

IRAQ: FACTS AND FIGURES



ICRC

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OVERVIEW

Over the past year, the Iraqi population continued to carry the humanitarian burden of decades of conflict and ongoing violence. Access to basic necessities, such as clean water and proper health care, remained a challenge for many Iraqis, especially in rural and violence-prone areas. In addition, thousands of families across the country are still trying to find out what happened to their missing relatives.

In 2012, the ICRC extended its presence in areas most affected by the past and present violence, notably in the disputed territories and in central Iraq, increasing its proximity to Iraqis in need of assistance and broadening the scope of its humanitarian activities. It assisted vulnerable people and communities, in particular women heading households, persons living with a disability, needy farmers, and internally displaced people. It focused on strengthening health and physical rehabilitation services, improving access to clean water and responding to humanitarian emergencies. Supporting the Iraqi authorities in their efforts to clarify the fate of the missing continued to be a priority for the ICRC, as was the monitoring of the conditions in which detainees are being held and the treatment they receive.

The ICRC remained committed to preventing further suffering by promoting respect for international humanitarian law among decision makers and weapon bearers. It strengthened its cooperation with the Iraqi Red Crescent Society, notably in enabling Iraqis to restore or maintain contact with family members, particularly with detained relatives.

In 2013, the ICRC will pursue its humanitarian activities in behalf of the Iraqi population, as it has been doing continuously since the outbreak of the Iran-Iraq war in 1980. To maintain the ability to do so, it will remain in dialogue with all relevant stakeholders in the country. It will also keep on giving voice to and assisting the people most in need without distinction on any but humanitarian grounds.

The organization works from its delegation in Baghdad and its 11 field offices in Baghdad, Basra, Dohuk, Erbil, Khanaqin, Kirkuk, Mosul, Najaf, Nasiriya, Ramadi and Sulaimaniyah. The ICRC delegation in Iraq employs some 850 staff, including 750 Iraqi nationals.

ACTING IN BEHALF OF DETAINEES

The ICRC visits people in places of detention to assess the conditions in which they are being held and the treatment they receive. During its visits, the ICRC also assesses the access of detainees to proper health care and respect for basic guarantees of due process. The ICRC shares its observations and recommendations on a strictly confidential basis with the authorities concerned.

In 2012, the ICRC conducted 231 visits to 109 places of detention located in various governorates and supervised by the Iraqi central authorities or the Kurdish regional authorities. During the year, ICRC delegates:

- visited more than 38,000 detainees held by the Iraqi central authorities (Ministries of Justice, Defence, Interior and Labour and Social Affairs) or the Kurdish regional authorities, including 1,000 whose situations were monitored individually;
- helped improve living conditions for 3,180 detainees held in six places of detention in different areas of the country by upgrading infrastructure, including water and sanitary facilities, and heating and cooling systems, and by creating an open area for outdoor recreation.

In addition, nearly 3,500 detainees, including juveniles and women,

held in 21 different facilities were given various items such as stationary and educational materials, clothes, hygiene items, mattresses and blankets.

In November 2012, around 170 family members, including children, from the centre or south of Iraq visited their relatives held in Chamchamal Prison, in the north. Many had not seen their detained relatives for several years, as they had been unable to afford the cost of travel to the prison, which is located in Sulaymaniyah. By covering the cost of their transportation and accommodation, the ICRC enabled them to go to the prison and visit their relatives for several hours. The visit took place in close coordination with the prison authorities and the Iraqi Correctional Service of the Ministry of Justice, and with their full support.

To ensure respect for basic procedural safeguards, the ICRC organized a number of events in cooperation with the Iraqi judicial authorities. Members of the Kurdish judiciary participated in four round tables organized by the ICRC in Dohuk, Erbil and Sulaymaniyah governorates. In Baghdad and Najaf, the ICRC organized two workshops with investigative judges and prosecutors on guarantees of due process under international and Iraqi law.



Families carry gifts for their relatives they are visiting for the first time in years in Chamchamal prison in Sulaimaniyah.

RESTORING CONTACT BETWEEN DETAINEES AND THEIR FAMILIES

When ICRC delegates visit people held in places of detention, they give them the opportunity to restore or maintain contact with their families by exchanging news through Red Cross messages. These messages are collected and delivered in cooperation with Iraqi Red Crescent Society volunteers.

In 2012:

- 1,953 messages were exchanged;
- more than 12,700 phone calls from families looking for a detained or missing relative were processed.

In addition, the remains of four people were repatriated by the ICRC to four different countries.

The ICRC issued 107 travel documents to persons without passports, mainly refugees, who were granted resettlement in third countries. At the request of their families, it also attempted to locate 81 persons, including Iraqis living in Libya with whom contact was lost as a result of the armed conflict.

SUPPORTING THE AUTHORITIES IN THEIR EFFORTS TO CLARIFY THE FATE OF THE MISSING

The ICRC supports the Iraqi authorities – mainly the Ministry of Human Rights and the Medico-Legal Institute of the Ministry of Health – in their efforts to clarify the fate of the tens of thousands still unaccounted for as a result of the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq War and the 1990-1991 Gulf War, and to provide answers to their families. This support includes facilitating dialogue and exchange of information between the parties, forensic training, upgrading of facilities, joint exhumation missions in the field, and handover of human remains.

In 2012, the ICRC:

- facilitated five joint Iraqi-Iranian excavations, resulting in the recovery and repatriation of hundreds of sets of human remains;

- facilitated two joint Iraq-Kuwait excavation missions, which however did not result in the recovery of any human remains;
- provided tailored training courses by international forensic experts to address specific needs of staff of the Medico-Legal Institute in the fields of DNA, laboratory management, and forensic anthropology.

The ICRC has begun long-term cooperation with the Medico-Legal Institute with the aim of developing and maintaining the local capacity to analyse and manage human remains. So far, this has involved extensive exchanges with staff in their laboratories, providing technical advice, support and recommendations.

STRENGTHENING HEALTH-CARE SERVICES

Health-care services in rural areas still face difficulty meeting the needs of the population. In coordination with the Iraqi health authorities, the ICRC renovates and upgrades facilities and helps strengthen medical services by providing training in emergency management and war surgery.

In 2012:

- over 400,000 people benefited from improved health-care services in 13 primary health-care centres run by the Ministry of Health, thanks to ICRC support in strengthening the professional capabilities of the staff and management of the centres;
- four primary health-care centres were upgraded by the ICRC;
- women and children especially had access to improved curative care, in part because of technical guidance on enhancing hygiene and safety precautions, and improvements in drug management and in the treatment and transfer of emergency cases;
- cooperation with the Ministry of Health was strengthened, at both local and central levels, in particular through the signature of a memorandum of understanding and the organization of a national round table on primary health care in November;
- ICRC provided funding to enable 202 breadwinners to launch an income-generating activity.



A child is being vaccinated at Zaidan PHCC in Abu Ghraib, near Baghdad one of the 13 centres supported by the ICRC.

HELPING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES TO RESUME NORMAL LIVES

Since 1993, the ICRC has provided limb-fitting and physical rehabilitation services to disabled people in Iraq, helping them reintegrate into the community. The ICRC runs its own centre in Erbil and, by providing supplies and training, supports 11 physical rehabilitation centres in Baghdad, Basra, Fallujah, Hilla, Najaf, Nassariyah and Tikrit: nine run by the Ministry of Health, one by the Ministry of Defence, and one by the Ministry of Higher Education. It also supports the Iraqi school for prosthetics and orthotics, a school for physiotherapy in Erbil and a factory that manufactures crutches in Baghdad.

In 2012, the ICRC:

- provided physical rehabilitation services to 33,472 people, 51% of whom are amputees;
- delivered 3,927 prostheses, 14,213 orthoses, 197 wheelchairs and 850 crutches;
- organized three post-graduate training courses in cooperation with the school for prosthetics and orthotics;
- sponsored the attendance of seven Iraqi technicians in internationally

recognized schools or universities in prosthetics and orthotics in Cambodia, Tanzania and Scotland;

- organized a two-day national workshop in cooperation with the health ministries of Iraq and of the Kurdistan region;
- provided training in management in four centres and gave all physiotherapy students the opportunity to spend time in clinical placement at the Erbil centre.

The ICRC also helps people with disabilities who head households to launch income-generating activities. The aim is not only to help them care for their families, but also to restore their dignity by making them feel useful and needed again.

In 2012, 375 micro-economic initiatives, such as grocery and mobile-phone shops, barber shops, bee-keeping enterprises and car-repair workshops, were launched which benefited almost 2,400 people in Diyala, Kirkuk, Ninawa and Sulaimaniyah.

ASSISTING WOMEN HEADING HOUSEHOLDS

Women who must shoulder the burden of caring for their families alone because their husbands have been killed, arrested, disabled by war injuries, or have gone missing, struggle with extremely harsh living conditions. The ICRC aids them in their efforts to register with Iraq's welfare allowance system. Women heading households are also offered grants to start small businesses and become financially self-sufficient.

In 2012:

- 608 women breadwinners received ICRC grant enabling them to set up small businesses; this income often represents over 40% of their families' revenue and allows them to gain more independence;
- with the support of local NGOs and the ICRC, 3,962 women heading households (with close to 16,000 dependents) were encouraged, accompanied and guided in registering for the State welfare allowance disbursed by the Directorate of Women and Social Care; they also received cash payments from the ICRC to compensate for costs incurred while compiling the registration file.

The ICRC also continued its dialogue with the Directorate of Women and Social Care and other authorities concerned on improving living conditions for women heading households.



A widow with the calf born from a pregnant cow she was given by the ICRC in Kirkuk.

BRINGING RELIEF ASSISTANCE TO IDPs AND VULNERABLE RESIDENTS

Many Iraqi people are still struggling to earn a living and support their families. The ICRC provides assistance to those most in need in violence-prone and remote rural areas.

In 2012:

- with the support of the Iraqi Red Crescent Society, the ICRC helped nearly 27,000 people, mostly IDPs in group settlements around the country, to improve their living conditions through ad hoc distributions of essential household and hygiene items;

- close to 10,000 particularly vulnerable individuals also received additional one-off food rations during the initial phase of displacement.

In close coordination with UNHCR, the UN lead agency on refugee issues, the ICRC also distributed essential household and hygiene items together with food rations to 1,218 Syrian refugees. It stands ready to provide emergency assistance if needed.

BOOSTING THE PRODUCTIVE CAPACITY OF RURAL COMMUNITIES

The ICRC helps needy resident farmers and returnees in rural areas to improve their livelihoods by increasing their agricultural production in a sustainable way and helping them restock their herds.

In 2012, the ICRC:

- assisted over 7,000 farmers and livestock owners and their families (more than 45,000 people in total) through community-based livelihood support projects;
- helped improve their livelihoods by upgrading irrigation infrastructure, providing greenhouses, drip irrigation systems, seed and tools, and livestock (restocking), and by supporting the vaccination of livestock.

A total of 526 of the farmers also received cash payments for their work repairing irrigation canals and reclaiming land to help them better support their families.



A sheep distribution to farmers victims of drought in Makhmour.

IMPROVING ACCESS TO CLEAN DRINKING WATER AND SANITARY FACILITIES

Access to clean water remains a challenge in much of Iraq. ICRC engineers repair and upgrade water, electrical and sanitary facilities, especially in rural areas, with a view to improving the quality of services and infrastructure. It also provides safe drinking water for internally displaced people (IDPs) and others in need.

The ICRC's water-related activities focus on upgrading infrastructure in cooperation with the authorities, and on identifying long-term and sustainable solutions to the country's water problems.

In 2012, the upgrading and construction of 27 water facilities throughout the country brought improved access to safe water and reduced vulnerability to sickness to more than 1.4 million people.

Among the ICRC's most significant achievements were:

- the installation of six water pumps serving 500,000 people in Abu-Khistawi, in Hilla, Babil governorate;
- the organization of 20 training sessions for 402 technicians operating water stations, enhancing their ability to maintain water systems.

In addition, it upgraded five water supply systems, which brought safe drinking water to 24,600 people displaced in various parts of the country. Through targeted emergency action, the ICRC also:

- provided clean water on a daily basis to close to 9,000 displaced people living in Sadr City in Baghdad until February, when the authorities took over;
- built latrines and showers in August for 589 Syrian refugees in Al-Qaim.

COMMUNITIES LEARN ABOUT SAFE BEHAVIOUR AND BENEFIT FROM MINE CLEARANCE

Iraq is littered with an estimated 25 million mines and other explosive remnants of war, in particular along the borders with Iran and Turkey. As a result, the safety and livelihood of around 1.6 million Iraqis are at risk.

In 2012, the ICRC, in coordination with the Iraqi army, local authorities, the Iraqi Red Crescent and the Regional Mine Action Centre, cleared 958 pieces of ordnance in three communities in Missan governorate, allowing more than 6,000 civilians to enjoy a safer environment. In July, the ICRC's programme of explosive ordnance removal was completed, and the task of attending to the remaining needs in the area was taken over by another organization.

In 14 governorates, the ICRC provided support for the 460 sessions held by the Iraqi Red Crescent Society to raise awareness of the risks posed by weapon contamination. The sessions enabled around 37,000 people living in contaminated areas to adopt safer behaviour and better protect themselves against the risks.



Information session regarding the dangers of explosive remnants of war conducted to a community in Missan governorate by the Iraqi Red Crescent Society.

PROMOTING RESPECT FOR INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW

The ICRC aims to protect the lives and dignity of victims of war and other situations of violence and prevent suffering by promoting compliance with international humanitarian law. In Iraq, ICRC staff regularly hold information sessions on international humanitarian law for government officials, weapon bearers, community leaders, religious leaders, tribal leaders, journalists, academics, and Iraqi Red Crescent Society staff and volunteers.

In 2012:

- religious and tribal leaders deepened their awareness of the ICRC's mandate and activities and of the links between international humanitarian law and Islam in regular meetings and workshops. Their acceptance of the ICRC's work helped expand the organization's access especially in violence-affected areas;
- increased contacts and activities with universities provided opportunities for wider promotion of international humanitarian law, with a view to seeing it integrated into academic curricula;

- several NGOs, particularly those working in support of women, reinforced their cooperation with the ICRC, contributing their expertise and facilitating contacts on the ground;
- more than 2,000 current and potential beneficiaries of assistance programmes throughout the country learnt about the ICRC and its activities, which helped strengthen acceptance of the ICRC's work.

The ICRC maintained a constructive dialogue with armed and security forces at the central and regional levels. It organized seminars for 87 formation commanders on integrating international humanitarian law into decision-making processes, and led courses on international humanitarian law for 27 members of the Kurdistan Peshmerga forces, who became instructors in the law. In addition, the ICRC organized information sessions on international humanitarian law and other applicable norms for 920 members of the security forces on the ground, including police officers.

COOPERATING WITH THE IRAQI RED CRESCENT SOCIETY

The ICRC helps the Iraqi Red Crescent Society develop its ability to deliver humanitarian services in Iraq. Cooperation between the two organizations also focuses on assisting persons separated from their relatives to restore contact and exchange news, and educating communities about the risks of explosive remnants of war.

In 2012, the ICRC:

- organized 21 first-aid and emergency response courses for 315 Iraqi Red Crescent staff and volunteers, and trained 14 Iraqi Red Crescent instructors in these matters;
- organized two workshops on international humanitarian law to enable 30 Iraqi Red Crescent staff to spread knowledge of this body of law;
- organized various training courses to enhance the capability of Iraqi Red Crescent staff to assess, plan and design projects, with support from Iraqi Red Crescent regional trainers who had previously received instruction from the ICRC.

The ICRC also supported an Iraqi Red Crescent programme to raise awareness of explosive remnants of war by printing 10,000 posters, 30,000 leaflets, 50,000 timetables, 25,000 colouring books, 50,000 pocket calendars and 50,000 board games.

In 2012, Iraqi Red Crescent personnel involved in the programme to raise awareness of explosive remnants of war:

- conducted 460 information sessions for almost 37,000 people in contaminated areas of 14 governorates;
- supported local initiatives aiming to draw attention to the dangers of explosive remnants of war by producing and installing seven billboards in Diyala and 10 warning signs in Wassit.



First aid training given by the ICRC for trainers of the IRCS in Sulaimaniyah.

MISSION

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is an impartial, neutral and independent organization whose exclusively humanitarian mission is to protect the lives and dignity of victims of armed conflict and other situations of violence and to provide them with assistance. The ICRC also endeavours to prevent suffering by promoting and strengthening humanitarian law and

universal humanitarian principles. Established in 1863, the ICRC is at the origin of the Geneva Conventions and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. It directs and coordinates the international activities conducted by the Movement in armed conflicts and other situations of violence.

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ICRC

THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS (ICRC) HAS BEEN WORKING IN IRAQ CONTINUOUSLY SINCE 1980 RESPONDING TO THE CONSEQUENCES OF ARMED CONFLICTS AND VIOLENCE.