

Mali

International Medical Corps has worked in Mali since 2013, following a coup d'état that caused mass displacement and the disruption of many public services, including healthcare. Violence and insecurity in the north aggravated already fragile health and nutritional conditions in the region, while women and

girls became increasingly exposed to acts of sexual violence.

To support those affected by the conflict, International Medical Corps provides lifesaving assistance to address the immediate needs of vulnerable populations in north and central Mali. Interventions focus on nutrition; maternal, newborn and child health; family planning and reproductive health; and gender-based violence interventions, including the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse. We currently operate in three regions, supporting 70 health facilities and one mobile clinic, benefiting more than 862,000 people.

In response to an outbreak of violence in 2013, International Medical Corps began working in the most seriously affected communities in Timbuktu and Gourma-Rharous districts, with programs focused on health, nutrition and protection.

Today, we are building on these efforts to strengthen Mali's surveillance, information and reporting systems for infectious diseases with epidemic potential. In the Timbuktu and Taoudénit regions, we help 15 primary healthcare clinics, one mobile clinic and two referral health centers provide primary and secondary healthcare, nutrition services and protection activities aimed at preventing and responding to gender-based violence (GBV). In Segou, we support 52 primary healthcare facilities and two secondary healthcare facilities for inpatient and outpatient nutrition care in the health districts of San and Tominian, providing quality treatment of severe acute malnutrition for children under 5. In 2020, we reached 5,257 children.

PRIMARY AND SECONDARY HEALTH

International Medical Corps' health and nutrition programs in Mali address deficits and inequities in healthcare delivery by improving the provision of healthcare services and meeting the growing demand for access to these services, especially in remote areas. International Medical Corps is one of the few organizations operating mobile teams, and supporting referrals between the community, primary healthcare facilities and secondary healthcare facilities in Taoudénit, Timbuktu and Ségou, despite the geographical complexity of the area and the unstable security context. In 2020, at least 126,000 people benefited from curative consultations, 7,088 women received antenatal care consultations and 3,073 deliveries were assisted by qualified personnel in International Medical Corps-supported health facilities in Timbuktu and Gourma Rharous. In Segou, we also support free healthcare targeting malnourished children by supporting the inpatient and outpatient management of severe acute malnutrition.

GBV TREATMENT AND PREVENTION

GBV in Mali significantly increased during the recent conflict in the north. The harm caused by sexual violence goes beyond those directly affected, causing painful social disruptions within families and communities. Besides promoting clinical and psychosocial care in a confidential, competent and compassionate manner, we focus on building community resilience and providing support to survivors in Gourma-Rharous, Timbuktu, Mopti and Taoudénit through mobile clinics. We also address how to prevent GBV by working in close partnership with community-based organizations, ensuring sustainability by training community volunteers and local health staff, and designing referral paths to other relevant services. In 2020, 25 GBV survivors benefited from psychosocial and medical care or support in the form of vulnerability kits, depending on their needs. We also trained 240 people on various topics related to GBV, including basic concepts of GBV, case referral and facilitation techniques, and women's leadership.

TRAINING OF HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS AND SUPPORT STAFF

Preparing the health workforce to achieve its health objectives is one of the main objectives of International Medical Corps in Mali. International Medical Corps trains healthcare personnel working in the facilities that we support, and complement this training with on-the-job coaching and supervision to further strengthen the capacity of healthcare providers. In 2020, International Medical Corps helped the Ministry of Health train 232 health workers on multiple health topics, including treatment for malnutrition, emergency obstetric and newborn care, infection prevention and control, and more. In addition, we trained 92 community health volunteers and 159 nutrition support groups members in health promotion, disease prevention and COVID-19 response, as well as in the screening and referral of malnourished children and of pregnant and breastfeeding women.

RESTORING ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE IN CONFLICT AREAS

Our health response in northern Mali promotes free, quality curative and preventive health services in areas severely affected by the recent war. Since 2013, International Medical Corps has helped local healthcare systems in the Gourma-Rharous and Timbuktu districts regain self-reliance and credibility by rehabilitating and supplying community health centers, recruiting and training health workers, and strengthening emergency response and disease surveillance. International Medical Corps supports a mobile clinic that provides maternal, child and newborn health services in remote areas such as Taoudénit and Timbuktu. Given the increased vulnerability of internally displaced persons, International Medical Corps also has adopted an adaptive approach by supporting rapid response teams that provide emergency assistance when mass displacements occur, which helped 4,542 people in 2020. We also have enhanced water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) facilities in all of the health centers we support, providing essential equipment like water pumps, tanks, handwashing stations and latrines.





NUTRITION

International Medical Corps supports community health centers and secondary healthcare facilities in the northern and central region of Mali, battling high rates of malnutrition by:



training healthcare providers—126 total in 2020—in the treatment of malnutrition through a preventive and curative approach, with a focus on the community-based management of malnutrition;



strengthening referral systems from community health centers to regional health facilities and hospitals, including providing vehicles in Timbuktu to ensure the transfer of complicated cases from primary healthcare facilities to secondary healthcare facilities and regional hospitals;



providing nutrition supplies and medication for treatment of acute malnutrition in its different stages, including ready-to-use therapeutic foods, medicines and medical equipment for 70 health facilities; and



forming nutrition support groups and training pregnant women and mothers on how to identify malnutrition.



Because the first 1,000 days of life are critical to a child's growth and development, we engage with partners, families and communities to break down the barriers that cause childhood malnutrition, supporting cost-effective and capacity-building interventions. We work within a multi-sectoral framework to ensure that key services, including WASH and health education, are integrated into our nutrition programs. International Medical Corps currently is supporting 159 mothers in mother support groups in Segou and Timbuktu, and in 2020 reached more than 1,900 women through nutrition support groups.



COVID-19 PREVENTION AND RESPONSE IN MALI

In response to the COVID-19 outbreak in Mali, International Medical Corps provides capacity-building and training to medical and non-medical personnel from public and private health institutions, the Ministry of Health, partner agencies and others. By the end of 2020, International Medical Corps had trained more than 315 medical and non-medical professionals from 71 healthcare facilities about how to limit the spread of COVID-19 across Mali. We also participated in the disinfection of key public places in Timbuktu and Gourma Rharous, and provided infection prevention and control and WASH materials—including handwashing devices, soap, disinfectants, gloves, face shields and masks—to 70 healthcare facilities, as well as at public places and women and girl’s safe spaces. International Medical Corps continues to provide logistical support for the transportation of suspected COVID-19 patients. Finally, we have protected our staff and the people we serve by reducing public gatherings, raising awareness on COVID-19 prevention and encouraging handwashing and mask wearing during all activities.



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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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