



An International Medical Corps mobile health team provides health consultations and vital sign examinations at one of the informal Sudanese settlements in Kufra.

Since mid-April 2023, the conflict in Sudan has led to the displacement of more than 11 million people, with more than 2 million crossing into neighboring countries to find safety. According to the latest UNHCR updates, the Sudanese refugee population in Libya reached 215,000 by the end of 2024. Estimates predict that 160,000 more will arrive in 2025, bringing the total to 375,000 by year's end. Despite continued challenges with registration and tracking, authorities have confirmed that they receive hundreds of registration requests from Sudanese refugees every day. Additionally, there has been a continued influx of new refugees, with approximately 450 to 500 people arriving at informal camps on a daily basis.

Kufra continues to experience a shortage of skilled healthcare staff required to operate multiple health facilities, mainly in the newly established Refugee Admission and Treatment Health Center and the Al-Shaheed Attia Hospital, which serve as the primary destinations for both the host community and Sudanese refugees seeking inpatient care. Both facilities are struggling with a shortage of qualified nurses and technicians in the medical and intensive-care departments. Al-Shaheed Attia Hospital urgently requires three anesthesiologists, 10 emergency physicians and additional emergency technicians to meet growing demands. Meanwhile, the Refugee Admission and Treatment Health Center requires a significant increase in staff, including 14 medical doctors, 20 nurses and technicians, as well as two infectious disease specialists and one emergency medicine specialist, to ensure efficient operations and quality patient care.

In recent meetings, health authorities in Kufra have called upon all active humanitarian organizations to help fulfill the staffing requirements, to ensure the continuity of essential healthcare services for both refugees and host communities. Respiratory infections, dermatological conditions and chronic illnesses remain the most common health issues addressed by our team in both informal settlements and the hospital.

On February 10, a fire erupted at the Alabaj settlement in Kufra, which hosts approximately 50 families. Though there were no casualties, four families lost their shelters and some non-food items (NFIs). Following the incident, the International Medical Corps team visited the settlement to assess the community's health and ensure that those affected have access to healthcare.

FAST FACTS

- The conflict in Sudan has displaced more than 11 million people, including more than 2 million who have sought refuge in neighboring countries, with 215,000 arriving in Libya.
- Ensuring that displaced communities receive timely assistance is crucial. There is a need to provide access to healthcare, mental health support, food, shelter and essential household items.

OUR FOOTPRINT

- International Medical Corps was the first global 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

- In Kufra, our medical team has conducted 18,519 consultations and distributed essential medical supplies and consumables in informal settlements and the city's primary hospital.

International Medical Corps has also conducted a mental health and psychosocial support needs and resources assessment in Kufra, Tripoli, and Misrata, engaging 43 participants, 74% female and 26% male, from the migrant, refugee, and host communities. Data from Kufra revealed that Kufra Mental Health Center, the only facility providing mental health support, operates with 13 psychologists and 12 social workers, significantly restricting access to specialized care. Additionally, 85% of assessed health facilities in Kufra lack essential psychotropic medications and only 16% report intermittent availability.

The referral system is dysfunctional, forcing patients to travel more than 1,000 km to Benghazi or Tripoli for specialized treatment, with poor roads and high costs further limiting access. Human resource shortages are critical, with only two trained mhGAP staff across district hospitals, primary healthcare centers, and basic health units. Psychological distress—including depression, anxiety and other behavior-related issues—is widespread,. Stigma remains a significant barrier, preventing people from seeking care. To address these challenges, recommendations include recruiting psychiatrists, expanding services, ensuring a stable supply of psychotropic medications, improving referral pathways, strengthening community-based support and increasing awareness campaigns to combat stigma and encourage help-seeking behavior.

International Medical Corps Response

International Medical Corps has been collaborating closely with local authorities since June 2024 to deliver critical humanitarian assistance to both Sudanese refugees and host communities in and around Kufra. We provide key services—including healthcare, mental health support and protection—daily at Alshaheed Atia Hospital, the Refugees Admission Health Center and six informal settlements. So far, we have conducted more than 18,500 health consultations, with 5,489 consultations conducted at the beginning of 2025 alone. The recent increase in the number of consultations reflects the evolving and growing demand, as well as the rising number of newly arrived refugees. We have also facilitated 220 patient referrals for specialized care at nearby facilities. This has ensured that patients in need of specialized care have access to appropriate medical attention.

In addition to the medical consultations, our community health workers have conducted 141 health awareness sessions, reaching 2,652 people in both refugee settlements and host communities. These sessions focus on hygiene practices, nutrition, maternal health and prevention of chronic diseases, providing communities with essential knowledge to promote healthier lifestyles and reduce preventable health risks.

In January 2025, two new shipments of medical commodities, including a large amount of essential medications and supplies, were successfully delivered to our field warehouse in Kufra, expanding the range of services we can provide and increasing our capacity to respond to the different healthcare needs of the affected population. The shipments included 168 medication and consumable items, covering essential therapeutic categories. Key medications included antibiotics, antihypertensives, antidiabetics and asthma management medication. The shipment also contained dermatological treatments and other essential drugs, such as paracetamol and omeprazole. In addition to medications, the shipment included various medical consumables and devices, including urine test strips, examination gloves, alcohol swabs, blood glucose meters, pulse oximeters and sphygmomanometers. These medications and supplies, which are in line with the main morbidities seen by the teams in the past months, are expected to cover the needs of the targeted population for approximately eight months.