



THE ICRC IN FORTALEZA

PROMOTING RESPONSES
TO THE HUMANITARIAN IMPACTS
OF ARMED VIOLENCE



ICRC



THE ICRC

In Brazil, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has a partnership with the federal government, local governments, organizations, and communities in order to respond to and support authorities' responses to humanitarian needs of the population in three priority areas:

- Promotion and adoption of International Humanitarian Law (IHL), International Human Rights Law (IHRL), and humanitarian principles, which are the foundation of ICRC's work;
- Relief of the humanitarian consequences of armed violence, a complex phenomenon that has severe impacts on the population – some are visible, such as deaths or injuries, and others less visible, such as disappearances, internal displacement, mental health problems, and/or lack of access to essential public services, namely a health system or education;
- Prevention of the breakdown of family ties within the population affected by armed violence or in a migratory context.

IN CEARÁ

The ICRC has been present in Ceará since 2018 to assist in responding to the humanitarian consequences of armed violence in the state, and to support the work carried out by the institution at the federal level. These initiatives involve authorities from Ceará and civil society, close to people affected by armed violence. The ICRC promotes the protection of essential public services, including their professionals and the population they serve, missing persons and their families, displaced persons, individuals deprived of liberty, as well as the communities. The International Committee of the Red Cross maintains a dialogue with relevant institutions, providing, among other actions, technical support in the creation of multidisciplinary and sustainable responses that benefit the affected population.

Since the beginning of its work in Ceará, the ICRC has signed various agreements to formalize technical partnerships with local authorities.

The organization has an agreement with the State Government of Ceará enables collaborative and constructive work that covers:

- The conditions of detention and treatment of persons deprived of liberty;
- The establishment of mechanisms for searching, locating, and identifying missing and deceased persons;
- The actions aimed at meeting the needs of relatives of missing persons;
- The promotion and integration of international human rights standards into police activities.

Furthermore, an agreement with the Municipality of Fortaleza for the implementation of the Safer Access to Essential Public Services (AMS) program. The Committee also collaborates with the Municipal Guard of Fortaleza, aiming to encourage the promotion and integration of international human rights standards into police activities.



PROTECTION OF POPULATION AFFECTED BY VIOLENCE

The program to protect communities affected by violence aims to minimize the impacts of armed violence on the population by reinforcing state mechanisms to respond to the humanitarian needs of affected individuals. Therefore, the ICRC engages in dialogue with local institutions, providing technical support for the development of multidisciplinary and sustainable responses that benefit the affected population.

When authorities cannot respond, the ICRC may provide emergency assistance to those suffering from the humanitarian consequences of armed violence, particularly those forced to flee and those whose access to basic essential services is impeded or denied.

The organization also seeks to strengthen the capacities and resilience mechanisms of communities affected by armed violence, engaging with civil society organizations and promoting self-protection measures.

MISSING PERSONS AND THEIR FAMILIES

The Family Links Protection Program contributes to fostering inter-institutional coordination, supporting the establishment of the Missing Persons Confrontation Center and the State Committee for Confronting Disappearances. It takes part, as a guest, in providing technical assistance to the latter with intent of offering technical advice through its multidisciplinary team.

It also stays in contact with and supports families of missing persons in order to understand the impact of disappearances and the demands arising from this event, such as administrative, legal, economic, and health-related (including mental health and psychosocial well-being) needs. It encourages family self-organization and works together to expand their skills and capabilities.

The ICRC encourages and supports authorities to improve and develop public policies that are capable of responding to the needs of people affected by disappearances, including creating search mechanisms. To this end, it offers technical recommendations and shares experiences gained from humanitarian work in Brazil and other countries.





C. Almeida/ICRC

PERSONS DEPRIVED OF LIBERTY

Guided by the principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality, and independence, the ICRC intervenes to improve the conditions of detention and treatment of persons deprived of liberty. The goal is to ensure that these individuals receive humane treatment, with due respect for their dignity, regardless of the reason for their detention.

The organization has an agreement with the State Government of Ceará and the Penitentiary Administration Secretariat (SAP) that allows access to places of detention in the state. Through visits to some prison units, the ICRC has expanded its work in the prison system. Using an evidence-based methodology, it seeks to contribute to the improvement of detention conditions and that the various groups of persons deprived of liberty obtain an appropriate treatment, addressing their needs.

The ICRC provides technical support to prison authorities by means of transparent and confidential bilateral dialogue, making recommendations and providing training to prison officers and other professionals according to the needs identified during visits.



MENTAL HEALTH AND PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT

The ICRC works with people affected by violence in urban contexts, displaced or affected by institutional violence, and with relatives of missing persons, identifying their specific needs in terms of mental health and psychosocial well-being and offering support in exceptional cases.

The ICRC's Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Program provides technical support to authorities and key actors in order to create or strengthen appropriate responses to the specific needs of people affected by violence and of relatives of missing persons, as well as to ensure their access to services.

Through partnership with the Municipal Government of Fortaleza, the ICRC provides technical support for strengthening stress management protocols for professionals working in essential public services in the face of critical incidents resulting from armed violence.

SAFER ACCESS (SAF)

The Safer Access to Essential Public Services program, developed by the ICRC, seeks to mitigate the consequences of armed violence for professionals in essential public services sectors such as education, health, and social assistance, as well as for the population they serve. In order to achieve this, the program works to strengthen the capacities of public institutions in areas related to armed violence context analysis, risk management, crisis management, and stress management.

The actions aim to promote changes in the behavior of professionals and managers to strengthen the resilience to the risks and impacts of armed violence, as well as to reduce the humanitarian consequences of violence on the provision and access to services.

AMS protocols are developed by local teams after they have undergone a training course. These are professionals who are in direct contact with those populations and exposed to situations of violence in different territories. In Fortaleza, the work includes the Municipal Secretariats of Health, Education, Social Assistance, and Youth.



DIALOGUE WITH POLICE AND SECURITY FORCES

The ICRC works with public security authorities to promote the respect for international human rights standards applied to police work as a way to prevent and reduce the consequences and the number of victims of armed violence.


Through training and direct dialogue with these authorities, it promotes the integration of the right to pursue these activities by incorporating the international human rights standards and enforcing the institutional documents in the following areas:

- Education: course curriculum, teaching plans, and teaching materials;
- Doctrine: operational procedure manuals, guidelines, and internal norms for operation conduct;
- Training: operational improvement programs, planning, and conduct of operations;
- Development of internal mechanisms for controlling police activity: disciplinary regulations and investigation norms for operational procedures.

The ICRC, in collaboration with the State Secretariat of Public Security, has developed Training Courses for Instructors in human rights, applicable to police activities. With the Municipality's Department of Citizen Security, the ICRC has also trained instructors in the field of human rights, in addition to supporting the development of standardized operational protocols for the Municipal Guard, with a focus on activities around schools and health centers. These protocols undergo constant review and are updated in accordance with the international human rights standards.

All the expertise in integrating these norms into the institutional frameworks is also applied to the Military Police of Ceará.

The ICRC helps people that have been impacted by armed conflict and other situations involving violence throughout the world by doing everything possible to protect their lives and dignity and to alleviate their suffering, often in cooperation with Red Cross and Red Crescent partnerships. The organization also strives to prevent suffering by promoting and empowering International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and defending universal humanitarian principles.

 facebook.com/icrc

 x.com/icrc

 instagram.com/ICRC

 youtube.com/icrcfilms

Fortaleza Office Rua Marcos Macedo, 1333,
Room 604-609

Edifício Corporate ZIP Code 60.150-190,
Aldeota Fortaleza-CE - Brazil

T: +55 85 3046 5631

foz_fortaleza@icrc.org

Regional Delegation for Argentina, Brazil,
Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay

SHIS QI 15 Conj. 5 House 23, Lago Sul

ZIP Code: 71.635-250 - Brasília/DF - Brazil

T: +55 61 3106 2350

bra_brasilia@icrc.org



ICRC

www.icrc.org

© ICRC, March, 2024