



ICRC

## Delegation of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) for Venezuela and the CARICOM States

### Newsletter

October - December 2017



The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is a Geneva-based humanitarian organization mandated by the international community to be the guardian and promoter of international humanitarian law. With 12,000 staff across 80 countries, it helps people around the world affected by armed conflict and other violence.

At the ICRC Regional Delegation for Venezuela and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) States, we work with National Societies in the region to address the humanitarian consequences of migration, armed conflict and other violence, following the organization's principles of neutrality, impartiality and independence in all our activities.

We maintain good relations with authorities, police, military forces and other actors through humanitarian diplomacy, and promote international humanitarian law, international standards on the use of force in law enforcement operations, and respect for the lives and dignity of vulnerable migrants and people displaced by armed conflict.

### ERTC in Caracas Military Hospital

For the first time in Venezuela, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) held an emergency room trauma course (ERTC) for military and civilian doctors from the National Public Health System.

This course took place at the Dr. Carlos Arvelo Military Hospital in Caracas and was attended by 25 doctors - 15 military and 10 civilian - from the Caracas military hospital, the Dr. Vicente Salias Sanoja Military Hospital, Caracas University Hospital, Ana Francisca Pérez de León Hospital and La Rosaleda Military Outpatient Clinic.

Rudy Lukamba, head of health care for the ICRC delegation in Venezuela, explained that the course's objective was to facilitate a high-quality exchange of knowledge and experience between Venezuelan doctors and the ICRC regarding the treatment of traumas. Colonel Ayleen González, coordinator of the teaching department at the Military Hospital in Caracas, said that "one of the benefits of the course is that our military health care personnel are receiving training in the care of critical patients, which is what we do every day."

"This exchange is of vital importance for Venezuelan doctors who work in the area of shock trauma, which is a matter of life or death," added Zayra Medina, director of the Ana Francisca Pérez de León Hospital.

### Jamaica: RIV Project

In 2016, the International Olympic Committee and the ICRC joined forces with the Jamaica Red Cross to launch a project aimed at reducing the impact of violence on young people in urban areas: "Reducing the Impact of Violence (RIV) project."

Over a period of two years (in 2016 and 2017), the Jamaica Red Cross carried out activities in the Clarendon and Saint Catherine communities to improve opportunities for young people aged between 11 and 24, to strengthen their community resilience skills and enable them to cope with the impact of violence in their lives. These activities included: sports, life skills and social behaviour, literacy and mathematics, and psychosocial support.

In addition to these activities in schools, participants from nearby communities received training in areas such as information technology, cleaning, cosmetology, hairdressing, jewellery making, social media marketing and basic first aid. This project ended on December 31, 2017 and there are several success stories to be told.

The ICRC will continue to provide support aimed at improving opportunities for young people through the Jamaica Red Cross Schools of Transformation, which have received assistance for the last 10 years. Several elements of the RIV project will now be incorporated into their curricula.

Please visit: <https://www.icrc.org/en/document/jamaica-education-reduce-impact-violence>



### Red Cross visits La Tigra community in Apure

The Apure Office of the Venezuelan Red Cross, together with the ICRC and the Department of Health, held a conference in La Tigra community located in the Apure state, very close to the border with Colombia.

Vaccination and dentistry services were provided to local adults and children by the region's medical services. In addition, the Department of Health fumigated the area.

Members of the Apure Office of the Venezuelan Red Cross also gave talks on malaria prevention and methods for making homemade repellents.

They offered first aid for common wounds and explained what the Restoring Family Links programme consists of.

A total of 51 children and adults took part. Local residents said it was the first time that this type of activity had taken place in the area.

### Use of force in police operations

States must strictly regulate the use of force in law enforcement operations. They must guarantee that their national legislation conforms with the international legal framework applicable to the tasks of maintaining public order, public safety, arrest and detention.

The ICRC, in its capacity as an impartial, neutral and independent organisation, engages in dialogue with the armed and security forces of several CARICOM member countries such as Belize, Trinidad and Tobago, and Jamaica.

This dialogue seeks to promote the integration of international rules and standards on the use of force and International Humanitarian Law (IHL) into national legislation. The ICRC also provides technical and institutional support, through workshops and training, to the police and the armed forces, to assist them in translating the law into specific measures and law enforcement actions.

### National Societies of the Red Cross attend Regional Workshop

Across the world, humanitarian workers have to take steps to protect their activities. To this end, members of the National Red Cross Societies in Honduras, Guatemala, Colombia, Mexico, El Salvador and Venezuela participated in a workshop that sought to increase regional cooperation and to identify what needs to be done to increase the safety of volunteers and staff in carrying out their work and best practices in this area.

The workshop addressed the issue of Respect for Health Care Services and what impact that has on volunteer participation. It also considered the role of the Red Cross in facilitating access to education through its work with young people aimed at strengthening values, helping develop a sense of belonging to their communities, strengthening community bonds, carrying out first aid work and developing contingency plans to respond to situations of risk. In the Americas, most community activities revolve around schools or are geared towards young people.

The ICRC Delegation in Venezuela also provided support for the exchange of experience between the National Red Cross Societies of Venezuela and El Salvador.

Representatives from the Caracas Office had the opportunity to learn about the community microeconomic initiatives that are being implemented by the local Red Cross in the country.

### Venezuelan Red Cross in Brazil

The Venezuelan Red Cross, with the support of the ICRC, took part in the fourth First Aid in Situations of Violence Meeting, held in Brazil. Alongside Venezuela, representatives from nine National Societies of the Red Cross from across the continent took part.

The meeting, which lasted three days, was organised by the ICRC, with the participation of the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, and was aimed at supporting the strengthening of the humanitarian mission of the Red Cross National Societies of Latin America.

Among the topics discussed were Safer Access, simulation of emergency situations, and psychosocial support in situations of violence

### Restoring family links (RFL)

Each year, thousands of families are separated by disasters, armed conflicts, violence or migration. The ICRC, the National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies work together across the world to trace people and restore contact with their families. This work includes searching for relatives, restoring contact, reuniting families and shedding light on the fate of those whose whereabouts is still unknown.

After Hurricane Maria devastated Dominica, the Red Cross Movement supported relief operations on the island. The ICRC focused on helping to restore family links by facilitating communication between families separated by the events. More than 512 successful phone calls were made. In 2018, the ICRC will organise training on this topic for Red Cross National Societies in the region with the aim of strengthening their response.

In November 2017, a Regional Meeting on RFL was held in Panama City attended by focal points of the 14 Red Cross Societies, including delegations from Belize, Jamaica and the Bahamas (representing CARICOM), and representatives of the International Federation of the Red Cross, Red Crescent and the ICRC. The main objective of the meeting was to share lessons learnt and good practices in RFL support provided in 2017 following the natural disasters and during the hurricane season.

The ICRC has been active in Venezuela since 1966. In 2000, it signed a headquarters agreement with the government of Venezuela (incorporated into law on November 6, 2001). Since then, it has also worked in the English-speaking Member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). The following link provides more information about our activities:

<https://www.icrc.org/es/document/actividades-del-cicr-en-venezuela>



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