four major routes used by Sudanese refugees: directly from Sudan to Kufra (the most popular route), through Chad to Marzuq, through Chad to Qatrun, and (the least-used route) through Egypt to Tobruk.

Migrants in Kufra are settling in two different types of settings: detention centers and community-based locations. The detention centers are under the management of the Ministry of Interior. In the community, new arrivals reside in Mazraa areas, which consist of expansive open spaces ranging from 3,000 to 5,000 square meters, partitioned with wood and cloth to create separate rooms for families and individuals. Spread across Kufra city, these locations accommodate approximately 15,000 to 20,000 migrants.

The urgent needs that have been observed involve health, mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), protection, and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH).

### **Health**

1. These locations are not providing any shape of health services other than irregular visits from the MoH rapid response team, and lack all the essential healthcare services, particularly emergency, reproductive health and child health services.
2. Only about 50–60% of the health facilities in Kufra are functioning, with only limited functionality in such specialties as reproductive health and child health services. There are severe shortages in medical commodities.
3. Conditions requiring treatment include chronic disease, malnutrition, infectious diseases, anemia and dermatological diseases. There is a need for antenatal care as well.

### **MHPSS**

1. Most of the population has showed symptoms of post traumatic stress disorder, due to the ongoing conflict.
2. The harsh living conditions, lack of basic services and uncertain future can cause significant psychosocial distress, manifesting in feelings of hopelessness, helplessness and despair.
3. Children in particular are vulnerable to developmental and behavioral issues due to disrupted education, lack of routine and exposure to traumatic events. Subsequently, they may exhibit signs of anxiety, depression and regressive behaviors.

### **Protection**

1. Overcrowding raises the risk of violence, including gender-based violence (GBV).
2. There is a need to establish safe spaces for women and girls, which would help provide access to GBV prevention and response services, including psychosocial support, medical care and legal assistance.

### **WASH**

1. Access to clean and safe drinking water is needed to prevent waterborne diseases.
2. Adequate sanitation facilities, including latrines and bathing areas, are needed to maintain hygiene and reduce the spread of illness.
3. Hygiene kits, including soap, menstrual hygiene products and other essentials, are needed.

### **Shelter**

1. There is an immediate need for safe, secure and adequate shelter to protect refugees from the elements and ensure privacy and dignity.