



ICRC

FACTS & FIGURES

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An ICRC and SARC convoy on its way to Rural Deir Ezzor. Deir Ezzor - Syria.

ICRC

THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS IN SYRIA

THE YEAR IN REVIEW

In 2012, the unrest in Syria gradually turned into an armed conflict affecting the lives of millions of Syrians and sharply increasing humanitarian needs.

Despite numerous constraints, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the Syrian Arab Red Crescent have been working hard to reach hundreds of thousands of displaced and resident Syrians across the country in order to respond to their needs, which include food, water and health care.

The ICRC and the Syrian Arab Red Crescent helped ensure that clean water was available to over 14 million people in 2012. Food items were also delivered to more than 1.5 million people, most of them displaced. Another half a million Syrians were also supplied with other essentials (blankets, mattresses, kitchen utensils and so forth). Furthermore, the ICRC and the Syrian Arab Red Crescent donated enough surgical and other medical supplies to treat thousands of sick and wounded patients across the country.

More than 100 field trips were carried out this past year to different parts of the country jointly with the Syrian Arab Red Crescent. However, in light of the continuing deterioration of the situation, much more needs to be done, including a significant scaling-up of our humanitarian response.

The ICRC currently has close to 100 staff members working in Syria, including 20 international team members. These personnel often work together with the Syrian Arab Red Crescent. Taking great risks and facing numerous challenges, they do everything in their power to bring relief to those suffering the effects of the conflict and to prevent, to the greatest extent possible, further human suffering. These efforts remain at the heart of the ICRC's humanitarian activities in 2013.

EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE: FOOD AND OTHER ESSENTIAL ITEMS

Having fled from their homes as a result of the ongoing fighting, hundreds of thousands of displaced Syrians have become completely dependent on humanitarian aid. The ICRC and the Syrian Arab Red Crescent together managed to provide aid throughout the country for more than 1.5 million people in 2012, most of them displaced. This assistance was distributed as follows.

- Food rations, including rice, beans, lentils, tea and sugar, canned food and other items, were distributed to more than 1.5 million people across the country, beginning with rural Damascus in the south, to Homs, Idlib, Hama, and up to Aleppo in the north of the country.



A man is delighted upon receiving an ICRC food parcel. Hama. Syria.

- Mattresses, blankets, hygiene items (soap, washing detergents, shampoo, etc.) and other household essentials (kitchen utensils, buckets, rechargeable lights and sleeping mats) were distributed to more than half a million people across the country.
- School bags containing notebooks and pencils were distributed to 30,000 children from vulnerable families when the school term began in September 2012.

PROVIDING CLEAN WATER AND UPGRADING WATER AND SANITARY WORKS

The ICRC works to ensure that people affected by violence have access to clean water and acceptable sanitary conditions. It also strives to ensure that displaced people accommodated in schools and other public shelters live in acceptable sanitary and hygienic conditions until they are able to return home.

Thanks to the joint efforts of the ICRC and the Syrian Arab Red Crescent, millions of people across the country had access to clean drinking water and enhanced water and sanitary infrastructure.

- To support local water boards in their efforts to maintain the supply of water that is clean enough for most purposes and also of water that is fully safe to drink for some 12.5 million people in the governorates of Damascus, Rural Damascus, Aleppo, Homs, Hama, Deir Ezzor, al-Hassakeh, al-Raqqa, Tartous, Lattakia, Quneitra and Sweida, products used to treat water (250 tonnes of aluminium sulphate and 740,000 litres of sodium hypochlorite) were provided.
- More than 3.5 million people benefited from emergency repairs to water infrastructure damaged by the fighting in Homs, Aleppo and Deir Ezzor.
- ICRC water engineers, together with the Syrian Arab Red Crescent, organized emergency repairs and upgrading of more than 290 public facilities hosting more than 88,000 displaced people. Among other improvements, showers were installed, the capacity of sanitary facilities was expanded, water storage capacity was increased and, in some places, water-heating units were installed.
- Ten-litre water bottles were distributed to over 80,000 people during the first days of displacement.



SARC volunteers installing an ICRC water tank with a stand. Furqlus. Homs.

- Some 135,000 displaced and drought-affected people benefited from water trucking in al-Hassakeh, Deir Ezzor, al-Raqqa, Homs and Rural Damascus.
- Some 160,000 people in drought-affected areas benefited from water supply projects such as upgrades to boreholes and ponds and the construction of underground reservoirs used for harvesting rain water.
- The ICRC provided spare parts and consumables to a number of local water boards to keep water-treatment units running that serve more than 175,000 people.

HEALTH CARE FOR THE SICK AND THE WOUNDED

The ICRC provides medical supplies to the Syrian Arab Red Crescent to expand the capabilities of its emergency health-care response and first-aid services for the wounded and the sick. It also strives to directly provide hospitals and other health facilities treating the wounded with medical supplies.



ICRC president Peter Maurer visits a patient at a Damascus hospital.

In 2012, the ICRC helped provide much-needed surgical and other medical items to help treat thousands of wounded people across the country:

- The Syrian Arab Red Crescent was provided by the ICRC with four mobile health units, fully equipped to provide primary health-care services in areas suffering the effects of the conflict and to help stabilize patients, for use in Aleppo, Homs, Hama and Tartous.
- The ICRC delivered surgical and other medical items to a number of hospitals and health facilities in Damascus, Homs and Rural Damascus following assessments of their needs and surgical capacity. It also delivered similar items to the Ministry of Health.
- Together with the Syrian Arab Red Crescent, the ICRC delivered medical supplies throughout the country to help treat thousands of wounded patients.
- The ICRC provided technical and financial support enabling some 70 Syrian Arab Red Crescent volunteers to attend advanced first-aid training.



A Syrian family making a free phone call to re-establish family links at ICRC's tracing office at the camp. Zaatari refugee camp in Mafraq, Jordan.

RESTORING CONTACT BETWEEN FAMILY MEMBERS

The ICRC endeavours to restore and maintain contact between relatives separated by the conflict, whether inside Syria or in neighbouring countries. It has helped hundreds of people affected by the current conflict in Syria, as well as people in the occupied Golan, restore contact with other members of their families:

- Close to 800 people sought the ICRC's help in confirming the whereabouts of relatives who have gone missing or have been arrested since the start of the conflict. Over 590 of the requests concerned people who were believed to be detained.
- More than 150 people without valid identification papers, including refugees, were resettled in third countries with ICRC temporary travel documents issued in coordination with the authorities concerned and the UNHCR.
- The ICRC facilitated travel to and from the occupied Golan for over 200 students and other people in humanitarian need.
- More than 50 official documents were couriered back and forth between Syrian families separated by the demarcation line to enable them to qualify for State allowances, or to settle inheritance and property issues.
- The ICRC received dozens of Red Cross messages (containing family news) for further distribution to immediate family members and other relatives.

VISITING DETAINEES

Visiting detainees remains a priority for ICRC, which stands ready to carry out visits for people held by one side or another any time the opportunity arises.

The ICRC pursued a dialogue with the Syrian authorities to reach a common understanding that would enable its delegates to carry out visits to all detention facilities in Syria. As a result, ICRC delegates conducted a visit in May 2012 to detainees held in Aleppo central prison. This visit was carried out in accordance with the ICRC's standard procedures, which involve, among other things, speaking to detainees in private and assessing the conditions in which they are being held. At the visit's conclusion, ICRC delegates shared and discussed their findings and recommendations bilaterally and confidentially with the detaining authorities.



ICRC and SARC distributing assistance. Homs.



An IHL seminar arranged by the ICRC in Damascus.

In 2012, the ICRC also engaged in a dialogue with the armed opposition with the aim of visiting places of detention under their control. The ICRC stands ready to carry out such visits, the security situation permitting, and provided that the ICRC's standard procedures for visits to places of detention are accepted and adhered to.

PROMOTING INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW

To raise awareness of and promote compliance with international humanitarian law, the ICRC:

- Continued bilateral and confidential dialogue with the Syrian authorities to raise awareness of international humanitarian law and remind them of the need to spare civilians and their property. A similar dialogue was also held with various armed opposition groups.
- Issued close to 40 written public documents detailing the humanitarian situation and reminding those involved in the conflict of the rules of international humanitarian law.
- Held a two-day in-depth seminar on international humanitarian law in coordination with the Syrian Arab Red Crescent, which was attended by 15 professors of law and Sharia from the University of Aleppo.
- Organized two workshops for journalists to enhance their knowledge of international humanitarian law and international human rights law.

WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE SYRIAN ARAB RED CRESCENT

The ICRC provided the Syrian Arab Red Crescent with material, technical, logistical, financial and other support to enable it to maintain the important role it plays in responding to the needs of people suffering the effects of the fighting.

THE ICRC'S MISSION IN A NUTSHELL

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) was founded 150 years ago, in 1863, and is part of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. It has been working in Syria and in the occupied Golan for over 45 years, since 1967.

The ICRC is a neutral, impartial and independent humanitarian organization. It seeks to preserve a measure of humanity in times of armed conflict. Its guiding principle is that even in war, there are limits.

The set of rules established with this in mind, and endorsed by nearly every nation in the world, is known as international humanitarian law. The Geneva Conventions form its backbone.

Headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland, the ICRC has over 12,000 employees who work in more than 80 countries.

For more information, visit us on www.icrc.org

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