

ISRAEL AND THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES



ICRC / AR, 2011
 + ICRC delegation + ICRC sub-delegation + ICRC mission + ICRC office
 + ICRC-supported prosthetic/orthotic centre

EXPENDITURE (IN KCHF)	
Protection	15,231
Assistance	30,013
Prevention	3,865
Cooperation with National Societies	2,610
General	-

► **51,719**

of which: Overheads 3,157

IMPLEMENTATION RATE	
Expenditure/yearly budget	80%

PERSONNEL	
Expatriates	78
National staff (daily workers not included)	310

KEY POINTS

In 2011, the ICRC:

- persisted in its efforts to persuade Israel to address the humanitarian issues arising from its non-compliance with the 1949 Geneva Conventions and to impress upon the Palestinian authorities and armed groups the obligation to respect civilians
- visited 20,296 detainees held by Israel and 3,684 held by the Palestinian authorities and shared its findings and recommendations regarding their treatment and living conditions with the detaining authorities
- through its family visits programme, arranged almost 115,000 family visits to 6,072 detainees from the West Bank, East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights held in Israel
- with local partners, rehabilitated water supply and sanitation systems, benefiting some 775,000 people, and implemented livelihood projects benefiting 59,430 people in the occupied Palestinian territory
- supplied 122 tonnes of medical items and consumables to 8 key Gaza hospitals (total capacity 1,935 beds)
- helped the Palestine Red Crescent Society and Magen David Adom boost their emergency preparedness and response capacities, thereby strengthening its operational partnerships with them

The ICRC has been present in Israel and the occupied territories since the 1967 Arab-Israeli war. It strives to ensure respect for IHL, in particular its provisions relative to the protection of civilians living under occupation. It monitors the treatment and living conditions of detainees held by the Israeli and Palestinian authorities and provides assistance to the Palestinian population. As the lead agency for the Movement in this context, the ICRC coordinates the work of its Movement partners and supports the activities of the Palestine Red Crescent Society and the Magen David Adom.

CONTEXT

The peace talks between the parties to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict remained stalled despite international efforts to revive them. The Palestinian Authority submitted a request to the UN General Assembly for full Palestinian statehood based on the 1967 borders, a move popular among Palestinians but denounced by Israel as an impediment to the chance of peace. The admission of Palestine to UNESCO led to Israel temporarily freezing the transfer of Palestinian tax revenues to the territory, further weakening the Palestinians' economic situation.

The events of the "Arab Spring" strained Israel's relations with neighbouring countries and stoked unrest among Palestinians, prompting large demonstrations, to which the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) responded, reportedly causing civilian casualties.

Meanwhile, Hamas and Fatah took steps towards rapprochement by signing an agreement to explore the formation of a transitional Palestinian unity government and to hold elections, announced for May 2012.

The sporadic escalation of violence in the occupied Palestinian territory, including rocket attacks on Israel and retaliatory action by the IDF, continued to affect both Palestinian and Israeli civilians. In the Gaza Strip, the partial easing of Israel's blockade in 2010 had a minimal effect on living conditions. In the West Bank, Palestinian farmers still faced difficulties accessing their land near the security barrier and settlements; settler violence, including attacks directed at Palestinians and their property and even at IDF personnel, reportedly increased.

The Israeli government and Hamas concluded an agreement brokered by Egypt that led to the release of an Israeli soldier captured in 2006 and of over 1,000 Palestinian detainees in October and December.

ICRC ACTION AND RESULTS

The ICRC continued to engage Israel in dialogue on the humanitarian consequences of its non-compliance with the 1949 Geneva Conventions and monitored the impact of Israeli policies and military activity. Reports submitted to and meetings with the Israeli authorities focused on the humanitarian issues arising from, among other things: restrictions on movement and access to land and fishing areas; increased levels of settler violence; and the conduct of Israeli military and law enforcement operations, including "Operation Cast Lead".

Main figures and indicators	PROTECTION	Total		
CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)				
Red Cross messages (RCMs)			UAMs/SCs*	
RCMs collected		4,194		
RCMs distributed		5,600		
Reunifications, transfers and repatriations				
People reunited with their families		2		
	<i>including people registered by another delegation</i>	1		
People transferred/repatriated		747		
Human remains transferred/repatriated		5		
Tracing requests, including cases of missing persons			Women	Minors
People for whom a tracing request was newly registered		55	2	
People located (tracing cases closed positively)		46		
Tracing cases still being handled at 31 December 2011 (people)		15	2	
Documents				
People to whom travel documents were issued		3		
Official documents relayed between family members across borders/front lines		2,779		
PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)				
ICRC visits			Women	Minors
Detainees visited ¹		24,080		
Detainees visited and monitored individually		6,116	64	414
Detainees newly registered		2,963	19	329
Number of visits carried out		696		
Number of places of detention visited		106		
Restoring family links				
RCMs collected		6,272		
RCMs distributed		4,692		
Phone calls made to families to inform them of the whereabouts of a detained relative		3,595		
Detainees visited by their relatives with ICRC/National Society support		6,072		
People to whom a detention attestation was issued		10,156		

* Unaccompanied minors/separated children

1. All detainees known through the authorities' notifications and followed up by the ICRC

Main figures and indicators	ASSISTANCE	Total	Women	Children
CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)				
Economic security, water and habitat				
Food	Beneficiaries	6,417	26%	47%
Essential household items	Beneficiaries	7,090	26%	47%
Agricultural, veterinary and other micro-economic initiatives	Beneficiaries	59,430	26%	47%
Water and habitat activities	Beneficiaries	775,385	26%	47%
PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)				
Economic security, water and habitat				
Essential household items	Beneficiaries	17,092		
WOUNDED AND SICK				
Hospitals				
Hospitals supported	Structures	29		
	<i>of which provided data</i>	18		
Admissions	Patients	269,723		
	<i>of whom weapon-wounded</i>	940		
	<i>of whom other surgical cases</i>	61,870		
	<i>of whom medical cases</i>	94,549		
	<i>of whom gynaecological/obstetric cases</i>	112,364		
Operations performed		55,504		
Outpatient consultations	Patients	640,511		
	<i>of which surgical</i>	264,829		
	<i>of which medical</i>	280,677		
	<i>of which gynaecological/obstetric</i>	95,005		
Water and habitat				
Water and habitat activities	Number of beds	1,935		
Physical rehabilitation				
Centres supported	Structures	1		
Patients receiving services	Patients	3,357	278	2,116
New patients fitted with prostheses	Patients	63	11	6
Prostheses delivered	Units	86	12	8
New patients fitted with orthoses	Patients	394	16	352
Orthoses delivered	Units	408	20	359
Crutches delivered	Units	174		
Wheelchairs delivered	Units	12		

The ICRC's dialogue with the Palestinian authorities and armed groups emphasized the need to respect both Israeli and Palestinian civilians and their property and to ensure the safety of medical personnel.

The ICRC concentrated its assistance programmes on alleviating the plight of Palestinians hardest hit by the conflict and occupation, including those whose homes had been destroyed or damaged. Cash-for-work and livelihood-support projects, implemented in partnership with the Palestine Red Crescent Society, helped impoverished people in the closed-off Gaza Strip and residents of the West Bank cope with the various restrictions.

In cooperation with the local water boards, the ICRC pursued projects to rehabilitate water supply and sanitation systems in the occupied territory, while encouraging sustainable resource management.

As a consequence of import and movement restrictions, key Palestinian hospitals, mainly in the Gaza Strip, relied on the ICRC's technical, material and financial support to respond to the needs of hundreds of thousands of patients, including those requiring surgery, post-surgical care and physical rehabilitation. The ICRC, together with the Norwegian Red Cross, helped the Palestine Red Crescent develop its emergency medical services (EMS); it facilitated the delivery of transport permits between East Jerusalem, the Gaza Strip and the West Bank and provided the EMS and other Gazan ambulance services with spare parts and fuel.

To check that detainees' treatment and living conditions were in line with internationally recognized standards, ICRC delegates visited people held by Israel, by the *de facto* Hamas authorities in the Gaza Strip and by the Palestinian Authority in the West Bank. It provided the detaining authorities with confidential feedback and, wherever possible, lent its expertise in improving detainees' living conditions. The ICRC family visits programme enabled several thousand detainees to receive visits from relatives, while wider family-links services proved vital, especially for detainees from the Gaza Strip, for whom the Israeli authorities had suspended the family visits programme in 2007. At the end of 2011, acting as a neutral intermediary, the ICRC facilitated the release of over 1,000 detainees.

In Israel and in the occupied territory, work to promote IHL in government, military, academic, media and religious circles and to increase awareness of humanitarian issues in general continued, with the aim of gaining support for efforts to address the ICRC's concerns.

Pursuing its partnerships with the Palestine Red Crescent and Magen David Adom, the ICRC provided them with financial, material and technical input and worked in cooperation with other Movement partners to help ensure that both organizations had the capacities to respond to an array of humanitarian needs in Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory.

CIVILIANS

Efforts to ensure respect for civilians continue

Aiming to address the adverse impact on civilians' lives of the situation in the occupied Palestinian territory and Israel, the ICRC made representations to the Israeli authorities, the Palestinian Authority, and the *de facto* Hamas authorities in the Gaza Strip, based on documented allegations. All parties were urged to respect civilians, civilian infrastructure and the medical services.

The Israeli authorities were reminded of the humanitarian issues arising from non-compliance with the 1949 Geneva Conventions. They were urged, *inter alia*, to:

- ▶ protect Palestinians and their property from settler violence and prosecute those responsible
- ▶ refrain from the disproportionate use of force in law enforcement, search and arrest operations, notably in and around the Gaza Strip (see *Authorities*)
- ▶ ease mobility restrictions, notably between East Jerusalem, the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, and restrictions on access to markets for Gaza products
- ▶ find viable solutions for ensuring access to agricultural land, fishing areas and essential services for the communities affected by the routing of the West Bank barrier

In the occupied Palestinian territory, dialogue with the Palestinian Authority, the *de facto* Hamas authorities and armed groups focused on alleged abuses, respect for humanitarian norms and ending attacks against all civilians.

Residents have improved access to safe water and better sanitation

Some 703,000 people in the Gaza Strip and 72,200 in the West Bank benefited from water and sanitation infrastructure projects, implemented with Palestinian water boards. These improved the water supply, encouraged sustainable resource management and, through better treatment and disposal of sewage and wastewater, contributed to disease prevention.

In Gaza City, 553,000 people faced fewer health risks thanks to two ongoing projects to rehabilitate storm water and wastewater treatment systems. The 150,000 residents of Rafah saw further improvements to the quality of the water they could use for irrigation after completion of another stage of the project begun in 2010 to refurbish/upgrade the city's wastewater treatment plant. Four similar projects were under way.

In the West Bank, 70,500 residents had improved access to more affordable water after three storage tanks were installed and a distribution system for 21 locations was constructed. These decreased water cuts and ended the need for water trucking, halving the price of water per cubic metre in at least two villages. In tightly controlled Bir El Basha, some 1,700 people gained access to safe water after the completion of a distribution network.

Budget limitations delayed planned studies on Gaza's water resources and on other Palestinian water production facilities.

Struggling communities improve their economic security

In the occupied Palestinian territory, about 940 people (120 families) whose houses had been destroyed/damaged owing to the conflict coped better after being provided, within 48 hours, with essential household items and, in some cases, food.

Particularly vulnerable people benefited from livelihood projects in the Gaza Strip (25,111 people/3,948 households) and in the West Bank (34,319 people/6,115 households).

In Gaza border areas, 1,819 farming households (11,824 people) improved their yields with inputs such as seed and fertilizers. In the West Bank areas worst affected by movement restrictions, 333 farming households (2,130 people) gained better access to their land following the ICRC's intervention with the Israeli

authorities. Livestock production outlook also improved for 5,714 farming households (31,683 people) after the Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture, with ICRC support, successfully vaccinated 250,000 heads of livestock threatened by a chlamydia outbreak.

In the Gaza Strip, some 2,057 households (12,819 people) avoided destitution thanks to cash-for-work projects. To overcome their disabilities, 72 patients from the Artificial Limb and Polio Centre (ALPC) (see *Wounded and sick*) received basic training in business and management skills and inputs to start agricultural or small-business activities with which to sustain themselves and their families (a further 396 people). Similarly, 68 households (506 people) in the most severely restricted areas of Hebron City increased their incomes through cash-for-work projects or small-business initiatives. Other destitute Hebron residents (6,200 people/940 households) continued to receive monthly food rations and hygiene kits, provided with the Palestine Red Crescent.

People overcome movement restrictions

Because of borders, front lines and movement restrictions, people used the ICRC as a neutral intermediary to exchange news via RCMs, to reunite with family members, to transfer documents, and to travel between the occupied Golan and the Syrian Arab Republic, between Lebanon and Israel and between locations in the Palestinian territory.

Family visits between people living in the Golan and their relatives in the Syrian Arab Republic remained suspended, despite efforts to have the Israeli ban on such visits lifted. With the ICRC acting as a neutral intermediary, however, family members separated by the demarcation line maintained minimum contact and Golan farmers sold their apple harvest in Syrian markets (see *Syrian Arab Republic*).

The families of Israelis missing in relation to past military action maintained contact with the ICRC; no progress was made regarding Jordanians missing in Israel since the 1980s (see *Jordan*). Families in Israel restored or maintained contact with relatives abroad through ICRC family-links services.

PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM

Detainees held by the Israeli authorities in prisons, interrogation centres, provisional detention centres and police stations and those held in places of permanent and temporary detention in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank received regular visits, conducted according to standard ICRC procedures. The detaining authorities received confidential feedback and ICRC observations on detainees' treatment, living conditions and access to health care during all stages of their detention.

Detainees used ICRC family-links services to communicate with their families. Those with specific needs or the particularly vulnerable, such as minors and migrants, received some assistance, including educational materials, hygiene kits and medical items.

People held by Israel

Detainees under interrogation, in administrative detention, in prolonged solitary confinement and from the Gaza Strip and particularly vulnerable inmates were given special attention.

The authorities regularly took follow-up action relating to the ICRC's observations. Meetings with the authorities and UNHCR served to highlight concerns about the situation of migrants, including those irregularly detained in the Sinai, and to promote the voluntary repatriation of those released. In some 40 cases, ICRC-provided documents facilitated such repatriations.

Through the ICRC's family visits programme, around 6,000 detainees from the West Bank, East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights received 115,000 visits from their relatives, including 27 family members transported by ambulance. A review showed that around 80% of eligible detainees received regular visits through this programme. The others either did not need the ICRC's help or could not receive visits because of permit delays. Despite some improvements, regular follow-up was required to address delays in processing permits and issues concerning the treatment of visiting relatives at checkpoints.

Prevented by the Israeli authorities from receiving family visits since July 2007, detainees from the Gaza Strip and their relatives

PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM	ISRAEL	PALESTINIAN TERRITORY
ICRC visits		
Detainees visited ¹	20,396	3,684
Detainees visited and monitored individually	4,115	2,001
	<i>of whom women</i>	13
	<i>of whom minors</i>	38
Detainees newly registered	1,701	1,262
	<i>of whom women</i>	4
	<i>of whom minors</i>	33
Number of visits carried out	390	306
Number of places of detention visited	38	68
Restoring family links		
RCMs collected	5,752	520
RCMs distributed	4,396	296
Phone calls made to families to inform them of the whereabouts of a detained relative	2,756	839
Detainees visited by their relatives with ICRC/National Society support	6,072	
People to whom a detention attestation was issued	9,105	1,051

1. All detainees known through the authorities' notifications and followed up by the ICRC

PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM	ISRAEL	PALESTINIAN TERRITORY
Economic security, water and habitat		
Essential household items	Beneficiaries	15,073
		2,019

exchanged RCMs, phone calls and news relayed by ICRC delegates. At the end of 2011, the Israeli authorities agreed to consider issuing exceptional permits on humanitarian grounds based on ICRC-submitted cases.

Detainees released in October and December (see *Context*) privately confirmed with delegates their wish to return home and had their transport facilitated by the ICRC.

People held in the Palestinian territory

The Palestinian Authority and the *de facto* Hamas authorities acted on some of the ICRC's recommendations relating to detainees' treatment and living conditions and basic judicial guarantees. In the West Bank for example, inmates in some places of detention saw improvements in their material conditions and, as of mid-January, all arrested civilians were handed over to the civil judiciary. There and in the Gaza Strip, medical and non-medical staff working in places of detention attended workshops on public health and medical ethics.

WOUNDED AND SICK

Several hundred thousand patients relied on ICRC-supported hospitals in the Palestinian territory, especially in the Gaza Strip. Regular hospital visits enabled the ICRC to: provide, and monitor the use of, essential medical/surgical supplies and spare parts; raise concerns with the Israeli authorities about the adverse impact of movement and import restrictions on hospital activities and on patients' access to treatment; facilitate patient and ambulance movements through checkpoints and medical deliveries from the West Bank to the Gaza Strip; familiarize hospital staff with IHL provisions protecting medical services; and improve the physical protection of health facilities and equipment.

Eight key Gaza hospitals (total capacity: 1,935 beds) managed to function thanks to the ICRC's delivery of 630 tonnes of various materials, including 122 tonnes of medical supplies and spare parts for power generators and medical equipment. Sustainable solutions for supplying power to hospitals were being studied. Al-Shifa Hospital, Gaza's largest, boosted its emergency response capabilities through the rehabilitation of its emergency room and through daily cooperation with an ICRC surgeon and nurse. Water and power supplies were improved in three hospitals, but import restrictions delayed similar projects in other hospitals. Despite security limitations, some 70 medical practitioners working in the emergency departments of Gaza and West Bank hospitals sharpened their skills during ICRC-sponsored trauma-care training.

With continued ICRC/Norwegian Red Cross support (including for operating costs and managerial, medical and maintenance training), the Palestine Red Crescent EMS responded to more than 70,000 call-outs in East Jerusalem, the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. The EMS of Gaza's *de facto* health authorities received similar support. A committee established by the Gazan authorities with the Palestine Red Crescent and other ambulance operators discussed ways to improve EMS coordination, with ICRC input.

The newly renovated Gaza ALPC provided services to more than 3,300 patients, of whom over 550 also received related physiotherapy rehabilitation. In partnership with the local health authorities, training in trauma and post-surgical care and physiotherapy continued in three major Gaza hospitals, which reported providing inpatient physiotherapy for over 10,000 people in 2011. Plans to offer similar support to other hospitals were under consideration.

AUTHORITIES

Networking and dialogue with the Israeli and Palestinian authorities, including the *de facto* authorities in Gaza and other decision-makers, concentrated on operational and IHL-related concerns. Information sessions on the ICRC's mandate and activities aimed at gaining support for efforts to address issues of ICRC concern were held for them and for embassy representatives.

In addition to other representations (see *Civilians, People deprived of their freedom* and *Wounded and sick*), the Israeli authorities received a report on the IDF's use of force in Gaza's buffer zone. Discussions began on a report on the situation of Gaza markets following the easing of Israel's blockade and continued on past reports on the conduct of hostilities during "Operation Cast Lead", the negative impact of the routing of the West Bank barrier and movement restrictions in the Jordan Valley and other settlement areas.

With ICRC input, the Palestinian Legislative Council submitted legislation on the use of the emblem to the President's Office, where it was awaiting approval.

ARMED FORCES AND OTHER BEARERS OF WEAPONS

Working relationships and dialogue with the armed and security forces in Israel and the Palestinian territory centred on IHL, international human rights norms and ICRC activities.

Discussions with the Israeli defence minister and chief of staff on the interpretation of IHL and its integration into the IDF's doctrine and training, based on the ICRC's 2009 report on "Operation Cast Lead", showed that more work was still needed. Nevertheless, some 1,600 members of the armed, police and border forces (including from private security companies) and prison officers learnt more about the law and the ICRC's mandate at briefings.

The Palestinian Interior Ministry worked on drafting a human rights training manual applicable to law enforcement. Several thousand officers and security service personnel in the Palestinian territory, including people working in places of detention, attended briefings on the Movement, international human rights norms and the legal framework applicable to their functions. Limited dialogue with armed factions in the Gaza Strip aimed to facilitate understanding of IHL and ICRC activities.

CIVIL SOCIETY

The level of violence in the occupied territories required the promotion of IHL and the ICRC among civil society actors to gain their support and facilitate humanitarian action.

Local and international journalists, using ICRC materials, reported on the humanitarian situation resulting from the Israeli-Palestinian armed conflict and of the Golan occupation and on ICRC activities.

Israeli and Palestinian NGOs, lawyers and community and religious leaders attended events facilitated/organized by the ICRC. For example, 25 lawyers, including from the public service, attended an intensive 50-hour IHL course co-organized with an Israeli NGO. In both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, religious leaders, judges, lecturers and scholars participated in round-tables, and 30 Islamic scholars attended workshops abroad on IHL and its similarities with sharia law.

Work with the Israeli academic community, including co-organized conferences, ICRC lectures and the yearly IHL competition,

encouraged students to include IHL in their studies. Eight Gaza and West Bank law or sharia faculties continued to teach IHL, while meetings encouraged other universities to do the same. More than 1,300 students in the Palestinian territory attended presentations on IHL and the ICRC.

After nine years of ICRC support, the Exploring Humanitarian Law school programme was handed over to the Palestinian Education Ministry, which had integrated the subject into the curricula of more than 270 Gaza and West Bank classes.

RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

Following the 31st International Conference, the ICRC continued to facilitate the monitoring of the 2005 cooperation agreement between the Magen David Adom and the Palestine Red Crescent. Working with the ICRC, the two organizations strengthened their capacities in disaster preparedness, EMS, tracing and dissemination, while integrating relevant aspects of the Health Care in Danger project.

With ICRC support and in coordination with other Movement partners, the Palestine Red Crescent:

- ▶ activated a disaster management database that linked 4 operations rooms around the territory
- ▶ organized training in leadership, communication, relief and logistics
- ▶ drew up a procedure for relief action integrating the Safer Access approach and the Fundamental Principles
- ▶ developed presentations on family-links services and the Movement in Arabic
- ▶ obtained more and longer permits for the movement of its EMS personnel between the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem (see *Wounded and sick*)

Similarly, the Magen David Adom:

- ▶ developed projects for vulnerable populations (Bedouin, youth and migrant communities)
- ▶ integrated knowledge of the Movement into its standard training
- ▶ developed its emergency response, including family-links activities
- ▶ improved its contingency planning through contacts with Movement partners and the Israeli authorities
- ▶ enabled senior staff to attend overseas training

The ICRC also facilitated other National Societies' missions and Movement coordination.