



A nurse and doctor tend to a newborn at International Medical Corps' field hospital in Gaza.

It has been five months since the start of the conflict in Gaza. Ongoing intense attacks from air, land and sea across much of the region has resulted in civilian casualties, mass displacement and the destruction of civilian infrastructure. According to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, approximately 1.5 million people have sought safety in the area around Rafah, equal to almost 70% of the country's population. Deaths have mounted as the violence has continued, with Palestinian fatalities in Gaza exceeding 30,800 and injuries exceeding 72,400.

International Medical Corps Response

On January 6, International Medical Corps deployed a Type 2 field hospital near Rafah in Gaza to provide comprehensive lifesaving services to the civilian population. Originally deployed with 50 beds, the facility has expanded to 140 beds due to the increasing demand for health and emergency services, including surgical care for trauma, physical rehabilitation, comprehensive emergency obstetric and newborn care, nutrition support, mental health and child protection services, gender-based violence (GBV) support, and water, sanitation and hygiene services.

The field hospital has an emergency room and inpatient care facilities, including a Level 1 intensive-care unit (ICU), an X-ray machine, ultrasound, laboratory, pharmacy and blood transfusion capacities. Given the context and the dire needs in Gaza, we provide inpatient and emergency services 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and provide essential outpatient services during daylight hours. The hospital has clinics for treating patients of all age groups, including those with communicable and non-communicable diseases and mental health conditions. We also provide antenatal and postnatal care for women of childbearing age.

Our inpatient services include two operation theatres dedicated to trauma, orthopedic and obstetric surgeries, including C-sections. On February 26, our surgical team achieved a milestone, having performed 500 surgeries. As of March 7, we had provided critical medical assistance to 27,431 people.

Though the hospital initially saw an average of 200 patients per day, since opening up surgical and obstetric care services a week after deployment, the number of patients seeking treatment increased significantly and now averages about 600 per day. The field hospital receives the majority of surgical patients in the area, and performs an average of 12 major surgeries and six deliveries, including C-sections, each day. Due to the destruction of hospitals, mainly surgical centers in Rafah and Khan Younis, the shifting of patients from Nasser Hospital and mass casualties in the area, we have increased

FAST FACTS

- Since October 2023, about 1.5 million people in Gaza have sought safety in the Rafah region, or almost 70% of the total population.
- As a result of the conflict, at least 30,800 Palestinians have been killed in Gaza, and more than 72,400 injured.

OUR FOOTPRINT

- International Medical Corps has worked in Gaza since 2008.
- Based on our experience providing health, protection and disaster risk-reduction services across Gaza, we have rapidly scaled up health activities in response to the crisis.

OUR RESPONSE

- Since the hospital opened in January, the field hospital has provided critical medical assistance to more than 27,400 people.
- On February 26, the team marked a milestone of 500 surgeries performed at the field hospital.
- We are providing inpatient and emergency services 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and essential outpatient services during daylight hours.

the number of beds in the hospital to meet additional demand. Though this has put a strain on supplies, we are working to support this increased patient load.

Recognizing the critical need to safeguard the well-being and rights of children affected by the conflict, International Medical Corps has prioritized child protection (CP) services since deployment of the field hospital. From January 6 through February 29, the CP team hosted 1,256 children in our child-friendly space, where children can socialize and access mental health resources. The team has provided psychological first aid (PFA) to 314 children; managed care plans for 38 children through our case management program; trained 127 caregivers on identifying and responding to signs of child abuse and abnormal child behavior; hosted an open recreation day for 72 children, where kids had the opportunity to engage in games, art and group meals; and provided individual counseling sessions for 108 children who showed signs of psychological trauma.

The CP services offered a range of interventions—including non-structured activities and PFA—aimed at providing immediate support and comfort to children experiencing distress. We also provided specialized case management and psychological counseling sessions to some children, ensuring tailored support to address their specific needs. Through these comprehensive efforts, the field hospital played a crucial role in creating a protective environment for children, enabling them to better cope with adversity, and promoting their overall well-being amid the turmoil of conflict.



Abdullah Al Sidani is a 15-year-old boy who was in the intensive-care unit at Al-Shifa Hospital until he was transferred to the International Medical Corps field hospital on January 15. Abdullah is the sole survivor of his family, who recently arrived in Rafah. He sustained a shrapnel injury to the head, resulting in paralysis of his left hand and leg, along with difficulty speaking and swallowing. The integrated care provided by our teams has enabled Abdullah to begin eating again, and begin to move his feet and hands, signaling a notable improvement in his condition.

International Medical Corps also provided psychological support services to 1,052 people, including PFA, which offers immediate psychological support and coping strategies during emergencies, aiming to alleviate distress and promote resilience among those affected by the conflict. Our mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) operations in the third week of February were particularly challenging, as fighting grew nearer and demand surged. Some patients were admitted to different departments in the hospital, while others were referred to other medical facilities. Most were provided with initial psychological support, which was not documented due to its sensitive nature. We continued to provide psychological counseling services to in-hospital patients who had previously received care, as well as PFA support for new cases in various departments. From January 6 through February 29, the MHPSS team provided 897 people with PFA services, conducted 55 individual mental health counseling sessions, hosted 35 group therapy sessions, and reached 362 people through awareness-raising sessions.

International Medical Corps' Nutrition team focused its efforts on addressing the nutritional needs of vulnerable citizens, particularly children under 5, pregnant women, and people at risk of acute malnutrition. From January 6 through February 29, we screened 1,732 children under 5 and provided them with essential nutritional support. The Nutrition team also identified and treated 77 cases of moderate acute malnutrition and 33 cases of severe acute malnutrition; identified 749 cases of malnutrition among pregnant and lactating women; provided infant and young-child feeding counseling services to 1,132 people; and partnered with World Central Kitchen to provide 7,058 ready-to-eat meals to 10,831 people.

Recognizing the needs of vulnerable people, particularly women, and girls, in conflict-affected settings, the GBV team conducted awareness sessions for 454 people and implemented case management strategies to address GBV effectively. The GBV team also conducted PFA sessions for 389 women and 60 men, provided case management services for 100 people, reached 549 people with individual GBV sessions and reached 1,003 people with GBV response services. The sessions educated the community about recognize and prevent GBV, as well as its consequences, helping people to recognize and report instances of violence. Additionally, the team provided specialized case management services to support GBV survivors, ensuring access to medical care and psychosocial support. This comprehensive approach underscores International Medical Corps' commitment to safeguarding the rights and well-being of all individuals, particularly those vulnerable to GBV, and working toward creating a safer and more supportive environment within the community. The hospital continues to provide awareness-raising initiatives and targeted interventions to address GBV and promoting gender equality during the emergency.