

EGYPT

COVERING: Egypt, League of Arab States



ICRC delegation

The ICRC has been in Egypt, with some interruptions, since the beginning of the Second World War. It works with the Egyptian Red Crescent Society to help it boost its emergency preparedness in relation to needs arising from situations of violence, focusing on first-aid care; as necessary, it provides support to refugees. It seeks to visit people detained in Egypt. The ICRC's regional legal advisory, communication and documentation centre works in cooperation with the League of Arab States and other ICRC delegations to promote the incorporation of IHL into domestic legislation, military training and academic curricula throughout the Arab world.

YEARLY RESULTS

Level of achievement of ICRC yearly objectives/plans of action

MEDIUM

KEY RESULTS/CONSTRAINTS

In 2014:

- ▶ victims of internal unrest received first aid from the Egyptian Red Crescent Society's emergency action teams and evacuees from the Gaza Strip were treated at hospitals – in both cases, with ICRC support
- ▶ with ICRC assistance, local health-care providers revised their contingency plans, and civilian/police doctors and surgeons honed their skills at seminars across Egypt, helping boost their emergency preparedness
- ▶ vulnerable Palestinian families from the Syrian Arab Republic met some of their needs with essential items/food obtained through vouchers distributed quarterly by the National Society/ICRC
- ▶ despite dialogue with the authorities on the ICRC's potential contribution to their efforts to ensure detainees' welfare and protect violence-affected people in Sinai, no access was granted to either group
- ▶ though the political transition hindered IHL implementation, a draft law for incorporating the provisions of the Rome Statute in domestic legislation was approved, and judges learnt more about IHL at lectures

PROTECTION	Total
CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)	
Red Cross messages (RCMs)	
RCMs collected	17
RCMs distributed	18
Phone calls facilitated between family members	395
People located (tracing cases closed positively)	78
People reunited with their families	2

ASSISTANCE	2014 Targets (up to)	Achieved
CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)		
Economic security, water and habitat (in some cases provided within a protection or cooperation programme)		
Essential household items	Beneficiaries 600	443
Cash	Beneficiaries	324
Vouchers	Beneficiaries 3,000	3,344

EXPENDITURE (in KCHF)	
Protection	608
Assistance	2,110
Prevention	1,140
Cooperation with National Societies	926
General	-

4,784

of which: Overheads 292

IMPLEMENTATION RATE	
Expenditure/yearly budget	102%

PERSONNEL	
Mobile staff	9
Resident staff (daily workers not included)	48

CONTEXT

The military-backed interim government that assumed office in 2013 proceeded with its transition plan. It held a constitutional referendum in January, leading to the *shura* council's dissolution; parliamentary elections were planned for 2015. Former army chief Abdel-Fattah El-Sisi was elected president in May.

Fuelled by socio-economic problems and political tensions, particularly between the authorities and Muslim Brotherhood supporters, demonstrations continued countrywide; these sometimes led to clashes between the police and protesters. Bombings, reportedly by armed groups, occurred in Cairo and elsewhere. In Sinai, the armed/security forces carried out operations against armed groups and evacuated some residents to create a buffer zone against alleged arms smuggling. The respective situations reportedly resulted in hundreds of casualties and arrests; however, security constraints and access restrictions limited the ability of humanitarian organizations to fully assess the impact on people in Sinai.

In July/August, some wounded Palestinians were evacuated to Egypt after events in the Gaza Strip (see *Israel and the Occupied Territories*).

Egypt remained a transit/destination country for hundreds of thousands of migrants, asylum seekers and refugees, from the Syrian Arab Republic (hereafter Syria) and elsewhere.

Cairo hosted the headquarters of the Arab Inter-parliamentary Union (AIPU) and the League of Arab States (LAS).

ICRC ACTION AND RESULTS

The ICRC, in cooperation with the Egyptian Red Crescent Society, focused on meeting humanitarian needs arising from violence within Egypt and conflict in the region.

The National Society's emergency action teams, trained and equipped by the ICRC, helped ensure timely treatment/evacuation for casualties of internal unrest. Hospitals backed by ICRC-donated supplies treated patients evacuated from the Gaza Strip, who eased their situation through ICRC-provided essential items and family-links services. Dialogue with local health-care institutions resulted in joint initiatives to improve their emergency preparedness/response capacities: two hospitals and an ambulance organization drew on ICRC advice to improve their contingency plans, and weapon-wound surgery and trauma-management seminars for doctors helped boost the quality of treatment countrywide. The incorporation of a weapon-wound surgery module into an organization's training curriculum awaited government approval. The National Society received support for its first-aid programme, enabling it to expand the pool of available first-responders, including journalists present at scenes of unrest. A national conference spread awareness of the need to respect/protect medical personnel and facilities.

The ICRC cancelled initial plans to assist Syrian refugees, who were receiving aid from other actors. It shifted its focus to vulnerable Palestinians from Syria, who met some of their needs using vouchers – exchangeable for essential items/food – distributed quarterly by the National Society/ICRC. Other particularly vulnerable groups benefited from ad hoc aid distributions. The ICRC bolstered the National Society's emergency relief stocks in Sinai.

People in Egypt restored/maintained contact with their relatives through ICRC family-links services; some were reunited with their families. ICRC travel documents helped foreigners without valid identification papers return home/resettle in third countries.

Though no formal dialogue was established with the authorities on the protection of the civilian population during situations of violence in Egypt, the ICRC discussed its potential contribution to their efforts in this regard during meetings/events. However, owing to security constraints and other restrictions, the ICRC remained without access to violence-affected people in Sinai. During field visits, the ICRC documented the concerns of people who had fled Syria and forwarded them to its delegation in Syria, to be raised with the parties concerned. The organization maintained contact with local/international actors engaged in efforts to prevent sexual violence.

Formal discussions with the authorities on the ICRC's offer of services to visit people deprived of their freedom continued, but failed to elicit the authorities' approval. A round-table with stakeholders was postponed, owing to other government priorities.

The Egyptian armed/security forces learnt about international norms relevant to law enforcement and detention at courses co-organized with the authorities. The ICRC encouraged the army to reactivate its IHL committee.

Though the political situation hindered domestic implementation of IHL, dialogue with the national IHL committee continued; the authorities approved a draft law incorporating the provisions of the Rome Statute into domestic legislation.

Contact with State-authorized Islamic organizations helped improve their awareness of the similarities between IHL and sharia law. The ICRC promoted widespread awareness of humanitarian issues and Movement activities by helping the media report on these topics through information materials, and by co-organizing seminars with local associations to enhance journalists' awareness of IHL and the protection it affords them. It also helped the National Society launch its new bilingual website.

Regionally, the ICRC pursued its partnerships with the AIPU and the LAS to promote/monitor IHL implementation by supporting national IHL committees and organizing IHL-related events for representatives of Arab countries.

The ICRC's regional resource and communication centre in Cairo supported the organization's efforts to increase knowledge of and respect for IHL throughout the Arabic-speaking world by producing written/audiovisual materials in Arabic and updating the ICRC's Arabic-language website.

CIVILIANS

Although no formal dialogue was established with the authorities and weapon bearers on the ICRC's potential contribution to their efforts to ensure the protection of the population during situations of violence, the subject was raised during meetings with and events attended by the authorities (see *Actors of influence*). Access to violence-affected people in Sinai was not granted, but the ICRC stayed abreast of possible humanitarian concerns arising from the situation there through media reports and contact with the National Society and health-care providers in the area. Dialogue on the humanitarian concerns of irregular migrants was not

pursued, owing to developments in the situation and operational constraints.

People who had fled Syria, particularly Palestinians, had their needs assessed and their protection concerns, including those connected with the principle of *non-refoulement*, monitored during ICRC field visits. They reported the alleged arrests of their relatives in Syria; at their request, these reports were forwarded to the ICRC delegation there (see *Syrian Arab Republic*), which submitted representations to the parties concerned whenever possible. However, none of the information received led to the location of people being sought by enquirers in Egypt.

With a view to helping reduce people's risk of becoming victims of sexual violence, particularly during demonstrations, the ICRC developed dialogue with local/international organizations engaged in related efforts, and exchanged information with them at workshops/meetings.

Palestinian families from Syria meet some of their needs through vouchers

Plans for relief distributions had initially targeted Syrian refugees; however, as they were receiving aid from UN agencies and their partners, the ICRC recalibrated its response to focus on Palestinian families from Syria, who had not been receiving assistance systematically, apart from monthly WFP food vouchers.

With the Egyptian authorities' agreement and in coordination with the Palestinian embassy, some 1,000 vulnerable Palestinian households (over 3,300 people) met their urgent needs with the help of vouchers exchangeable for essential items/food at local supermarkets. Initially provided by the ICRC on a one-off basis, these vouchers were distributed quarterly by the National Society/ICRC once working procedures were agreed on. Additional vouchers were provided in December to help them cope with winter.

Medical evacuees from the Gaza Strip receive hygiene kits and other essentials

Wounded Palestinians evacuated from the Gaza Strip (see *Context*) and their families (395 people in all) eased their displacement through hygiene kits distributed with the help of the National Society; some of them also received cash assistance.

A few particularly vulnerable migrants received ad hoc support to help them cope with their situation.

Though people in Sinai remained inaccessible to the ICRC, the National Society received some support to bolster its emergency preparedness in the area; its warehouse was rehabilitated and restocked with emergency relief kits for 100 families (500 people).

Members of dispersed families keep in touch, resettle abroad or return home

People in Egypt restored/maintained contact with or located relatives through ICRC family-links services, including brief oral messages, relayed by the ICRC, to relatives detained in Jordan and Lebanon. Some Egyptians sent parcels to and exchanged video calls with relatives held at the US internment facility at Guantanamo Bay Naval Station in Cuba or at the Parwan detention facility in Afghanistan; one family visited a relative held at the latter.

Over 1,250 people without valid identification papers, including asylum seekers, resettled in third countries or were repatriated

using ICRC travel documents issued in coordination with IOM, UNHCR and the embassies concerned. With the help of ICRC tracing services, an Eritrean girl – a former victim of human trafficking – as well as a South Sudanese minor and her son were reunited with their relatives in Switzerland and South Sudan respectively. In cooperation with the Egyptian authorities, a Syrian minor in Jordan was reunited with her family in Egypt. Three people rejoined their families in Egypt using ICRC-facilitated entry visas.

Unaccompanied foreign minors, particularly those without valid papers or awaiting family reunification, received legal, psychological and vocational assistance through an ICRC-supported initiative of the Africa and Middle East Refugee Assistance until February, when the organization closed, owing to administrative issues. In December, an agreement was signed with another NGO, with a view to resuming psychological/educational support for unaccompanied foreign minors.

At National Society/ICRC training sessions, some 170 members of the National Society's emergency action teams (see *Wounded and sick*) enhanced their ability to provide family-links services.

PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM

Detainees still do not benefit from ICRC visits

Though formal discussions on the ICRC's offer to visit detainees in Egypt continued, the authorities' approval was not obtained. To clarify the humanitarian nature of its activities for people deprived of their freedom and help raise awareness of the ICRC's potential contribution to the authorities' efforts to ensure that inmates' treatment and living conditions were in line with internationally recognized standards, the ICRC sought dialogue with the stakeholders concerned, including the Interior and Justice Ministries. A round-table discussion with them – to be co-organized with the National Committee on Human Rights – was postponed, owing to the presidential elections and other government priorities (see *Context*).

At their families' request, the ICRC followed up on the alleged arrest of 26 people, with a view to ascertaining their whereabouts; however, no cases were resolved.

Two Egyptian nationals formerly held at the Guantanamo Bay internment facility received ad hoc cash assistance to help ease their reintegration into society; one of them also received supplies for his artificial limb.

WOUNDED AND SICK

The internal situation generated significant numbers of casualties, and developments in neighbouring countries led to the evacuation of some wounded people into Egypt (see *Context*). The ICRC focused on helping emergency responders ensure timely care for them, while undertaking joint initiatives with local health-care providers/institutions to boost their capacities and the quality of care afforded to weapon-wounded patients. Violence-affected people in Sinai could not, however, be reached (see *Civilians*).

Medical evacuees from the Gaza Strip receive treatment in Egypt

Some wounded Palestinians evacuated from the Gaza Strip (see *Context*) were treated at seven hospitals with the help of medical supplies donated by the ICRC through the National Society. ICRC delegates monitored their situation through regular visits, and provided them with family-links services and other assistance (see *Civilians*). At a Palestine Red Crescent Society hospital

in Cairo, 17 Palestinians had their treatment costs covered by the ICRC; a portable X-ray machine was donated to the facility.

Emergency teams from the Ministry of Health and Population (MOHP) evacuated some 600 Egyptians from Libya after the security situation deteriorated in August (see *Libya*); they received dressing sets to help them stabilize and treat those who were wounded.

A university hospital's blood bank received a freezer and other equipment to help it provide its services.

Injured people receive timely treatment from the National Society's emergency action teams

Over 500 people wounded during demonstrations and other incidents throughout Egypt, particularly Cairo, benefited from first-aid treatment and medical evacuations carried out by National Society emergency action teams. The teams used ICRC-donated equipment, supplies and vehicles, which helped facilitate their deployment and ensure their members' safety. At International Federation/ICRC-supported sessions, new members of these teams trained in emergency care in line with the Safer Access Framework, and the provision of family-links services (see *Civilians*); they also learnt about IHL and the Movement. Pre-existing members upgraded their skills during refresher courses. By year-end, 94 teams (comprising 470 people) covered 23 out of 27 governorates countrywide. Furthermore, the National Society received equipment to help it extend first-aid training to the public, broadening the pool of capable first-responders during emergencies. Journalists, who were often present at scenes of unrest, acquired first-aid skills during IHL dissemination sessions (see *Actors of influence*).

Local health-care providers improve procedures for handling mass-casualty situations

Through MOHP-ICRC initiatives, two hospitals and the Egyptian Ambulance Organization strengthened their capacities to deal with mass influxes of patients. With on-the-job training and advice from an ICRC consultant, the three institutions identified gaps in their current set-ups and began to revise their guidelines and standard operating procedures, with a view to improving their services. An MOHP official improved his knowledge of managing large-scale emergencies at an ICRC-organized course in Switzerland.

Dialogue with local forensics professionals led to plans for training initiatives in 2015.

Public awareness of the need to respect/protect medical personnel was raised at a national conference for local and international organizations, organized with the National Society/MOHP.

Doctors hone their skills in weapon-wound surgery and emergency room trauma management

At five weapon-wound surgery seminars and two emergency-room trauma courses co-organized with the MOHP, the Interior Ministry, the Arab Medical Union and university hospitals, over 220 civilian/police doctors from all governorates enhanced their skills and exchanged best practices on treating injuries during precarious situations and with limited resources. The incorporation of a weapon-wound surgery module into the Egyptian Fellowship Board's medical training curriculum awaited MOHP approval.

ACTORS OF INFLUENCE

Members of the armed/security forces learn about international rules related to law enforcement

Given the prevailing situation, dialogue with the authorities and

weapon bearers during meetings and events focused on helping them enhance their knowledge of the ICRC and its mandate, particularly during situations of violence.

Some 180 military, State security and police officers learnt about international norms applicable to law enforcement operations and detention, as well as IHL principles, at sessions co-organized by the Defence and Interior Ministries and the ICRC. The military was encouraged to reactivate its IHL committee.

Some senior diplomats, judges and military/police officers broadened their understanding of IHL at regional courses in Beirut (see *Lebanon*), Cairo (see below), and the United Arab Emirates (see *Kuwait*).

The authorities approve a draft law incorporating the provisions of the Rome Statute

The political situation hindered efforts to promote domestic implementation of IHL. Nevertheless, the national IHL committee drew on ICRC technical support to formulate draft laws on the missing and on the protection of cultural property. In August, the Council of Ministers approved a draft law incorporating the provisions of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court into domestic legislation, for submission to the parliament to be elected in 2015.

Hundreds of judges and prosecutors added to their knowledge of IHL at lectures co-organized by the National Centre of Judicial Studies; some of them participated in an essay competition. The centre's library received IHL reference materials.

Journalists enhance their knowledge of IHL and the protection it affords them, and train in first aid

The media remained a key partner in promoting humanitarian principles and the Movement. During seminars, some of which were co-organized with local/regional organizations, journalists learnt more about topics such as: IHL, including the protection it affords them; the Movement; conflict reporting, including ethical considerations; and the role of social media and technology in supporting humanitarian work. At some of these workshops, some 200 journalists also acquired first-aid skills with the help of the National Society, which contributed to emergency preparedness, as they were often present at scenes of unrest. Media outlets enhanced their reporting through briefings and information published on the ICRC's Arabic-language website.

Through dialogue, briefings and media reports, human rights organizations, political parties and State-authorized Islamic organizations improved their awareness of the ICRC's mandate/work and the similarities between IHL and sharia law.

Representatives of military training/legal departments in the region broaden their understanding of IHL

The AIPU, LAS and ICRC continued working with national IHL committees in the region to promote and monitor IHL implementation in line with regional action plans adopted by the two multilateral bodies. Notably, the LAS/ICRC organized a meeting on domestic IHL implementation (see *Algeria*), and prepared a report on the topic.

At a seminar in Cairo co-organized with the LAS's Security Department, representatives from the military training/legal departments of 11 Arab countries and LAS staff members enhanced their knowledge of IHL, the ICRC's mandate, and its activities in the region.

Peacekeeping troops from across the region refreshed their knowledge of IHL at sessions conducted with a Cairo-based military training centre.

RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

The Egyptian Red Crescent, with ICRC financial/technical/material support, helped address needs arising from violence in Egypt and conflict in neighbouring countries (see *Civilians* and *Wounded and sick*) – for instance, through its logistical pipeline to the Gaza Strip for humanitarian assistance – and strengthened its emergency preparedness.

The National Society also drew on ICRC support to improve its capacity to promote awareness of IHL, humanitarian principles, the Movement and its own activities. It produced an Arabic-language brochure describing its activities and history, and launched an English-Arabic website to reach a wider audience. It also expressed an interest in taking a greater role in providing family-links services.

The National Society supported the Health Care in Danger project, notably, by co-organizing a conference on it (see *Wounded and Sick*) and sending participants to a workshop in South Africa on safeguarding health facilities (see *Pretoria*). At a Movement meeting in Beirut (see *Lebanon*), the National Society shared best practices and challenges related to the operational application of the Fundamental Principles.

MAIN FIGURES AND INDICATORS: PROTECTION		Total			
CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)					
Red Cross messages (RCMs)			UAMs/SCs*		
RCMs collected		17			
RCMs distributed		18			
Phone calls facilitated between family members		395			
Reunifications, transfers and repatriations					
People reunited with their families		2			
	<i>including people registered by another delegation</i>	1			
People transferred/repatriated		2			
Tracing requests, including cases of missing persons			Women	Girls	Boys
People for whom a tracing request was newly registered		359	73	41	77
	<i>including people for whom tracing requests were registered by another delegation</i>	36			
People located (tracing cases closed positively)		78			
	<i>including people for whom tracing requests were registered by another delegation</i>	1			
Tracing cases still being handled at the end of the reporting period (people)		371	80	42	61
	<i>including people for whom tracing requests were registered by another delegation</i>	37			
Documents					
People to whom travel documents were issued		1,253			
Official documents relayed between family members across borders/front lines		1			

* Unaccompanied minors/separated children

MAIN FIGURES AND INDICATORS: ASSISTANCE		Total	Women	Children
CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)				
Economic security, water and habitat (in some cases provided within a protection or cooperation programme)				
Essential household items	Beneficiaries	443	21%	9%
Cash	Beneficiaries	324	21%	14%
Vouchers	Beneficiaries	3,344	25%	50%