



International Medical Corps staff provides medical consultations and dispenses medications to Sudanese mothers and children in Kufra, Libya.

The conflict that began in Sudan in mid-April 2023 has forced approximately 10 million people from their homes, with more than 2 million crossing into neighboring countries. In Libya, many of these displaced Sudanese have settled in Kufra, a sparsely populated desert region. This sudden influx of people has triggered a serious humanitarian crisis.¹

International Medical Corps Response

International Medical Corps quickly deployed a rapid response team—including a medical doctor, a nurse and a field site officer—to Kufra the day after receiving formal authorization from the International Cooperation Office and the Emergency Committee of the Ministry of Health (MoH) to initiate joint projects in the area. We have continued to engage with thematic working groups for health, nutrition, protection, access, and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), maintaining close coordination with health authorities and the Emergency Health Committee to share updates and intervention plans.

We have successfully identified 13 locations for health consultations, and are operating at 12 of them. We serve four locations—Alazoumi, Bu Gazala, Eammi and Ekrik—on a fixed weekly schedule, and serve the remaining locations on a rotational basis, to ensure comprehensive coverage. Despite receiving an average of approximately 800 new arrivals daily, the number of new arrivals varies significantly between locations, with some experiencing overcrowding due to the availability of free accommodation.

The population also suffers from chronic conditions such as diabetes, hypertension, gastritis and various infections, including respiratory and urinary-tract infections. Immediate needs include treatment for anemia, skin disorders and antenatal care. In response to the high volume of health consultations, we have deployed an additional medical doctor to address urgent health needs. In coordination with MoH, our doctor is stationed at Alshaheed Atia Hospital, which manages all Sudanese referrals requiring secondary health services.

FAST FACTS

- Since April 2023, conflict has spread across Sudan, forcing more than 10 million people to flee their homes. Of these, more than 2 million have crossed into neighboring countries.
- The situation in Kufra, Libya, is increasingly dire, with a significant rise in the number of displaced Sudanese. This surge has raised alarms about a potential humanitarian crisis unless prompt assistance is mobilized.
- Immediate needs include health and mental health services, food, shelter, essential household items for the displaced and logistical support.

OUR FOOTPRINT

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

OUR RESPONSE

- Our rapid-response team has identified 13 sites hosting displaced Sudanese communities and conducted field visits to 12 of these locations.
- We dispatched pharmaceutical supplies and medical consumables to Kufra to address shortages and meet critical health needs.

¹ <https://reliefweb.int/attachments/84369fdc-07bf-4aac-9213-131a23d430d4/UNHCR%20Update%20-%20June%202024%20EN.pdf>



An International Medical Corps doctor treats a critically ill patient in Alshaheed Atia Hospital, located in Kufra.

Our medical team has been diligently providing emergency and primary healthcare consultations to the Sudanese population, conducting up to 100 consultations daily. Since our deployment, we have completed 1,970 consultations through both fixed points and field operations. Additionally, we have referred 49 cases to secondary health services for further care. In addition to consultations, our team is distributing essential medications, with a particular focus on patients with chronic conditions such as diabetes and hypertension. Our team is also preparing to donate medical supplies to Al-Kaseh Hospital to address the severe shortage and high demand.

Watery diarrhea is a rising concern, with our team addressing about five cases daily, especially children and infants, from different sites. Our health team has alerted the Kufra Health District Office about this. According to the latest report from Al Kufra Environmental Sanitation Office, the accumulation of garbage and human waste is creating an environment enabling infections to spread quickly. The need to improve WASH services is urgent.

Mental health and psychological distress are also urgent needs that new arrivals in Kufra face. Displaced people, particularly women and children, suffer from high levels of psychological distress and are often malnourished, traumatized and wounded. Furthermore, the prevalence of common mental, neurological and substance-use conditions among the conflict-affected populations is estimated to be 22%.² This distress stems from traumatic experiences during their search for safety, and the ongoing conflict. Access to information on protection and gender-based violence (GBV) is limited and restricted. Current data and observations suggest an increasing risk of protection issues for women and girls from Sudan, placing them in a particularly vulnerable position and exposing them to a risk of harm and abuse. There is a dire need to enhance protection measures and support for GBV.

Health

1. Due to overcrowded living conditions and inadequate nutrition, the health of migrants is deteriorating.
2. Many health facilities in Kufra are only partially operational, with especially limited capacity for reproductive- and child-health services. Severe shortages of medical supplies are also a major issue.
3. There is a pressing need for antenatal care and treatments for chronic diseases, malnutrition, infections, anemia and skin issues

Mental Health and Psychosocial Support

1. The ongoing conflict has caused symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder in most of the population. Poor living conditions and lack of basic services frequently result in severe psychological distress, characterized by hopelessness and despair.
2. Disrupted education, lack of routine and exposure to traumatic events make children highly vulnerable to developmental and behavioral issues. This often results in signs of anxiety, depression and regressive behaviors.

Protection

1. Increasing numbers of women and girls arriving from Sudan, some of whom have gone through the long journey experiencing and being exposed to violence and abuse, and now living in inadequate, overcrowded shelters, face the risk of violence, specifically GBV and sexual exploitation and abuse.
2. Women report that, due to lack of regular income and inability to work, there is a high need for essential menstrual hygiene and other relief items.
3. Safe access to lifesaving GBV specialized services to Sudanese women and girls—including case management, psychosocial support, emotional support and reproductive health services—are almost non-existent.

WASH

1. To prevent waterborne diseases, access to clean and safe drinking water is essential.
2. Adequate sanitation facilities, including latrines and bathing areas, are essential for hygiene and illness prevention.
3. Hygiene kits—including soap, menstrual hygiene products and other essentials—are necessary.

² <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/mental-health-in-emergencies>

Shelter

1. Immediate needs for displaced communities include safe, secure and adequate shelters to protect refugees from the elements and to uphold privacy and dignity.
2. Essential items urgently required include tents, blankets, sleeping mats and mosquito nets to shield newly arrived migrants from severe weather and intense sunlight. Additionally, childcare necessities such as diapers, baby bottles and baby wipes are critically needed.