

OPERATIONAL OVERVIEW

ICRC activities in Lebanon for the year 2011

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has been present in Lebanon since 1967, addressing the humanitarian consequences of conflict and other situations of violence, in close cooperation with the Lebanese Red Cross Society and the Palestine Red Crescent Society. Over the last 44 years, the ICRC has assisted families separated by war, prisoners, displaced populations, acted as neutral intermediary in the exchange of combatants and mortal remains and reminded parties involved in conflict to respect the principles of international humanitarian law.

In 2011, the ICRC conducted a study of the needs of the families of persons who went missing during armed conflicts in Lebanon. While it continued visiting detainees in prisons and other detention places, the ICRC worked on improving sanitation and access to health care for detainees. It also completed a bid to help local authorities, mostly in rural areas, upgrade water installations that had been damaged or neglected over long years of armed conflict in Lebanon.

The ICRC continued to provide support to the health facilities operated by the Palestine Red Crescent Society and a first-aid training programme for volunteer members of the civil society to improve the quality of care available to residents of Palestinian camps.

The Lebanese Red Cross is the main national partner of the ICRC in Lebanon. Operational Support and joint contingency planning are the backbone of a common effort to ensure preparedness to respond efficiently to any emergency.

The Missing

In line with its efforts to raise awareness about the suffering of the families of people unaccounted for as a result of armed conflicts, the ICRC started an assessment of the needs of these families in Lebanon. Through direct interviews with the families of the missing, the ICRC survey seeks to identify the specific difficulties – emotional, economic, social or legal - they face due to the disappearance of their loved ones.

The overall aim is to understand the families' current situation, their needs and expectations in the absence of an answer on the fate of their missing relatives. This will allow, identify and set priorities, make clear and appropriate recommendations and support suitable mechanisms to help them cope with their plight. The outcome of the assessment will be shared with the authorities and other stakeholders and the ICRC will work on having the needs and rights of the families acknowledged and addressed.

Restoring family links

In its role as a neutral intermediary between the Israeli and Lebanese authorities, the ICRC repatriated Lebanese nationals living in Israel who wished to return home, and facilitated contact via Red Cross messages between families in Lebanon and their relatives in Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories.

In 2011, the ICRC's family links service provided a neutral channel of communication through which news and official documents – for example, for the registration in Lebanon of the birth or death of Lebanese citizens in Israel – were exchanged between members

of dispersed families. The ICRC continued to work with the judicial authorities to provide answers for families whose relatives went missing during the 2007 armed conflict in Nahr el-Bared Palestinian camp.

In 2011, the ICRC

- collected 32 and distributed 22 Red Cross Messages to and from civilians in Lebanon enabling them to establish and maintain contact with their relatives abroad, including detainees in Israel
- repatriated four Lebanese civilians and the mortal remains of five others from Israel to Lebanon



Two Lebanese women repatriated from Israel through the neutral intermediary of the ICRC are reunited with their fiancés



ICRC

Visiting detainees

In 2011, ICRC delegates visited more than 6,000 people held in places of detention and in interrogation centres in Lebanon. The visits were conducted in accordance with the standard working procedures that the organization follows all over the world. The purpose of such visits is to monitor the conditions in which detainees are being held, the treatment they receive, and respect for basic legal safeguards, including during the interrogation period. The ICRC shares its findings exclusively with the authorities concerned and checks to see that its recommendations are followed.

The ICRC started visiting detainees in Lebanon in April 2007 after signing an agreement with the authorities that gives its delegates access to all prisons on Lebanese territory. The ICRC's priority, in accordance with its mandate, is to visit persons arrested in connection with armed conflict or for State security reasons.

Since completing a comprehensive assessment of health care in Lebanese prisons, the ICRC has helped the authorities to improve sanitation and the quality of health care available to detainees in the Central Prison of Roumieh, which is the country's largest detention facility. In addition, the ICRC provided the prison with medical supplies and equipment, and with training in first aid and other important skills for health-care personnel.

The ICRC also drilled and equipped a new deep well in Roumieh prison and connected it to the prison water system, thereby increasing water supply to the detention facility by almost 50 per cent.

Throughout the year, the ICRC gave detainees the opportunity to stay in touch with their families through the exchange of Red Cross messages and of oral greetings ("Salamat" calls).

In 2011, the ICRC

- visited 6472 detainees during 115 visits to 23 places of detention
- exchanged 52 Red Cross Messages and 262 oral messages between detainees and their families
- made arrangement for two families living abroad to travel to Roumieh to visit their detained relatives

Supporting Health Services

In 2011, the ICRC continued to provide support, enabling residents of Palestinian camps in Lebanon to obtain access to better health care. In addition to its support for five hospitals in the camps, it completed the construction of an emergency and community health

centre for the Palestinian population of Nahr el Bared camp. The centre replaces a Palestine Red Crescent clinic that was destroyed during the conflict in 2007.

The new 550 square-metre facility was built in 14 months. It has examination rooms, a theatre for minor operations, a laboratory, an X-ray room, and four in-patient beds. In addition, it has a library and a recreation room.



The Palestine Red Crescent Society's Community Health centre constructed by the ICRC in the Palestinian camp of Nahr el Bared.

The ICRC organized a workshop on "first aid in armed conflict" for the main providers of emergency medical services (EMS) in Lebanon, which was attended by participants from the Lebanese Red Cross, Lebanese civil defence, the Islamic Health Society, the Palestine Red Crescent and the Ministry of Health.

In 2011, the ICRC

- Provided First Aid in Armed Conflict training to 54 members of 5 Emergency Medical care providers in Lebanon.
- Donated medical assistance to 11 hospitals, 4 primary health care centres and 3 ambulance service providers
- Maintained an emergency medical stock for treating up to 500 war wounded.

Helping to provide clean water

ICRC engineers completed projects assisting local water boards in the Bekaa and in northern and southern Lebanon in the repair and renovation of water infrastructure, which was ill-maintained during the long years of armed conflict. The ICRC equipped wells with pumps and chlorination systems and installed water pipelines to connect pumping stations to reservoirs. It completed 108 such projects serving over one million people between 2006 and 2011.

In 2011, the ICRC

- carried out 10 water projects which benefited more than 160,000 inhabitants in mainly remote and rural areas.

In partnership with the Lebanese Red Cross

The ICRC continued its close cooperation with the Lebanese Red Cross, its main national partner. It provided technical and other support in line with a five-year strategy to boost the National Society's preparedness and its ability to respond to emergencies. The ICRC donated medical equipment and a one-year supply of consumables to Lebanese Red Cross EMS stations, provided computer equipment and financial support for the management and maintenance of the fleet of EMS vehicles, in addition to providing training for more than



Lebanese Red Cross volunteers carry out training on management of dead bodies.

2,000 volunteers in international EMS standards and in the management of dead bodies. The ICRC also funded the renovation of EMS stations and provided support for Lebanese Red Cross medical evacuations of wounded Syrian nationals crossing into Lebanon.

The ICRC provided the Lebanese Red Cross youth section with support to boost its training activities and its capacity to deliver emergency assistance. The ICRC provided the Lebanese Red Cross with advice on fundraising policy, and on the drafting of new legislation designed to protect the red cross emblem which will be submitted to parliament.

In 2011, the ICRC

- renovated 3 EMS stations of the Lebanese Red Cross in Jounieh, Kob Elias and Saïda
- organized 42 training camps for 2065 Lebanese Red Cross EMS volunteers
- trained 27 LRC personnel on how to manage dead bodies in natural disaster and armed conflict situations
- provided IT and medical equipment to EMS stations and training for 80 volunteers on the maintenance and management of ambulances.

Promoting respect for International Humanitarian Law (IHL)

Throughout 2011, meetings with representatives of the Lebanese authorities and arms carriers as well as regular dialogue with the country's main political, religious and civil society groups resulted in improved mutual understanding and support for international humanitarian law and for the humanitarian tasks performed by the ICRC in response to any outbreaks of violence. The ICRC regularly briefed troops and high-ranking officers of the Lebanese Army, the Internal Security Forces and the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) on basic principles of international humanitarian law, and on the ICRC's mandate and activities. Advanced workshops on international humanitarian law were held at the College of Staff and Command for officers trained to become legal advisers in Lebanese Armed Forces operations.



ICRC delegate during a workshop on IHL for Lebanese Army Officers at the Army's College of Staff and Command.

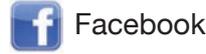
In parallel, the ICRC worked with the national authorities on promoting the incorporation of rules of international humanitarian law in national legislation. It provided guidance for the newly established Lebanese National Committee for International Humanitarian Law, the role of which is to advise and guide the government on the ratification and implementation of international treaties and other legal instruments. At the onset of the events in neighbouring Syria, the ICRC reminded the Lebanese authorities of their obligations under international law with respect to persons crossing the border into Lebanon.

The ICRC was represented by its vice-president at the Second Meeting of States party to the Convention on Cluster Munitions, which took place in Beirut in September. The ICRC encouraged States to sign, ratify and implement the convention, which bans the use, production and stockpiling of a weapon known to kill and maim indiscriminately.

In 2011, the ICRC

- held 43 information sessions on international humanitarian law and on the ICRC's mandate which were attended by 2,700 Lebanese Armed Forces personnel, and a four-day workshop on international humanitarian law and its implementation in military operations for 24 officers
- briefed more than 140 officers of the police and General Security on the ICRC and on the working procedures it follows on visits to detention places
- organized two roundtables for members of the National Committee for International Humanitarian Law to help them assume their future tasks
- presented international humanitarian law and the ICRC mandate to members of Palestinian armed groups, placing special emphasis on the need to protect medical service providers

Follow the ICRC on:



Facebook
Personal accounts and stories from the field. Share your thoughts and questions on the wall.



Twitter
Get the latest news from the ICRC. Please #ICRC your tweets.



Youtube
Videos from the field that can be shared and embedded on your site.



Flickr
Photos illustrating the organization's activities around the world.



Scribd
A wide selection of ICRC publications for your e-reader.

Visit ICRC Arabic website at www.icrc.org/ara

On its website the ICRC shares the most recent information through news releases as well as other feature stories. The website also enables users to find out what the ICRC is, how it works and what it does, by type of activities and by country or region. It can be consulted for IHL Treaties including the full text of the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols and for a list of the States party to those treaties.

The screenshot shows the ICRC Arabic website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the ICRC logo and the text 'لبنان ICRC'. Below this is a search bar and a menu with options like 'من نحن', 'أنشطتنا', 'مناطق عملنا', 'الحرب والقانون', and 'مركز المعلومات'. The main content area features a news article titled 'اللجنة الدولية للصليب الأحمر في لبنان'. The article text discusses the ICRC's work in Lebanon since 1967, focusing on addressing humanitarian issues, internal and international conflicts, and providing medical assistance to the population. A photo shows two people, one in a headscarf and one in a suit, looking at a document. The right sidebar contains a 'مناطق عملنا' section with a dropdown menu for 'اختر المنطقة' and 'جميع البلدان'. There are also links for 'تبرعات', 'قاعدة بيانات القانون العرفي', and 'خدمة RSS'.



ICRC

International Committee of the Red Cross Sadat / Hamra Street PO Box 11-7188, Beirut

Tel. : +961-1-739297/8/9 - Fax : +961-1-740087 - E-Mail : bey_beyrouth@icrc.org