

Since its inception 30 years ago, International Medical Corps has been committed to strengthening the capacity of devastated communities so that they can recover, rebuild and become self-reliant. The intensity of our dedication to giving disaster-stricken communities the **strength and skills to meet their own primary health care needs** helps define us. It is in our motto, “From Relief to Self Reliance.” It is in our mission statement: “...to improve the quality of life through health interventions and related activities that **strengthen local capacity in areas worldwide.**”



From Relief to Self-Reliance

Since 1984, International Medical Corps has worked in more than 70 countries and regions on 6 continents. In each case, the priorities have remained unchanged: provide emergency relief to communities struck by natural or complex emergencies, then help them develop the capacity they require to move toward self-reliance. We do this by:

- ▶ making education and training an integral part of our programs, whether it is primary health care, HIV/AIDS and infectious disease, nutrition, or water and sanitation
- ▶ working closely with host government agencies at all levels and partnering with local non-government organizations, often using our expertise with sub-grants to give them and other small, technically proficient groups the chance to gain experience on projects funded by major international actors

Saving Lives, Securing Healthy Futures

Capacity strengthening not only fosters self-reliance, it also builds the kind of confidence, pride, and self-esteem essential for political stability and successful development. Because of this, International Medical Corps considers training an important component of every program. Occasionally, this training occurs early in an emergency response deployment, as it did during our initial work in Haiti, Afghanistan and Somalia. In the early 1990s as our teams braved continued fighting in the Somali capital of Mogadishu, we trained dozens of local doctors and nurses, laying the groundwork for self-reliance in the process. In many other crisis areas, International Medical Corps' focus on training grows as the emergency phase eases.

Training is a critical component of every International Medical Corps program.

Continuing Medical Education & Professional Development

Continuing Medical Education (CME) and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) are important cornerstones of health system strengthening and a critical part of International Medical Corps' comprehensive capacity strengthening approach. This involves meeting the needs of clinicians at various points in their practice/career to support a more motivated and skilled health workforce. Furthermore, in disaster situations, war, conflict, and complex emergencies, health indices invariably decline. CME and CPD are an important part of our overall strategy to establish or re-establish the knowledge basis and skill sets to counter the impact of such adverse situations. International Medical Corps has implemented an extensive and successful CME/CPD program in post-conflict Iraq which now serves as a model for our capacity strengthening initiatives including in post-earthquake Haiti and in Japan after the earthquake and tsunami.





Indonesia

Following the 2004 tsunami, International Medical Corps established a partnership with a respected local emergency response group of health professionals, Ambulan 118, that added to Indonesia's capacity to react quickly and effectively in the event of an earthquake or other disaster. We created a comprehensive emergency preparedness and response program in disaster-prone areas throughout Indonesia -- a country predisposed to disaster given its position on the so called "Ring of Fire." The program reached all levels of disaster response, including: medical personnel, policemen, firemen, search and rescue teams, hospital administrators and community leaders. We also created full-scale disaster simulations to test participants in the curriculum.

South Sudan

In South Sudan, where there are only 9 nurses and 5 physicians for every 100,000 people, International Medical Corps has implemented a midwifery training program to increase local health capacity long-term. To date, 46 midwives and 20 community nurses have graduated from the National Health Training Institute in Kajo Keji. By building a new cadre of health workers, International Medical Corps' training program is helping lay the foundation for a stable health care system.



Iraq

After entering Iraq when the war began in 2003, we have gradually shifted our focus from emergency relief to institutional capacity strengthening. Today, International Medical Corps works at all levels of government and society, including a four-year project to strengthen management and administrative skills in the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs. Through this program we have trained more than 700 hospital administrators, health center administrators, and nurse managers.

We are also committed to increasing access for physicians to CME and professional development in Iraq. From 2007-2011, International Medical Corps presented more than 40 CME programs in a range of medical and surgical specialties, which benefitted over 1,000 clinicians. Specialties included anesthesia and intensive care, internal medicine, orthopedics, obstetrics and pediatrics. We also launched a full Emergency and Disaster Care development program in Iraq, which has been the first in-depth attempt to build civilian emergency medicine infrastructure for the country.



Afghanistan

Despite the highly volatile security conditions, International Medical Corps has tended to Afghan health care capacity for over a quarter of a century. Today, we are the number one non-government organization working in Afghanistan in the field of hospital management. We provide support to two major hospitals in Kabul and one in the eastern border province of Paktika. International Medical Corps works with the local Ministry of Public Health to support development of health system capacities through human resources management, hospital administration and management capacity building, technical capacity building, supply chain management, and strengthening of health management information systems reporting.

In addition, in Khost and Paktika provinces, we have operated highly successful Community Midwifery Education programs since 2007, training about 90 young women to assist expectant mothers through pregnancy, child-birth and post-natal care. Students learn essential clinical skills, including how to perform antenatal exams, manage severe hypertension, and resuscitate a newborn. The Khost program has been recognized as the best midwifery training in the country. Its graduates—all raised in the province—are helping ease a major shortage of midwives in a country that has the world's highest infant mortality rate at over 150 per thousand.



Haiti

Immediately following the Haiti earthquake in January 2010, International Medical Corps' Emergency Response Team mobilized on an unprecedented scale to provide emergency medical care. While other relief agencies have since left, we are still there training local health workers and working with the Haitian people to lay the foundation for long-term recovery.

International Medical Corps worked with local physicians to establish the Haitian Medical Society, provide medical leadership and a space and opportunity for ongoing specialty-based education programs in fields such as primary care, cardiology, and obstetrics and gynecology. We also dedicated an 18-month program for Emergency Medicine in collaboration with the Haitian Ministry of Health and the Hopital de l'Universite d'Etat d'Haiti administration.



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