

OPERATIONAL OVERVIEW

ICRC activities in Lebanon for the year 2010

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Lebanon continued visiting detainees in prisons and detention places for the third consecutive year with the aim of monitoring their conditions of detention, their treatment and the respect of their fundamental judicial rights. It ensured a close follow-up of persons arrested for security reasons and in connection with armed conflicts or other situations of violence. The ICRC works as well on improving sanitation and health to detainees by increasing water supplies and assessing medical services available in prisons.

Another priority for the ICRC is enhancing the quality of health care accessible to residents of Palestinian camps, notably through training of staff at hospitals run by the Palestine Red Crescent Society and provision of medical equipment. It also worked on ensuring pre-hospital care in the camps by initiating volunteer members of the civil society on First Aid techniques.

Reinforcing the preparedness and ability of its national partner, the Lebanese Red Cross, to respond efficiently to situations of emergencies remains a main interest for the ICRC in Lebanon. Support focused on developing preparedness of the Emergency Medical Services of the National Society and training of its Youth Section on emergency relief assessment.

Visiting detainees

ICRC's team of seven expatriate delegates in the protection department visited more than 6,400 people held in prison and interrogation centers in Lebanon in 2010, an activity that the delegation in Beirut has been carrying out since it signed an agreement with the Lebanese authorities in 2007, giving ICRC delegates access to all places of detention on the Lebanese territory.

In accordance with its standard working procedures, the ICRC monitors the material conditions of detention and treatment of detainees as well as the respect of their fundamental judicial guarantees, including during the interrogation period. It then shares its findings exclusively with the concerned authorities and closely follows up on the implementation of its recommendations. The ICRC puts special emphasis on persons arrested in connection with armed conflict or state security in line with its international mandate.

As part of its activities in the prisons, the ICRC worked to improve access to healthcare for prisoners. In 2010, the ICRC completed a comprehensive assessment of the health service for inmates in prisons, and appointed a medical doctor in its Beirut delegation specifically to collaborate with the authorities on addressing the issues identified in the assessment.

In order to help improve conditions of detention, the ICRC completed in 2010 the first phase of a water project aimed at increasing regular access to clean water for some 4000 inmates at Roumieh Central Prison, the country's largest detention facility and home for nearly 70% of its incarcerated population. The project involved the installation of a centralized network, roof tanks, a chlorination station, a distribution control room and the refurbishing of a deep well,



Palestinian lady reading a Red Cross Message from a relative detained in Iraq

augmenting by 70% water supply to the prison in winter. The second phase to be implemented in 2011 will further improve the quantity and quality of water available in the prison.

Throughout the year, the ICRC allowed persons deprived of freedom to stay in touch with their families abroad through the regular exchange of Red Cross Messages and transmission of oral greetings, known as "Salamat". And for the first time, the ICRC organized the visits of families of certain foreign prisoners, by facilitating their travel and transportation to Roumieh.



ICRC

In 2010, the ICRC

- visited 6'464 detainees during 146 visits to 19 places of detention.
- exchanged 174 Red Cross Messages and 360 oral messages between detainees and their families
- facilitated the visit of the families of two foreign detainees in Roumieh living abroad

Restoring family links

Continuing to fulfill its role as a neutral intermediary between the Israeli and Lebanese authorities, the ICRC repatriated Lebanese nationals living in Israel who wished to return home and facilitated contact between families in Lebanon and their relatives in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories, via Red Cross Messages.

Through the ICRC's family-links service, families in Lebanon were able to exchange news and official documents with relatives detained or residing abroad, mainly in Iraq and Israel. In that regard, the ICRC facilitated procedures for people wishing to officially register in Lebanon the birth or death of Lebanese citizens in Israel by issuing notifications of births and deaths.

In parallel, the ICRC provided the associations of families of the missing, the Internal Security Forces and the Lebanese Armed Forces with the necessary training and equipment that would enable them to consolidate their compilation of data on the missing persons. In 2010, the ICRC also offered training on the exhumation and identification of human remains to 15 Lebanese forensic doctors appointed by the Ministry of Justice.

The ICRC is working together with the judicial authorities to provide answers to families, in Lebanon and abroad, whose relatives went missing in the context of the 2007 armed conflict in Nahr el-Bared Palestinian camp.

In 2010, the ICRC

- collected 64 Red Cross Messages and distributed 38 others to civilians in Lebanon enabling them to establish and maintain contact with their relatives abroad, including detainees in Israel
- repatriated six Lebanese civilians and the mortal remains of six others from Israel to Lebanon.

Providing water for vulnerable communities

The team of water engineers at ICRC's wathab department worked on assisting the local authorities to renovate decaying water infrastructure in rural and urban communities. In 2010, more than 340,000 people gained better access to safe water after the team

had completed water projects in the Bekaa, the south and north of Lebanon. The projects carried out in cooperation with local water boards benefited the populations living in areas where water facilities were inadequate, non-existent, or became derelict due to lack of maintenance and neglect over long years of armed conflicts in Lebanon. Water boards also received equipment to help them operate the water systems in a more efficient manner.

In order to enable the authorities to better manage water resources, the ICRC helped put in place a data bank listing the key characteristics of water supply in the north Lebanon area, including wells, reservoirs, springs, pumping stations and primary water networks.

In 2010, the ICRC

- carried out 22 water rehabilitation projects mainly in the Bekaa valley, benefiting more than 340'000 residents in remote areas and communities which are short of water.



ICRC engineers examine a water project implemented by the organization in Niha, Central Bekaa

Supporting health services

Improving access to healthcare for the Palestinian refugee population in Lebanon remained an operational priority for the ICRC delegation for the third consecutive year. In 2010, experienced ICRC surgeons and nursing instructors implemented an intensive training programme for doctors and nurses from the five Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRCS) hospitals and from Ein el Helweh's Human Call Association hospital. The programme focused on the management of emer-

gency cases, improving emergency room organisation, and updating clinical practices through training according to international standards. The ICRC provided biomedical support to operating theatres and emergency rooms in these hospitals, including the review of existing equipment, repair or replacement of non-functional devices, and donation of essential items to ensure better management of medical emergencies. The ICRC also worked on improving access to pre-hospital care for Palestinian casualties of violence through First Aid training of community volunteers from Beddawi, Burj el-Barajneh and Ein el-Helweh refugee camps.



Palestinian participants during a First Aid session in Ein el Helweh camp

In Nahr el Bared, the ICRC started in 2010 the construction of a community health clinic, to replace the one destroyed during the 2007 conflict, a project that should be completed by mid-2011.

The ICRC also supported emergency preparedness and response by Lebanese surgeons, sharing its long-standing experience in the surgical management of conflict-related casualties during a War Surgery Seminar held in Tyr, south Lebanon. The course focussed on managing massive influx of casualties, and on discussing the surgical procedures best adapted to treating injuries caused by different types of weapons.

In 2010, the ICRC

- provided 6 months of intensive training on the clinical management of emergencies to 43 doctors and 27 nurses working in six Palestinian hospitals throughout the country
- supported the PRCS hospitals with the repair, replacement, management and maintenance of essential medical equipment
- provided basic First Aid training to 164 volunteers from community groups in Beddawi, Burj al-Barajneh and Ein el-Helweh Palestinian refugee camps

- donated essential medical supplies to 12 hospitals, 6 primary health centres and 4 ambulance service providers regularly responding to emergencies throughout Lebanon.
- organized a war surgery seminar for 20 surgeons and experienced doctors

Together with the Lebanese Red Cross

ICRC continues to work closely with its national partner, the Lebanese Red Cross (LRC). In 2010, the partnership focused on the development of the National Society's Emergency Medical Services (EMS) through training of its volunteer instructors and contribution to the maintenance of the ambulances and purchase of new vehicles. Moreover, a great effort was put in developing preparedness and response planning of both institutions in case of emergency. Additional funding was provided for the rehabilitation of EMS stations as well as the centers from which the LRC's ambulance services are being operated across the country.

In 2010, the ICRC provided the LRC youth department with training on relief assessment and response for a greater mobilization in case of need

In 2010, the ICRC

- rehabilitated 11 EMS stations, including the EMS headquarters in Baabda. Works essentially focused on operation rooms and the renewal of radio and other communication equipment.
- supported LRC with the acquisition of a new EMS station in Saida
- trained 25 LRC and PRCS personnel on how to conduct needs assessment in emergencies



Lebanese Red Cross volunteers transporting the body of one of the victims of the ill-fated Ethiopian airplane

Promoting respect for International Humanitarian Law (IHL)

Throughout 2010, meetings with various representatives of the Lebanese authorities and arms carriers as well as regular dialogue with the country's main political, religious and civil society groups ensured improved mutual understanding and support for International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and ICRC's humanitarian action in response to any outbreaks of violence.

In this regard, the ICRC regularly briefed troops and high-ranking officers of the Lebanese Army, the Internal Security Forces (ISF) and the United Nations Interim Forces in Lebanon (UNIFIL) on basic IHL principles, ICRC mandate and activities and the need to facilitate access of the ICRC and LRC to victims in emergencies.

In parallel, ICRC worked with the national authorities on promoting the integration of IHL rules within the national legislation, stressing the relevance of ratification of IHL-related treaties by the Lebanese state. In that regard, Lebanon created its national IHL committee, which is an advisory body that supports the authorities in the choice

and ratification of relevant international treaties that boost respect and implementation of the law. ICRC welcomed the move which it had been encouraging and supporting by regular sponsoring of the participation of representatives from the Lebanese Army, and the Ministries of Defense, Justice and Foreign Affairs in regional IHL seminars jointly organized with the Arab League

In 2010, the ICRC

- organized dissemination session on IHL and ICRC's humanitarian mandate for 1200 student officers of the Military School, 70 officers and 1600 troops and non-commissioned officers of the Lebanese Army, in addition to 445 officers of the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL)
- briefed 200 ISF officers, 90 members of the Military Police and 12 officers in charge of LAF detention centers on ICRC's standard modalities and procedures applied during visits of places of detention.
- organized presentations for more than 225 members of various Palestinian factions and 100 members of NGOs operating inside Palestinian camps on basic IHL principles and the protection of medical services

Visit ICRC website at www.icrc.org/ara

On its website the ICRC shares the most recent information through news releases as well as other feature stories. The website also enables users to find out what the ICRC is, how it works and what it does, by type of activities and by country or region. It can be consulted for the full text of the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols and for a list of the States party to those treaties.

The screenshot shows the ICRC website in Arabic. The header includes the ICRC logo and navigation links. The main content area features a news release titled "اللجنة الدولية للصليب الأحمر في لبنان" (The International Committee of the Red Cross in Lebanon). The text discusses the ICRC's work in Lebanon since 1967, focusing on providing protection and assistance to civilians affected by armed conflict and violence. It mentions the ICRC's main delegation in Beirut and its offices in Tyre, Tripoli, and Ein el-Helweh. The website also includes a search bar, a language selector, and a sidebar with additional navigation options.

The ICRC has been present in Lebanon since 1967, giving priority to protection and assistance to civilians affected by armed conflict and violence, in partnership with the Lebanese Red Cross Society. Its main delegation is based in Beirut, with offices in Tyre, Tripoli and Ein el-Helweh Palestinian refugee camp. Its current priorities include visiting persons deprived of freedom, supporting hospitals, extending assistance to improve health and water infrastructure in vulnerable communities and in prisons, and dissemination of International Humanitarian Law.