

ICRC REGIONAL DELEGATION FOR THE GCC COUNTRIES

(KUWAIT, SAUDI ARABIA, QATAR, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES, BAHRAIN AND OMAN)

THE ICRC'S COVID-19 RESPONSE

MARCH-AUGUST 2020



SUPPORTING HEALTH AUTHORITIES

The ICRC:



Provided recommendations on COVID_19 forensics to the GCC authorities.

Technical support and guidance is to the GCC health authorities.



Provided technical advice about health care in detention centres to the GCC authorities and continues to provide support in other areas.

Continuous efforts to provide support to the GCC authorities when needed.



Generates social media campaigns and content to raise awareness on COVID-19 and good hygiene practices.

DETENTION VISITS IN KUWAIT

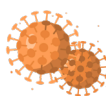
The ICRC:



Visited the deportation centre in Kuwait because it is a hub for a large number of deportees. We provided the centre's director with a list of recommendations and a working paper on managing risks.



Visited one of the accommodation centres in Kuwait where deportees are being held before being returned to their countries of origin. We assessed the conditions in which they are being held and conveyed the findings to the authorities.



Carried out a detention visit to Kuwait Central Prison on 27-29 July, 2020 for the first time since COVID-19 outbreak.

HELPING FAMILIES KEEP IN TOUCH



Reuniting families in government quarantine facilities is part of our COVID-19 response, in collaboration with GCC National Societies.



Guidance for National Societies was shared on how the family links services (RFL) could be used during the pandemic, recommending the use of phone calls and "safe and well" messages for people who need to contact relatives.



We shared information about family links services with National Societies and encouraged them to raise awareness about the services through their digital platforms and websites.



The ICRC in collaboration with Saudi Red Crescent Authority facilitated more than **13** phone calls between families in Saudi Arabia and their loved ones detained in Guantanamo Bay.

INFECTION CONTROL IN DETENTION CENTRES



The ICRC shared best practice and guidance documents about forensics and health care in detention centres, with a focus on the dignified management of the dead.

We provided technical advice about managing isolation in detention centres.



We advised the GCC health authorities on measures to control the spread of COVID-19 in detention centres. The authorities can adapt these measures to their local environments.

As a result of the pandemic, we have prepared virtual training sessions on health care in detention centres.



We provided a detailed set of recommendations to the GCC detaining authorities about preventive and reactive measures to ease the effects of COVID-19 in detention centres. These guidelines are designed to help the authorities:

- implement strong preventive measures to stop the spread of the infection in detention centres
- implement a plan to deal with any confirmed cases of COVID-19.

PARTNERING WITH NATIONAL SOCIETIES IN GCC COUNTRIES



Since the beginning of the COVID-19 outbreak in GCC countries, we have been in close contact with all the National Societies and GCC authorities, showing our support to the staff and volunteers responding to the pandemic. We helped National Societies by extending our technical support for communications, sharing COVID-19 messages on our social media platforms and giving joint interviews to broadcast media.

The ICRC carried out the following activities:



Shared information on preventing the spread of COVID-19 with National Societies in GCC countries.



Shared guidelines on volunteer safety with National Societies in GCC countries.



Provided guidelines on managing the dead and how to help separated families stay in touch through our family links services.



Held 6 information sessions for newly recruited volunteers.



Trained **80** volunteers in social and emergency response. They are supporting the authorities, sharing materials on international humanitarian law and COVID-19.



Ongoing joint efforts are exerted to alleviate human suffering in countries affected by armed conflict, as the pandemic compounds the suffering of millions of vulnerable people that are already struggling to meet basic needs.



Contributing ideas and content that promotes awareness about Covid-19, for social media campaigns run by National Societies.



The National Societies in GCC countries are carrying out response activities in their respective countries. Examples of their work in responding to the pandemic are included below.

KUWAIT RED CRESCENT SOCIETY

The Kuwait Red Crescent Society:



Has distributed over **210,000** meals as part of its national Ramadan campaign



Is delivering **3,000** food parcels to workers in locked-down areas



Launched an awareness campaign on COVID-19 prevention measures called "We protect you", in coordination with the health ministry and civil society organizations



Distributed **10,000** food parcels to **500** families in need



The KRCS created a relief committee to respond to the needs of the affected people of Beirut explosion.



The KRCS dispatched a **36** tons of relief including medical items, food assistance, ambulances, blood and wheelchairs.

The KRCS launched a fundraising campaign to raise funds for its activities in Lebanon.

QATAR RED CRESCENT SOCIETY

The Qatar Red Crescent Society:



Made **50** ambulances operational to transfer people to quarantine centres



Has tasked **700** volunteers with providing psychosocial support in quarantine centres, generating awareness campaigns, disinfecting streets and supervising medical centres



Has provided training to **20,652** volunteers



Has provided four distance training sessions for **22** organizations on COVID-19 and prevention measures



Has allocated **60** million Qatari riyals to support people in need through its Ramadan campaign, providing hot meals for when the fast is broken.



The QRCS raised a campaign "Lebanon in Our Hearts" in coordination with the the Qatari Authority of Charitable Organization and Qatar Charity to raise **50** million Qatari Riyals to support around **55,000** victims as a first stage



A second batch of QRCS assistance was sent to Lebanon on 16 August, 2020. The shipment included food and medical items.

RED CRESCENT AUTHORITY FOR UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

The Red Crescent Authority for United Arab Emirates:



- Is raising awareness through campaigns on COVID-19 prevention measures
- Is supporting **6,909** orphans worldwide as part of its "Qalby Etmaan" programme, which aims to help 10,000 orphans
- Is reuniting **400** stranded people with their families around the world.
- The ERCA launched a campaign to raise funds for the victims of Beirut blast.
- Joint medical and food assistance by the UAE, WHO and the IFRC were dispatched to Lebanon.

SAUDI RED CRESCENT AUTHORITY

The Saudi Red Crescent Authority:



Is delivering campaigns on COVID-19 prevention measures

Has assigned volunteers to work in communities to support the health ministry's campaigns



Has provided first-aid and psychosocial support training for its volunteers, with **23,370** volunteers taking part

Has assigned **1,875** volunteers to take part in its work, with a total of **28,037** volunteering hours contributed



Is a member of the government's coronavirus national task force and is providing humanitarian services to tackle the pandemic



Has helped more than **100,000** people learn about the pandemic and how to stop its spread.

BAHRAIN RED CRESCENT SOCIETY

The Bahrain Red Crescent Society:



Is supporting the government as part of its auxiliary role



Is supporting the public health ministry in managing quarantine centres



Is helping to relocate migrant workers away from crowded areas



Is delivering campaigns on COVID-19 prevention measures



Is providing volunteers with online training in first aid and psychosocial support



Is providing food supplies to **4,500** families.



The BRCS donated an amount of \$50,000 to the Lebanese RC to support its efforts in responding to the current situation.



The BRCS dispatched a \$378,000 in kind donation including medical items and food assistance to Lebanon through the IFRC logistic center in the UAE.

OPERATIONAL FOCUS



Our multidisciplinary response aims to provide immediate help to people in need, as well as address the long-term structural impacts of the COVID-19 crisis. We are focusing on health care in detention and working with National Societies to provide them with technical support and advice.



Exchanges on strategic humanitarian issues between the ICRC and GCC authorities are continuous to explore sustainable responses to the humanitarian needs of affected populations.

We are also working with the media to highlight the plight of people affected by COVID-19 in armed conflict areas, and their humanitarian needs.

Qatar: On 30 June - 01 July 2020, the president of the ICRC conducted a successful e-visit to Qatar, where he virtually met with H.E. Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Qatar, to address the challenging humanitarian needs during the ongoing COVID19 pandemic. The e-visit also included a fruitful discussion with Qatar Red Crescent Society on mutual humanitarian concerns, and the work carried out in responding to COVID19 pandemic, both, domestically and internationally. The President concluded his e-visit with video calls with the Special Adviser to the UN Secretary-General, and with other key interlocutors in Qatar to effectively, coordinate humanitarian response to the needs of affected persons.

Kuwait: On June 29, 2020, the ICRC co-chaired the Third High Level Policy Dialogue with the State of Kuwait, the KRCS and Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development to discuss COVID-19 long term impact. This continued partnership contributes to the alleviation of human suffering through a dedicated collaborative approach to humanitarian causes.

More info:

(<https://www.icrc.org/en/document/kuwait-third-high-level-policy-dialogue-joint-statement>)

Oman: With its partner Oman Charitable Organization, the ICRC is exploring avenues of cooperation to strengthen negotiation skills of humanitarian practitioners in times of crisis.