



An International Medical Corps doctor provides water to a malnourished child in the field hospital in Gaza.

It has been more than six 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. Nearly 85% of Gaza's 2.3 million people have been displaced, with the Rafah region sheltering approximately 1.5 million Palestinians. Deaths and injuries continue to increase, with at least 34,488 Palestinian killed and 77,643 injured in Gaza.¹

International Medical Corps Response

On January 6, International Medical Corps deployed a field hospital near Rafah in Gaza to provide comprehensive lifesaving services to the civilian population. Originally deployed with 50 beds, the facility has since 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, mental health and psychological support (MHPSS), child protection (CP), gender-based violence (GBV) prevention and support, and access to water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) facilities and services.

Due to the deteriorating security situation in the field hospital location, International Medical Corps moved the field hospital to the Al Mawasi area, on the southwestern coast of Gaza, during the first week of April. We plan to expand the field hospital into the surrounding land to increase the capacity and extend the number of services provided. The field hospital remains a key facility for civilians to access comprehensive and holistic medical and health services, and continues to receive patient referrals from other facilities across Gaza.

As hostilities expand and move farther south, the number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) moving to the middle area of Gaza continues to rise, including large numbers of women and children. This number is likely to rise further over the next few months, which will exacerbate the current situation, as there is a lack of available services, including maternal and child health. In response, International Medical Corps is currently establishing a second field hospital near Deir Al Balah that will provide primary healthcare and specialized sexual, reproductive, maternal and child health services. As with the facility in Al Mawasi, this field hospital will provide comprehensive, integrated and multi-sectoral services, including nutrition, MHPSS, GBV and CP, as well as ensuring access to WASH facilities.

FAST FACTS

- Since October 2023, about 1.5 million people in Gaza—almost 70% of the total population—have sought safety in the Rafah region.
- As a result of the conflict, more than 34,000 Palestinians have been killed in Gaza, and more than 77,000 injured.

OUR FOOTPRINT

- International Medical Corps has worked in Gaza since 2008.
- Leveraging our experience providing health, WASH, protection and disaster risk-reduction services across Gaza, we have rapidly expanded health, protection, nutrition and WASH activities in response to the crisis.

OUR RESPONSE

- Since the hospital opened in January, we have provided critical medical assistance to more than 53,502 people.
- As of April 24, we had performed 1,400 major surgeries at the hospital.
- We are providing inpatient and emergency services 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and essential outpatient services during daylight hours.

¹ <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/hostilities-gaza-strip-and-israel-flash-update-159>

Health

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. We also provide antenatal and postnatal care for women of childbearing age. Specialized staff provide outpatient consultations for surgical and orthopedics patients, dressings for wounds requiring regular dressings, consultations for pediatrics patients, pain management and physiotherapy consultations.

Though the hospital initially saw an average of 200 patients per day, since opening surgical and obstetric care services one week after deployment, the number of patients seeking treatment increased significantly and now averages approximately 650 per day.

Our inpatient services include two operating theatres dedicated to trauma, orthopedic and obstetric surgeries, including C-sections. The field hospital receives the majority of surgical patients in the area, and performs an average of 12 major surgeries and up to 10 deliveries, including C-sections, each day. As of April 24, our surgical team had performed 1,400 major surgeries. Due to the destruction and damage of other hospitals in the region, mainly surgical centers in Rafah and Khan Younis, as well as the shifting of patients from Nasser Hospital and mass casualties in the area, we have increased the number of beds in the hospital to meet additional demand, as mentioned above. Although this has strained supplies, International Medical Corps is supporting this increased patient load and coordinates with other organizations to ensure, to the best extent possible, consistent supplies and referrals to and from the field hospital.

Also as mentioned above, we recently moved the field hospital from its initial location in the Mirage area to the Al Mawasi area west of Rafah, which has seen a large influx of IDPs in the last few weeks. The movement of the hospital, including of patients, was done in a phased manner to ensure continuity of quality care for admitted patients, especially those requiring a higher level of care.

Finally, as previously mentioned, International Medical Corps is in the process of establishing a 42-bed field hospital near Deir Al Balah by early May 2024, with services to be provided in this facility specified and adapted to identified needs in the area. It will consist of a fixed emergency medical team that provides lifesaving primary healthcare and emergency (ER) services, comprehensive emergency obstetric and newborn care services, and inpatient services for acute medical cases, for stabilization and referral as needed. We will provide these services alongside integrated nutrition, MHPSS, CP and GBV services, as well as WASH facilities and services.

Child Protection

Recognizing the critical need to safeguard the well-being and rights of children affected by the conflict, International Medical Corps has prioritized CP services since the deployment of the field hospital. As of April 26, the CP team had hosted more than 2,300 children in our child-friendly space, where children can socialize and access mental health resources. The team has provided psychological first aid (PFA) to more than 1,100 children; managed care plans for 93 children through our case management program; trained 127 caregivers on identifying and responding to signs of child abuse and abnormal child behavior; conducted awareness sessions for 1,117 caregivers; hosted an open recreation day—where kids had the opportunity to engage in games, art and group meals—for 116 children; and provided individual counseling sessions for 189 children who showed signs of psychological trauma.

Through these comprehensive efforts, the field hospital has 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.

Mental Health and Psychosocial Support

International Medical Corps has provided psychological support services—including PFA, which offers immediate psychological support and coping strategies during emergencies—to more than 2,600 people, aiming to alleviate distress and promote resilience among those affected by the conflict. As of April 15, the MHPSS team had provided 1,791 people with PFA services, conducted 118 individual mental health counseling sessions, hosted 35 group therapy sessions, reached 766 people through awareness-raising sessions and provided case management to 10 people.

Gender-Based Violence

Recognizing the needs of vulnerable people, particularly women and girls in conflict-affected settings, as of April 26 the GBV team has conducted awareness sessions for more than 2,500 people and implemented case management strategies to address the effects of GBV on survivors. The GBV team has so far conducted PFA sessions for 1,111 women and 500 men; provided case management services for 170 people; reached 2,300 people with individual GBV sessions; and provided 3,619 people with GBV response services. We have educated the community on how to recognize

and prevent GBV, as well as its consequences, helping people to identify and report instances of violence. 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.

Nutrition

International Medical Corps' Nutrition team continued to focus on addressing the nutritional needs of vulnerable people and IDPs, particularly children under 5, pregnant and lactating women, and people at risk of acute malnutrition. As of April 26, we had screened more than 4,500 children under 5 and provided them with essential nutritional support. We also identified and treated 196 cases of moderate acute malnutrition and 78 cases of severe acute malnutrition; screened 1,570 pregnant mothers and lactating women; identified 784 cases of malnutrition among pregnant and lactating women; and provided infant and young-child feeding counseling services to 1,899 people.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

As of April 26, our solar-powered water desalination plant has produced more than 1.3 million liters of clean water, providing healthcare staff, patients, caregivers and community members with access to clean drinking water. We also have improved sanitation services for 28,285 people at the field hospital. Our health and hygiene sessions continue to promote better hygiene practices, enhancing community resilience against waterborne illnesses and encouraging infection prevention.

We have safely disposed of 30,642 kg of medical and domestic waste, safely disposed of 1.2 million liters of wastewater using ground bladders and cesspit tanks, and leveraged our relationships with trusted local partners to set up biowaste disposal, laundry services and disinfection procedures for the field hospital. We are conducting hygiene promotion activities for healthcare staff and patients, such as awareness sessions and messaging around handwashing, safe storage of solid waste and waterborne diseases, among other topics.



International Medical Corps supplies headed to Gaza are loaded onto a truck in Cairo, Egypt.