



ICRC

OVERVIEW OF ICRC ACTIVITIES IN LEBANON

October 2007

Backed by 40 years of humanitarian work in Lebanon, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) continues its activities in the fields of assistance, including health and water, as well as protection and prevention. In addition to its efforts to alleviate the human suffering caused by the war in the summer of 2006, the ICRC responded to the humanitarian emergency triggered by the fighting in the Palestinian camp of Nahr el-Bared in North Lebanon.

PROTECTION

Protection of civilian population

The ICRC monitors continuously the impact of military activities on the life of the civilian population and regularly addresses its concerns to the respective authorities. In this regard, the ICRC maintained during the conflict in Nahr el Bared a confidential dialogue with the different parties to the conflict. The ICRC also carried campaigns for raising awareness about unexploded ordnances in Palestinian camps where Nahr el-Bared refugees took shelter.

Detention

On 20.02.07, the ICRC signed a protocol with the Lebanese authorities in order to start up the detention visits to "all detainees in all places of detention." The aim of these detention visits is to assess living conditions of the detainees as well as their treatment while in custody. The findings of these visits are reported in a confidential manner in oral and in writing to the relevant authorities.

The ICRC also works to re-establish the family links between the detainees and their families when needed. Family links have been established between the Lebanese detained in Israel after the July-August 2006 war and their families in Lebanon. The ICRC facilitates a regular exchange of family news, including verbal greetings, Red Cross messages and cantina money.

Repatriation/Transfer

The ICRC repatriated the body of a Lebanese civilian deceased in Israel. His mortal remains were repatriated across Ras Naqoura and duly buried by his family in Lebanese soil. The ICRC, through its teams in Lebanon and Israel, facilitated the humanitarian transfer of a terminally sick person from Israel to his family in Lebanon. Thanks to the collaboration of the Lebanese Embassy in New Delhi and ICRC delegations in Delhi, Amman and Beirut, a Palestinian-Lebanese national was repatriated. Visited by the ICRC since 1993, he had been released from an Indian jail, but needed the ICRC help in order to be able to travel back into Lebanon.

Notifications/transmission of documents

The ICRC facilitated the registration in Lebanon of official documents issued in Israel. This allowed the families to register in Lebanon the death, birth and marriage certificates of their loved ones living in Israel. The ICRC also issued nine attestations of detention.

Missing

The ICRC marked the "International Day of the Disappeared Persons" by underscoring the fate of the missing in Lebanon.

ASSISTANCE

Water

The rehabilitation of water infrastructures damaged during the summer war of 2006 is almost finished. Projects for rebuilding water reservoirs



Maroun el-Ras Reservoir

in Maroun el Rass, Aitaroun, and Wazzani were completed and the first two were inaugurated in August and September. Aitaroun, with a capacity of 1000 cubic meters, and Maroun al-Ras with a capacity of 200 cubic meters, benefit an estimated population of 16,000. Other water-related projects undertaken by the ICRC included the rehabilitation of 4 wells along the border with Israel, the extension of the capacity of the Chamsine pumping station in the Bekaa serving about 100,000 people, extension of village water network, chlorination systems and maintenance of generators in water facilities in the south and the Bekaa. Moreover, the ICRC carried out an assessment of water needs for the population who were displaced from Nahr el-Bared to nearby Beddawi camp following the outbreak of hostilities on May 20. The ICRC delivered more than 120,000 liters of drinking water to residents remaining in the besieged camp and installed a powerful generator at Nabi Yousha well in Minieh, near Nahr el-Bared, to pump water for trucking and irrigation.

Distributions

Assistance in food and other basic needs picked up after the outbreak of fighting in north Lebanon and the displacement of large numbers of inhabitants from Nahr el-Bared. The ICRC mobilized its teams to secure emergency relief assistance. In cooperation with the Lebanese Red Cross (LRCS) and the Palestine Red Crescent (PRCS-L), the ICRC distributed more than 185 tonnes of food to the displaced refugees in Beddawi and Palestinian camps in the south and the Bekaa where some refugees had sought shelter, as well as to civilians remaining inside Nahr el-Bared. Before the events in the north, the ICRC provided food assistance to orphanages, centers for the disabled and vulnerable families in several Lebanese regions.



Food distribution in Beddawi camp

Support to Health Services

The ICRC provided medical supplies to Safad Hospital, run by the PRCS-L, in the camp of Beddawi and delivered emergency first aid assistance to al-Shifa clinic inside Nahr el-Bared. Medical support in terms of body bags and module dressing for burns was extended to first aid teams of the Lebanese Red Cross. The ICRC provided medical assistance to 12 hospitals and 35 dispensaries all over Lebanon, while a mapping and assessment of all hospitals in the country is being undertaken. The ICRC also started delivering surgical equipment to five hospitals run by the PRCS-L. Two seminars on war surgery were held this summer in Tyre and Beirut to initiate local doctors on operating in the field during armed conflicts. Seventy six surgeons from 60 hospitals throughout the country attended.

COOPERATION

Cooperation with partners in the International Movement of the Red Cross and Red Crescent remains a crucial part of ICRC activities. For the past months, ICRC activities focused on supporting the LRCS and the PRCS branch in Lebanon to enable them to respond to the emergency in the North and the events in the rest of the country. The ICRC extended immediate cash support to refit 63 LRCS ambulances with new tires and repairs and provided financial and medical support to Safad Hospital in Beddawi camp.

Workshops were organized by the ICRC to train LRCS Youth and Logistics departments on medical logistics and distribution of assistance, including the assessment and distribution methodologies. Since July 2006, the ICRC supported the LRCS with donations in kind and cash amounting more than \$4 million for their Emergency Medical Services, blood bank, youth, logistics and communications departments.



ICRC, Lebanese Red Cross: "Together we're strong"

IHL DISSEMINATION

It is the responsibility of all those involved in armed conflict to respect international humanitarian law (IHL). The ICRC is involved in raising awareness about IHL and about its role and activities. In this respect, presentations about the ICRC and basic principles of IHL were given to Internal Security Forces, Lebanese Armed Forces and UNIFIL battalions deployed in south Lebanon. Last April-May, the ICRC organized a two-week regional workshop for government officials from 16 Arab countries to introduce them to IHL. Dissemination of IHL was also carried out with Human Rights NGOs. In the meantime, ICRC efforts to help introduce IHL programs in the official curricula of the Ministry of Education and in university circles continue.

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