

# UNFPA Services in Sudan

## Mobile Health Teams:

Since April 2024, UNFPA has deployed 56 mobile health teams across 11 states in Sudan, providing integrated sexual and reproductive health (SRH) and sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) services and have conducted over 153,000 medical consultations.

- The health teams consist of doctors, pharmacists, lab technicians, psychologists, health officers, and midwives.
- UNFPA's mobile clinics offer a comprehensive range of medical services focused on SRH and SGBV in emergencies. Crucially, these mobile clinics are integral to the referral system, identifying complicated SRH and GBV cases that require advanced care and referring them to hospitals or SGBV case management services.
- The mobility of these teams is essential in increasing accessibility to vital services in remote areas.
- On average, each mobile team covers three different locations per week, spending one to two days in each location based on the community's size and needs.

## Emergency Obstetric and Newborn Care:

- The Emergency Obstetric and Newborn Care (EmONC) interventions are integral components of the Minimum Initial Service Package (MISP) for Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) in emergency settings, designed to provide life-saving care for pregnant women and newborns in conflict-affected areas of Sudan.
- These interventions aim to ensure that health facilities are equipped to manage obstetric emergencies, thereby reducing maternal and neonatal mortality and morbidity.
- Recent efforts include the delivery of EmONC equipment to Port Sudan, with distribution planned for 50 health facilities across the country. Additionally, UNFPA has ensured the continuous operation of Al-Saudi Maternity Hospital in North Darfur by providing essential fuel supplies, enabling the uninterrupted delivery of emergency obstetric and newborn care.
- By providing necessary equipment and ensuring continuous power supply in key hospitals, the programme supports thousands of women and newborns, significantly reducing maternal and neonatal mortality rates.

## Solarization of Hospitals Across Sudan:

- Health clinics and hospitals across Sudan face frequent and lengthy power cuts, which severely impact their operations. Temporary solutions such as back-up generators and batteries have proven neither efficient nor affordable, often adding costs to patients' hospital bills. The lack of reliable electricity means hospitals struggle to maintain critical

services such as blood banks, which require timely coordination with other hospitals, often causing delays of several hours to days. Incubators for newborn babies are also affected, with parents hesitant to use machines that could switch off at any moment. Additionally, life-saving medicines and supplies cannot be stored in refrigerators for long periods, compromising their efficacy.

- To address these challenges, UNFPA has launched an essential initiative to solarize hospitals across Sudan. This initiative ensures the uninterrupted provision of healthcare services, particularly vital for safe childbirth. The solar systems enable hospitals to operate 24/7 with renewable energy, covering all essential facilities, including maternity wards, operation rooms, blood bank refrigerators, incubators, medicine storage rooms, and administration offices.

### **Midwives Save Lives:**

Since the beginning of the crisis, UNFPA has provided 600 midwifery kits to midwives across Sudan. These kits are essential in equipping midwives with the necessary tools to support safe childbirth, addressing the dire equipment shortages since the conflict's onset, and are critical in lowering the maternal mortality rate.

- Over the past two years, UNFPA has trained 460 midwives on standard obstetric and neonatal care.
- Many women throughout Sudan rely on midwives during and after pregnancy. The role of midwives extends beyond delivering babies; they provide prenatal and postnatal counseling, psychological support, and essential health messages to help mothers and their families raise healthy children.
- These trained midwives reach remote communities, including those in humanitarian crises, building trust and delivering high-quality maternal health services.

### **Women and Girls Safe Spaces:**

- In response to the ongoing conflict in Sudan, UNFPA is providing crucial support and protection for vulnerable women and girls through the establishment of Women and Girls Safe Spaces (WGSS).
- A WGSS is a place where women and girls feel physically and emotionally safe, free from trauma, excessive stress, violence, or abuse. These spaces allow women and girls to express themselves without fear of judgment or harm, and they serve as areas where they can socialize, rebuild social networks, receive support, acquire relevant skills, and access safe, non-stigmatizing multi-sectoral GBV response services, including psychosocial, legal, and medical support. UNFPA supports 64 WGSS across Sudan, including in gathering points for internally displaced persons (IDPs).
- These spaces provide indispensable GBV prevention and response services, such as individual and group-based psychosocial support, referrals, awareness-raising sessions, and educational sessions on GBV core concepts. Additionally, SRH services offered include family planning, antenatal and postnatal care, maternal health services,

management of STIs, clinical management of rape, and menstrual health management, ensuring comprehensive support to women and girls in conflict-affected areas.

### **Community-Based Protection Networks:**

- Within the framework of the WGSS, UNFPA has been instrumental in enhancing protection and support mechanisms through the establishment of community-based protection networks (CBPN). These networks are crucial in disseminating vital information on GBV and ensuring access to services, thereby facilitating referrals to specialized care.
- CBPNs receive continuous training to enhance their operational capacity. This training covers protection monitoring, reporting of GBV and protection violations, GBV coordination, and referral of GBV cases to service providers. Since April 2023, with the support of UNFPA, 119 community-based referral mechanisms have been operationalized across Sudan. This includes the initiation of 18 groups equipped with tuk-tuk ambulances, which are designed to ensure the expedited referral of obstetric emergencies to Emergency Obstetric and Newborn Care (EmONC) facilities.

### **Combating Harmful Practices:**

- UNFPA has integrated initiatives to combat female genital mutilation (FGM) and child marriage into its GBV humanitarian response. These initiatives include strategic capacity building and awareness-raising activities.
- Over 2,100 professionals, including social workers, healthcare providers, community-based protection network members, community leaders, and legal aid providers have been trained in GBV core concepts, focusing on strategies for risk mitigation and the provision of responsive services pertinent to FGM and child marriage.
- Since April 2023, UNFPA has reached 10,894 community members and IDPs through awareness raising sessions on the impacts of GBV and harmful practices, including FGM and child marriage, while informing participants about the available services and referral pathways. Additionally, 750 women and girls in White Nile and Aj Jazirah have benefited from group psychosocial support sessions utilizing a peer-to-peer approach, which enhances community support and resilience among the participants.

### **Responding to Sexual Violence**

- Since the conflict outbreak in Sudan, there has been a significant increase in the number of SGBV cases reported by service providers. Survivors of SGBV suffer from severe and long-lasting impacts on their physical and mental health, including injuries, unintended pregnancies, pregnancy complications, sexually transmitted infections (including HIV), depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, and, in some cases, death. Reports indicate that some women are pregnant as a result of rape and are seeking SGBV and SRH services, but also many remain silent to avoid stigma.
- In response to this crisis, UNFPA has adopted a multi-faceted approach focused on capacity building and the development of technical guidance for service providers.

UNFPA has trained 8,494 frontline workers on comprehensive GBV concepts and interventions, including the nuances of sexual exploitation and conflict-related sexual violence. This training aims to improve the quality and accessibility of support services for survivors.

- Additionally, UNFPA has developed guiding documents such as GBV Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and guidelines for GBV awareness sessions, remote psychological first aid, and case management. These resources facilitate effective service provision and ensure the safety of both survivors and service providers. Through these efforts, UNFPA is striving to enhance the support network for GBV survivors, ensuring they receive the care and assistance they need in the face of this ongoing crisis.

### **GBV Coordination**

- As the lead agency for coordinating GBV prevention and response in Sudan, UNFPA leads the GBV Working Groups in 14 states to ensure a coordinated and coherent response at both state and national levels. Regularly updated GBV referral pathways in these states align with the latest mapping of GBV services and clinical management of rape services, providing a safe means for survivors to access specialized GBV and other sectoral services.
- At the national level, the GBV Sub-Cluster has enhanced stakeholder participation, comprising 75 member organizations, including 27 national NGOs and 16 women-led organizations. In 15 out of 18 states, GBV Case Management Taskforce Groups have been reactivated under the GBV Working Groups to provide technical support and guidance to GBV case managers. These task forces ensure the application of GBV Guiding Principles and prevent harm during the current conflict.
- UNFPA's commitment to capacity building has resulted in the training of 8,734 frontline GBV service providers and stakeholders in GBV principles and interventions, further expanding the support network for survivors. The GBV Sub-Cluster has developed guiding documents, including national and state-level GBV SOPs and standard guidelines for key GBV interventions, to facilitate effective service provision and enhance the safety of both survivors and service providers.

### **Supplies**

- The ongoing conflict in Sudan has significantly disrupted the logistical supply chain, impacting the availability of essential health and protection services. UNFPA has prioritized the provision of necessary supplies to ensure the continuation of SRH services and support for GBV survivors.
- 206 Emergency Reproductive Health Kits have been distributed to meet the needs of over 27,000 SRH emergencies, enhancing emergency reproductive health service

capacity. UNFPA has also provided 545,638 family planning commodities, supporting voluntary family planning and the procurement of contraceptives, crucial for gender equality and the empowerment of women.

- Additionally, UNFPA procured and distributed 1.1 million ampules of Oxytocin and 655,000 tablets of Misoprostol to assist over 1.3 million women with the prevention and management of obstetric hemorrhage, the leading cause of maternal death in Sudan. Moreover, 120 health facilities have been equipped with necessary tools for Basic and Comprehensive Emergency Obstetric and Neonatal Care (BEMONC and CEMONC), benefitting women and girls.
- UNFPA has tailored its response to the specific needs of sexual violence survivors by distributing 2,880 supplies for clinical management of rape targeting XX beneficiaries and providing 6,750 supplies for the management of STIs to safeguard reproductive health for XX people. Moreover, 170 clean delivery kits have been supplied to XX midwives across Sudan, enhancing their capacity to provide care under challenging conditions.
- Despite logistical and access challenges, UNFPA has navigated these obstacles through collaboration with inter-agency coordination focal points, ensuring efficient movement and storage of supplies. This collaborative approach, along with online training for health managers and strategic partnerships, has been pivotal in enhancing the delivery of life-saving services and facilitating access to affected areas.

### **SRH Coordination**

- As a co-chair of the SRH Working Groups, UNFPA is supporting SRH coordination in Red Sea, Gedaref, Kassala, Blue Nile, White Nile, North Kordofan, West Darfur and North Darfur. UNFPA is collaborating with the Ministry of Health's Reproductive Health Program to update the SRH partner mapping. Additionally, UNFPA is conducting a Minimum Initial Service Package (MISP) for SRH assessment to evaluate the functionality of MISP components in the current emergency setting across 13 states, with assessments completed in Blue Nile, White Nile, and East Darfur.

### **Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)**

- UNFPA's Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) programme in Sudan is dedicated to preventing, identifying, and addressing instances of sexual exploitation and abuse across its operations. The programme focuses on building the capacity of stakeholders and raising community awareness to foster a culture of accountability. It primarily targets implementing partners, SRH and GBV service providers, as well as community members. These groups play a crucial role in ensuring that PSEA principles are upheld in both humanitarian and community settings.
- UNFPA has trained 578 individuals using the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) PSEA materials, focusing on enhancing reporting mechanisms and improving referral processes. This training equips stakeholders with the necessary knowledge and skills to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse. Additionally, UNFPA has reached

1,138 individuals in Kassala and White Nile through targeted awareness-raising sessions.

- These sessions, which include drama performances, open community events, focus group discussions, and the distribution of information, education, and communication materials, are designed to encourage community members to report cases of sexual exploitation and abuse and empower them to actively safeguard their communities.

### **Dignity Kits**

- The dignity kits provided by UNFPA offer essential hygiene supplies to women and girls in conflict-affected and displacement settings across Sudan. These kits are vital for maintaining personal hygiene, dignity, and health, especially in areas where access to basic necessities is severely limited.
- Dignity kits also serve as a crucial entry point for survivors and individuals at risk to access broader prevention and response services. The kits, which include items such as menstrual pads, soap, underwear, and other personal hygiene essentials, are distributed with the strategic purpose of connecting vulnerable women and girls to critical SRH and GBV services. This includes access to awareness-raising sessions on menstrual hygiene, referrals to available GBV services, and opportunities to participate in food distribution, which might otherwise be inaccessible.
- Since the conflict outbreak in April 2023, UNFPA has provided 51,000 dignity kits across Sudan, supporting the overall health and well-being of vulnerable populations by connecting them to comprehensive services that address their broader needs in these challenging conditions.