# Sudan's health crisis worsens as civil war devastates medical infrastructure



Sudan is facing an unprecedented health crisis, aggravated by nearly two years of civil war that has devastated its healthcare infrastructure. According to Al-Moghirah Al-Amin Gad Al-Sayed, director of the department of therapeutic medicine at the Federal Ministry of Health in Sudan, the situation could see significant improvements with the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) into medical services. Speaking to SciDev.Net, Al-Sayed remarked, "In conflict states, AI can play a big role when traditional medical services are not available.”

The conflict, which escalated in April 2023, has resulted in the deaths of 50 medical personnel due to attacks on health facilities by the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF). Alongside these violent confrontations, a mass migration of healthcare workers had already been a pressing issue long before the outbreak of war, exacerbating the acute shortage of medical supplies and personnel in the country. The World Health Organization has warned that the degradation of health systems—particularly in conflict zones—has become increasingly dire.

In some areas where no doctors are available to interpret diagnostic imaging, AI technology can offer solutions. Al-Sayed explained that AI could analyse X-ray images by comparing them against vast databases of stored images to reach a diagnosis. He asserted that numerous studies indicate “great accuracy in medical diagnosis as a result of the data on which it has been trained, as well as the summary of human experiences and experiences that have fed it.”

However, Al-Sayed cautioned that the lack of medical staff and essential supplies is contributing to the rise of antimicrobial resistance, as patients are resorting to self-administering antibiotics. He raised concerns about the potential emergence of a "generation of resistant microbes," which could undermine one of modern medicine’s most potent tools.

The director highlighted that while AI could serve as a compensatory measure for the shortage of medical professionals in conflict areas, the immediate need for additional healthcare workers and essential medical supplies remains urgent. Al-Sayed emphasised the importance of innovative approaches to healthcare delivery, advocating for the use of neutral actors in delivering vaccinations to communities in conflict zones, as traditional methods become increasingly unviable.

He also lamented the apparent lack of focus on Sudan's struggles by international media, contrasting it with coverage of other global crises. “The world sympathizes with the ugliness of Israeli crimes involving children in Gaza, which have been highlighted by the international media, while in Sudan we have thousands of stories that are more horrible, but do not receive the same attention,” he stated.

The ongoing violence has had devastating effects on families, particularly on women. Al-Sayed noted that the RSF’s assaults on women serve as a tactic to instigate family migrations. Since the conflict ignited, over 11.5 million people have reportedly been displaced according to United Nations statistics.

Compounding these challenges are extreme weather events linked to climate change. Sudden torrential rains and flooding that began in June 2022 have not only claimed lives but have also exacerbated the existing health crisis, leading to cholera outbreaks and widespread infestations of scorpions and snakes in certain regions.

Al-Sayed underscored the role of Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors Without Borders), acknowledging its vital partnership in providing healthcare services in safer regions of Sudan. He pointed out, however, that MSF requires more donor support to replenish supplies and enhance its operations in conflict zones.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.who.int/emergencies/situations/sudan-emergency> - Corroborates the intense fighting in Sudan, the need for urgent health care, and the challenges in delivering health care due to insecurity and attacks on health facilities.
* <https://www.rescue.org/article/crisis-sudan-what-happening-and-how-help> - Supports the information on the conflict in Sudan, the impact on the health care system, mass displacement, and the humanitarian crisis, including the extreme constraints on humanitarian access.
* <https://www.rescue.org/article/crisis-sudan-what-happening-and-how-help> - Details the power struggle between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces, the resulting humanitarian needs, and the severe impact on health care services and infrastructure.
* <https://www.who.int/emergencies/situations/sudan-emergency> - Highlights the disruption of the disease surveillance system and the challenges in detecting and confirming infectious disease outbreaks due to the conflict.
* <https://www.rescue.org/article/crisis-sudan-what-happening-and-how-help> - Mentions the acute lack of staff, funding, and medical supplies, as well as the repeated attacks on health facilities, which exacerbate the health crisis in Sudan.
* <https://www.rescue.org/article/crisis-sudan-what-happening-and-how-help> - Reports on the mass displacement of people, including the impact on women and families, and the role of violence in instigating family migrations.
* <https://www.rescue.org/article/crisis-sudan-what-happening-and-how-help> - Discusses the extreme weather events linked to climate change, such as flooding, and their exacerbation of the health crisis, including cholera outbreaks.
* <https://www.who.int/emergencies/situations/sudan-emergency> - Confirms the large-scale displacement of people within Sudan and to neighboring countries due to the conflict.
* <https://www.rescue.org/article/crisis-sudan-what-happening-and-how-help> - Highlights the critical role of Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors Without Borders) in providing healthcare services in safer regions of Sudan and the need for more donor support.
* <https://www.rescue.org/article/crisis-sudan-what-happening-and-how-help> - Details the economic crisis, food insecurity, and malnutrition affecting over 25 million people in Sudan, marking one of the worst food insecurity emergencies globally.