# AI as a potential solution in Sudan's healthcare crisis



Sudan's healthcare system is facing an unprecedented crisis, resulting from nearly two years of civil conflict that has led to the deaths of numerous medical professionals and a dire shortage of resources. Al-Moghirah Al-Amin Gad Al-Sayed, director of the department of therapeutic medicine at the Federal Ministry of Health, addressed these challenges during an interview with SciDev.Net, indicating that artificial intelligence (AI) could play a pivotal role in bolstering health services where conventional medical support is no longer viable.

The World Health Organization has reported alarming conditions in Sudan, highlighting that the health infrastructure has been severely compromised due to looting and destruction of medical facilities, particularly in regions that are difficult to access. Al-Sayed explained that in instances where there are no doctors available to interpret X-rays or other diagnostic images, AI can serve as an alternative by comparing a patient's scan with a vast database of images to provide a diagnosis. He stated, “Many studies have proven that [AI] shows 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.”

The ongoing civil war has exacerbated pre-existing challenges; the exodus of medical professionals from Sudan was an issue even prior to the conflict. Attacks by the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) have resulted in the deaths of 50 medical personnel within health facilities, compounding the emergency situation. Additionally, the lack of medical personnel and essential supplies has contributed to the rising incidents of antimicrobial resistance. Al-Sayed cautioned that indiscriminate use of antibiotics by patients could lead to a generation of resistant microbes, thereby undermining the effectiveness of vital medical treatments.

Al-Sayed stressed that while AI can significantly mitigate the impact of the staff shortage in conflict-ridden areas, there is an urgent necessity for the recruitment of additional healthcare workers and an influx of medical supplies. He called for innovation in healthcare delivery methods, such as deploying neutral entities to administer vaccinations in conflict zones.

In reflecting on the media coverage of Sudanese suffering, Al-Sayed lamented the disparity in attention received by various crises around the world. He noted, “The world sympathises 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.” The ongoing violence has resulted in the displacement of over 11.5 million people since April 2023, according to United Nations estimates.

Gender-based violence has further exacerbated the plight of families in Sudan, with many being forced to flee due to harassment and assaults by the RSF. Al-Sayed indicated that the systematic targeting of women serves as intimidation to compel families to relocate.

Compounding these humanitarian issues, extreme weather linked to climate change has intensified the circumstances. Torrential rains beginning in June 2022 resulted in fatalities and the destruction of homes, significantly deteriorating public health conditions. Al-Sayed pointed out that such climate-related disasters have led to further displacements and health crises, including cholera outbreaks and increased risks from dangerous wildlife in various states.

Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors Without Borders) has been instrumental in providing medical services amidst the chaos, although Al-Sayed noted that the organisation requires additional donor support to enhance its operations and supply chain in these critical areas. The dire state of healthcare in Sudan exemplifies the urgent need for both innovative solutions and increased humanitarian aid to address the multifaceted challenges faced by the affected population.

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

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