



IOM physician conducting a primary healthcare consultation for an indigenous community in northern Brazil. © IOM 2023

## MIGRATION HEALTH ASSISTANCE FOR CRISIS-AFFECTED PEOPLE AND HOST COMMUNITIES

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) is a key player in responding to humanitarian and public health emergencies as well as supporting health system recovery and resilience. Health programming in emergencies is an essential part of IOM's humanitarian mandate and recognized by the Organization's Migration Crisis Operational Framework as one of the 15 sectors of assistance to address before, during and after crises. This factsheet showcases some of this programming from 2023 in countries with established health operations in crisis settings and presents some examples of the Organization's innovative and adaptative programming.

### The International Organization for Migration (IOM) is a:

- Formal partner of the World Health Organization and a member of The technical working Group on Pandemic Preparedness and Response
- Member of the Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network
- Active member of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Global Health Cluster

### Services are delivered through a multisectoral approach, in close coordination with other humanitarian sectors, including:

- Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
- IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix
- Protection, including Mental Health and Psychosocial Support and Gender-based violence risk mitigation and response

## 2023 EMERGENCY HEALTH GLOBAL HIGHLIGHTS



Emergency health projects in **44** countries



More than **400** mobile clinics deployed



Over **2.2 million** people screened for acute malnutrition



**314,000** antenatal care consultations provided



Close to **6.8 million** primary health-care consultations provided



More than **23,000** health workers trained



Over USD **15.3 million** worth of medical supplies procured and distributed



More than **2.2 million** people vaccinated in outbreak response scenarios



Over **200** points of entry and points of control supported



Over **900** health facilities supported or managed



More than **217,000** health information sessions conducted



**54** Emergency Health Deployments

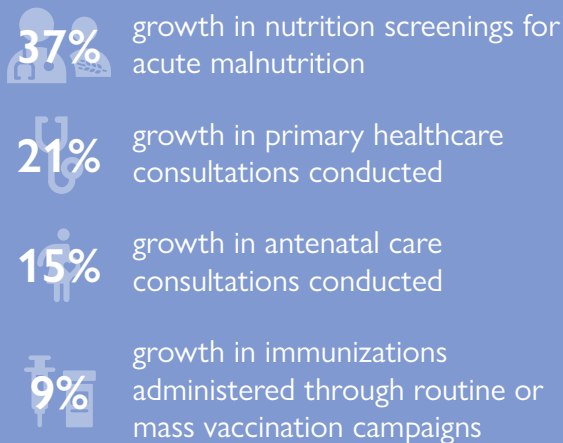
## SCOPE AND AIMS OF IOM'S EMERGENCY HEALTH INTERVENTIONS

IOM's emergency health programming aims to ensure essential life-saving health care is available and accessible to those affected by crises. IOM uses targeted interventions that seek to uphold humanitarian principles and protect dignity while improving health outcomes of crisis-affected people and host communities through direct health service provision by mobile teams to hard-to-reach communities, establishment of referral networks to specialized care, and health promotion through community engagement and vaccinations.

Health system strengthening is crucial to guarantee continuity of care for displaced and crisis-affected people and the longer-term recovery and resilience of a health system after an emergency. IOM collaborates closely with Ministries of Health and interagency partners to strengthen health systems' ability to prepare for and respond to health and humanitarian crises and implement the International Health Regulations (2005). IOM provides targeted capacity-building to medical professionals, supports health facilities including procurement of essential medical supplies, and develops mobility-sensitive public health interventions in relation to outbreak preparedness and response and in line with global health security strategies.

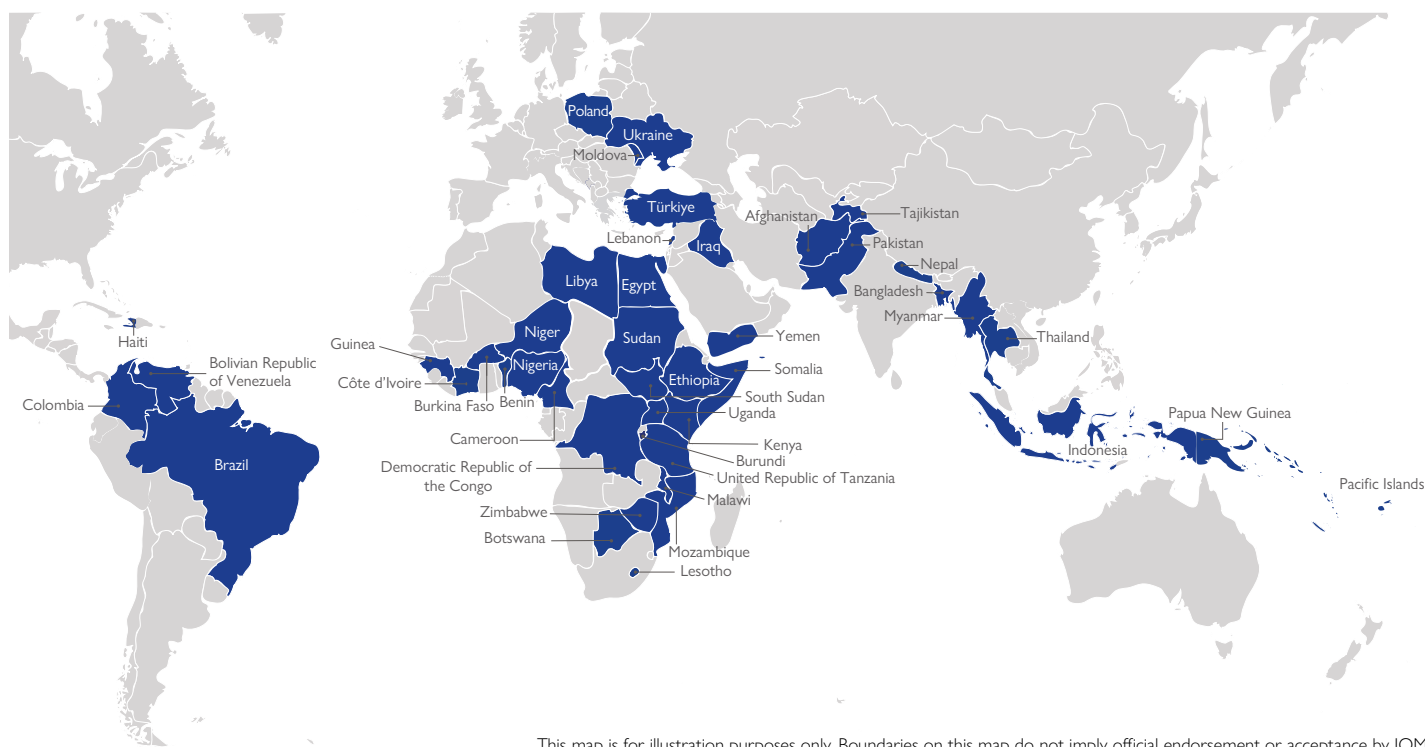
IOM's emergency health programming aligns with IOM's Strategic Plan 2024 – 2028 and is integrated within the Strategic Approach on Migration Health that emphasizes (a) saving lives and protecting people on the move by improving access to quality health care and provision of health services; (b) strengthening health systems and anticipating and mitigating health-related risks surrounding displacement to support durable solutions; and (c) promoting the health of migrants and mobile populations and strengthening migration health governance for regular migration pathways.

### YEAR OVER YEAR GROWTH HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2022 TO 2023



## 2023 EMERGENCY HEALTH PROGRAMMING GEOGRAPHIC COVERAGE

This map indicates countries (44) in which emergency health programming was implemented. It does not illustrate all countries where migration health interventions were implemented.



## IMPORTANCE OF INTEGRATED PROGRAMMING – Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) and Health

Increased conflicts and environmental hazards in recent years have intensified the rate of population displacement and expanded the scale of humanitarian needs. Infectious and communicable diseases can quickly become serious public health issues in these types of settings due to lack of clean water and corresponding challenges relating to hygiene and sanitation. All water related and infectious diseases including but not limited to Cholera, diarrheal diseases and diseases involving vectors, are heavily influenced by water quality and supply and can create a heavy burden of disease. As such it is important for public health interventions to prioritize integrating health and water, sanitation and hygiene programmes in both prevention and response activities.

In Yemen, IOM provided rapid, essential health and WASH services to contribute to the response and prevention of acute watery diarrhea (AWD) and cholera. The activities were identified based on gaps in target locations as identified by needs assessments and discussions with health, nutrition, and WASH partners as part of ongoing coordination. Direct assistance in AWD/Cholera hotspots was provided for over 26,000 affected IDPs and host community members, including but not limited to screening, treatment and referral of people with severe diarrhea to treatment centers, the establishment of 12 water points along migrant routes, and joint hygiene promotion and solid waste management activities.



Hygiene kit and water distribution during a cholera outbreak response in Al Mokha, Yemen. © IOM 2023

## SOMALIA – Providing life-saving care in the midst of drought, food insecurity and climate change



Mobile health team transporting medical supplies during floods in Beletweyn, Somalia in June 2023. © IOM 2023

In 2023, Somalia faced a prolonged and severe drought due to five consecutive failed rainy seasons, which resulted in crop failure, economic decline, and increased food prices. The situation worsened in October with the onset of the rainy season. Combined with the impact of El Niño, a disruptive weather anomaly, these conditions brought forth unexpected flash floods causing damage to infrastructure and loss of life. It also further deepened the existing humanitarian crisis and increased the total number of internally displaced people in the country to 3.8 million.

In the face of these challenges, almost 5 million people required health and nutritional assistance. In collaboration with the National Health and Nutrition Clusters and partners, IOM supported the Ministry of Health (MOH) by operating seven healthcare facilities and 20 mobile clinics in areas most hard hit by the climate related disasters. IOM focused on crisis affected communities, conducting close to 300,000 essential primary healthcare consultations and administering routine vaccinations to over 73,000 children under the age of five as a preventive measure against vaccine preventable diseases. To combat the effect of long-lasting food insecurity, IOM provided over 260,000 systematic screenings for malnutrition for children under the age of five and pregnant and lactating women.

Somalia was also confronted with two cholera outbreaks in the districts of Dhobley and Dollow in Jubaland. In response, IOM assisted the MOH to conduct oral cholera vaccination campaigns in both districts as well as supported the installation of handwashing facilities and the establishment of oral rehydration points at existing government facilities. These stations aided the treatment of mild diarrheal cases, allowing faster identification and referral of severe cases to the nearest cholera treatment center. IOM donated 13 cholera treatment kits to the two districts affected and conducted over 21,000 health promotion and risk communication sessions focused on combating vaccine hesitancy and the prevention of acute watery diarrhea diseases. IOM's response underscores its strong operational capacity and its commitment to address health risks and provide lifesaving health care for crisis affected populations impacted by the confluence of climate change, food insecurity and conflict.

## IRAQ – Improving health service capacity through partnerships and community-led solutions

Close to five million IDPs in Iraq have returned to their areas of origin since 2015. Very few of those communities have the capacity to provide adequate services or have health facilities for their community members. Without access to reliable, high-quality healthcare services, returning IDPs cannot remain safely and sustainably in areas of return. Iraq is one of 16 countries in which UN agencies and partner organizations are piloting the Inter-Agency Standing Committee's Durable Solutions Strategic and Operational Framework. Equitable access to basic services, including health services, is part of Iraq's country-specific durable solutions strategic and operational framework. IOM implemented a pilot project to support reactivating Ministry of Health (MoH) services previously disrupted by conflict. In doing so, IOM improved access to health services for IDPs who remained displaced due to the crisis and for returnees in their areas of origin.



Mobile health team conducting a non-communicable disease campaign in Dohuk, Iraq, August 2023. © IOM 2023

The pilot project took place in four locations where IOM had a pre-existing presence. IOM, in collaboration with the MOH in four governorates, set the three objectives to guide intervention design and implementation:

1. Restore primary healthcare services,
2. Bolster the capacity of Iraq's DOH to effectively manage health services, and
3. Improve health literacy among IDPs, returnees, and host community members through health promotion and outreach activities.

The co-design approach of activities enabled IOM and the MOH to tailor interventions to priority needs, consult on resource allocation and the prioritization of activities as well as develop the capacity to sustain and eventually scale interventions. In 2023, IOM supported 18 government healthcare facilities and conducted over 237,000 primary healthcare consultations and 100,000 specialized healthcare consultations, in coordination with the MOH. Additionally, IOM engaged targeted communities with almost 34,000 health awareness information and community engagement activities. This pilot offered insights into how durable solutions can pave the way for broader health system strengthening efforts based on clear joint expectations, community-embedded solutions and leveraging of existing programmes and partnerships.

## ETHIOPIA – Building Health Capacity to Prepare for and Respond to Gender-Based Violence during the Sudan Crisis



GBV Basic Concepts training in Mekele, Tigray Region, Ethiopia August 2023. © IOM 2022

Women and girls face extremely high risks of gender-based violence (GBV) and other protection vulnerabilities during conflict-related displacement while in transit, temporary shelters and awaiting border crossings. A key intervention in IOM's emergency health preparedness efforts involves capacity building of healthcare providers serving conflict affected populations to develop a comprehensive understanding of the needs of GBV survivors while also sensitizing health workers to the barriers faced by migrants in accessing sexual and reproductive health services.

Since the conflict erupted in Sudan in April 2023, a situation of perpetual vulnerability impacting millions of women and girls has been created. The number of people in need of GBV services in 2024 is expected to increase to 6.9 million from 4.2 million earlier in the conflict. Drawing on existing IOM trainings including Gender Based

Violence Basic Concepts, Clinical Management of Rape and Adolescent Reproductive Health and Rights in Emergency Health, IOM trained 83 IOM and government staff between June and September 2023 to prepare for and respond to the emerging needs along the Ethiopia-Sudan border. Additionally, IOM prepositioned and procured over 40,000 USD of basic obstetric and neonatal commodities and dignity kits to meet the needs of vulnerable women and girls at the Metema Point of Entry between Sudan and Ethiopia. These readiness and capacity building efforts allowed for timely and appropriate response when conflict affected women and girls were identified as needing immediate care.

For more information on the above activities please contact the Migration Health Division Emergency Health Team at [MHDHQEmergencyHealth@iom.int](mailto:MHDHQEmergencyHealth@iom.int).

