



*An International Medical Corps medical team conducts health awareness sessions focused on addressing current issues affecting Sudanese refugees in Kufra, Libya.*

Following the onset of conflict in Sudan in mid-April 2023, nearly 11 million people have been displaced, with more than 2 million crossing to nearby countries. A large number of displaced Sudanese have resettled in Kufra, a sparsely populated and remote area in the southeast of Libya. The surge in displaced communities has created a humanitarian crisis in the region.<sup>1</sup> Thunderstorms in mid-August, combined with the poor infrastructure, have worsened the challenges faced by the displaced population, forcing them to relocate to different locations inside Kufra and other cities.

Health, protection and WASH challenges persist in Kufra and other remote locations due to the influx of new arrivals. The Sudanese community, particularly in Kufra, faces numerous health challenges, such as acute diarrhea, eye infections and scorpion stings. The National Center for Disease Control (NCDC) has identified that the majority of diarrhea cases are attributable to food poisoning resulting from improper storage. In addition, the mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) needs of refugees in Kufra are critical, with increasing rates of depression, anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder. These issues are further compounded by the limited capacity of the local mental health system to address the increasing demand for care.

## International Medical Corps Response

International Medical Corps began delivering crucial humanitarian services daily to both Sudanese and host communities in Kufra after receiving access approval from national authorities on June 2. Our services encompass health, mental health and protection at 14 informal settlements we have identified, as well as Alshaheed Atia Hospital.

In collaboration with the Kufra emergency cell and NCDC, International Medical Corps continues to monitor the local situation and deliver essential services to refugees, including secondary and inpatient care. According to the Inter-Agency

### FAST FACTS

- Since the conflict in Sudan began in April 2023, nearly 11 million people have been displaced, with more than 2 million seeking refuge in neighboring countries and 97,000 arriving in Libya.
- The Ministry of Health in Kufra, Libya, reports that approximately 70,000 Sudanese refugees have arrived in Kufra city, raising alarm about a humanitarian crisis
- Immediate support is crucial to provide health and mental health services, food, shelter and essential household items for those displaced.

### 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

- In Kufra, our medical team has pinpointed 14 locations with pressing needs among Sudanese refugee communities and has offered health consultations at each location. So far, our team has carried out 6,668 consultations and distributed medical supplies and consumables.

<sup>1</sup> <https://reliefweb.int/report/libya/sudan-situation-sudanese-refugees-and-asylum-seekers-libya-05-sep-2024>

Bi-Weekly Update report on the Sudanese refugee response in Libya, International Medical Corps remains the sole international non-governmental organization providing healthcare services in Kufra.<sup>2</sup>

Our health team—consisting of two doctors, a nurse, a social worker, an MHPSS counselor and a field officer—provides services to approximately 130 people daily despite limited resources. Beneficiaries include both displaced Sudanese and residents of host communities. The team rotates services to cover all settlements and prioritizes urgent cases, including late-night emergencies.

So far, the team has conducted 6,668 health consultations and referred 175 cases to nearby health facilities for follow-up. It has addressed about 45 diarrhea cases and 10 scorpion stings, and is managing eye and skin infections, in several camp-like settlements.

International Medical Corps co-leads the Health Taskforce and actively participates in technical working groups on protection, MHPSS, and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH). Recent assessments have highlighted a shortage of health staff and a need for basic medical supplies. To address the shortage, International Medical Corps is working to obtain necessary security approvals to transport medical supplies from Benghazi to Kufra, including partial donations to Alshahhed Atia Hospital.

International Medical Corps' MHPSS counselor and medical staff have implemented interventions such as psychological first aid and individual counseling, as well as referrals for severe cases, to reduce psychological distress and improve well-being. Since the initiation of the services, 338 people (82 male, 256 female) have received MHPSS assistance tailored to their specific needs. Two suicides were reported in August, underscoring the critical need to scale up lifesaving support to address growing mental health needs among refugees.

Based on feedback from 214 women and girls, our social worker implemented awareness activities in Kufra, addressing personal and menstrual hygiene, stress management and overall well-being in a resource-limited setting. These activities target women, caregivers and mothers, using a participatory approach to discuss challenges and solutions.

To engage women and children, we also conducted psychosocial support recreational activities, including henna making and accessory crafting, based on well-being strategies from earlier focus group discussions. Through 24 sessions across five informal settlements and the Libya Red Crescent Center, we reached 191 women and 70 adolescent girls and children. International Medical Corps remains committed to working closely with displaced women and girls to address their needs and enhance their well-being.



*The International Medical Corps medical team conducts health assessments and provides medical consultations and medications to Sudanese from a mobile clinic in one of the informal settlements in Kufra.*



*An International Medical Corps social worker facilitates a recreational activity (traditional henna stickers) with Sudanese women and girls in one of the informal settlements in Kufra.*

<sup>2</sup> <https://reliefweb.int/report/libya/inter-agency-bi-weekly-update-sudanese-refugee-response-libya-16-31-august-2024>