

ALGERIA



The ICRC has been working in Algeria, with some interruptions, since the 1954–1962 Algerian war of independence. Aside from visiting people held in places of detention run by the justice ministry and people remanded in police stations and *gendarmeries*, it supports the authorities in strengthening national legislation with regard to people deprived of their freedom and promotes IHL. The ICRC supports the Algerian Red Crescent in its reforms process and partners it to restore links between separated family members.

KEY RESULTS/CONSTRAINTS IN 2016

- ▶ Algeria increased legal protection for detainees, based partly on ICRC findings and recommendations drawn from visits to detainees. The constitution had new provisions on pre-trial detention, arbitrary arrest and legal counsel.
- ▶ Vulnerable foreigners in Algeria reconnected with their families through Algerian Red Crescent and ICRC family-links services. Families abroad received news of relatives in Algeria, after the ICRC resolved their tracing cases.
- ▶ Through advanced courses and training initiatives with the ICRC, magistrates had a better grasp of their role in ensuring and bolstering respect for IHL and other norms protecting detainees and vulnerable people.
- ▶ The defence ministry and the ICRC concluded an agreement for the latter to help enhance military education, notably through the update of the military's IHL manual. Officers learnt more about IHL, at ICRC-organized events.

EXPENDITURE IN KCHF

Protection	1,215
Assistance	316
Prevention	687
Cooperation with National Societies	313
General	20
Total	2,551
<i>Of which: Overheads</i>	<i>156</i>

IMPLEMENTATION RATE

Expenditure/yearly budget	89%
---------------------------	-----

PERSONNEL

Mobile staff	9
Resident staff (daily workers not included)	15

YEARLY RESULT

Level of achievement of ICRC yearly objectives/plans of action

HIGH

PROTECTION	Total
CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)	
Restoring family links	
RCMs collected	11
RCMs distributed	11
Phone calls facilitated between family members	11
Tracing cases closed positively (subject located or fate established)	21
PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)	
ICRC visits	
Detainees visited	22,388
Detainees visited and monitored individually	223
Number of visits carried out	56
Number of places of detention visited	50
Restoring family links	
RCMs collected	32
RCMs distributed	20
Phone calls made to families to inform them of the whereabouts of a detained relative	412

CONTEXT

Despite insecurity in the region, and some degree of political and economic uncertainty in the country, Algeria remained relatively stable. It kept its borders – excluding that with Tunisia – closed and continued military/security operations against groups suspected of endangering the State, or of being associated with unregulated trade in various commodities. Reportedly, these operations led to arrests and casualties.

Migrants, including refugees and asylum seekers, continued to arrive in Algeria; flare-ups with residents took place occasionally. State services or the Algerian Red Crescent helped some of the people who had fled violence in Mali or the Syrian Arab Republic (hereafter Syria) meet their immediate needs.

Algeria adopted a new constitution in February.

The country continued to play an active role in multilateral forums, notably as a member of the African Union Peace and Security Council and the UN Human Rights Council.

ICRC ACTION AND RESULTS

In Algeria, the ICRC visited detainees in prisons and jails run by the police or the *gendarmérie*; it conducted these visits in accordance with its standard procedures. Vulnerable inmates – including security detainees, people in solitary confinement, foreigners, minors and sick people – continued to be monitored individually. Confidential feedback based on the above-mentioned visits and other technical input were provided by the ICRC to the detaining authorities, to help them improve detainees' living conditions and treatment, including respect for judicial guarantees, in the context of the overall penitentiary reform. These efforts, sustained over several years, contributed to the increased protection of detainees notably, new provisions covering pre-trial detention, arbitrary arrest, detainees' access to legal counsel and medical screening for detained minors in Algeria's constitution. With ICRC support, the health and penitentiary authorities pursued amendments to legislation and other means to improve detainees' access to health-care services, and two penitentiary officials expanded their managerial capacities.

The ICRC helped foreign detainees, and inmates held far from their homes, stay in touch with their families through RCMs, short oral messages and other family-links services. People separated from their relatives by migration or other circumstances also made use of family-links services provided by the Algerian Red Crescent and the ICRC. Some families, who had lodged tracing requests with the ICRC, received news of their relatives. The National Society also strengthened its organizational structure and its capacities in other areas: caring for wounded people, conducting assistance activities and applying the Safer Access Framework. It continued to lean on ICRC expertise in such matters as observing the Fundamental Principles and coordinating with other Movement components.

The ICRC continued to work with the authorities and others to reinforce respect for IHL and other applicable norms and standards. Various events organized by the ICRC helped magistrates and other government officials strengthen their grasp of IHL and norms protecting vulnerable people, and advance understanding of their role in promoting and ensuring compliance with these legal regimes. An agreement was reached with the defence ministry to organize ad hoc training sessions. The ICRC briefed military and security forces on IHL or international policing

standards at events it organized with the interior and justice ministries, and other local parties concerned. Together with the National Society, the national IHL committee and other local institutions, the ICRC strove to foster support for IHL and the Movement among diplomats, students and others. At the request of local organizations, ICRC representatives made presentations on humanitarian issues; Islamic leaders and scholars were briefed, at two international gatherings, on the ICRC's neutral, impartial and independent humanitarian approach. Joint initiatives with journalists and the national archives sought to broaden public awareness of ICRC activities in Algeria.

CIVILIANS

Families of vulnerable foreigners in Algeria receive news of their relatives

Members of families dispersed by armed conflict, detention, migration or other circumstances reconnected through RCMs, short oral messages and other family-links services offered by the Algerian Red Crescent with the ICRC's technical support. One family regularly saw and spoke to a relative held at the US internment facility at Guantanamo Bay Naval Station in Cuba through monthly video calls. Other families were able to contact their relatives detained in countries such as Iraq, Mali and Syria. The National Society and the ICRC followed up tracing requests, including those sent by other National Societies assisting the families of foreigners in Algeria. Around 20 people were located and their families informed.

The National Society continued to build its family-links capacities with ICRC support. In line with Movement-wide efforts to improve family-links services for migrants in the region, an Algerian Red Crescent official attended ICRC-organized workshops in Senegal (see *Dakar*) and Côte d'Ivoire (see *Abidjan*) to share the National Society's experiences in this area. Close coordination between local associations, international organizations, other actors and the ICRC helped facilitate the referral of migrants and other vulnerable foreigners in Algeria to the appropriate services for assistance.

The ICRC remained ready to support the authorities in responding to the needs of the families of people missing in connection with past internal violence.

PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM

Constitutional reforms increase legal protection for detainees

Detainees in 50 places of detention – including a central prison in Algiers to which the authorities had recently granted the ICRC access, and 32 jails run by the police or the *gendarmérie* – received visits from the ICRC, conducted in accordance with the organization's standard procedures. Particularly vulnerable inmates were monitored individually; among them were security detainees, people in solitary confinement, foreigners, minors and sick people.

Confidential feedback based on the above-mentioned visits, recommendations and other technical input were provided by the ICRC to the detaining authorities, to help them improve detainees' living conditions and treatment, in the context of the overall penitentiary reform. Dialogue with the justice ministry and security forces tackled respect for judicial guarantees. These efforts, sustained over several years, contributed to increasing the protection for detainees. Notably, a number of reforms led to Algeria's constitution (see *Context*) being more closely aligned with international norms applicable to the treatment of people in pre-trial detention. The constitution also contained new provisions

covering arbitrary arrest and detainees' access to legal counsel, and stipulated mandatory medical screening for detained minors.

At an advanced course abroad (see *Abidjan*), two penitentiary officials honed their prison-management skills, in particular their ability to replicate improvements made in certain prisons throughout the penitentiary system; the ICRC supported these officials' participation in these events.

Health and penitentiary officials take steps to ensure detainees' access to health care

After an ICRC-organized study tour in 2015, health and justice ministry officials strove to include provisions for improving detainees' access to health care – within and outside prisons – in domestic legislation. These provisions included amendments drafted by them to transfer responsibility for health care in prisons from the justice to the health ministry. Officials in charge of the prison health system learnt about best practices in their field partly through a study trip to Kuwait (see *Kuwait*) and a regional conference on medical ethics (see *Jordan*). The authorities and the ICRC also organized three workshops at which 120 health and penitentiary personnel explored ways to: improve detainees' access to health-care services; reinforce the application in places of detention of international standards for public health; and strengthen adherence to medical ethics, particularly in documenting detainees' treatment.

Around 60 sick inmates received follow-up visits from an ICRC doctor, with whom the authorities discussed how to ensure that detainees received adequate care.

Interior and justice ministry officials and security officers learn about international policing standards

To reinforce respect for applicable international law and standards, the interior and justice ministries and the ICRC organized train-the-trainer sessions for 64 police agents, *gendarmes*, and civilian and military magistrates, as well as for a Sahrawi judge and police officer (see *Tunis*). These sessions covered international policing standards, notably for the use of force, international human rights law and to IHL.

Briefings were organized for penitentiary officers and guards, and students of the national prison administration school (see *Actors of influence*).

Foreigners and people detained far from their homes contact their families

People held far from their homes, or whose families were abroad, exchanged news with their relatives through RCMs and short oral messages relayed by the Algerian Red Crescent and the ICRC. The ICRC helped nearly 100 detained foreigners notify their consular representatives of their situation. Consular representatives were urged to facilitate regular communication between foreigners held in Algeria and their families.

ACTORS OF INFLUENCE

Magistrates are better equipped to ensure observance of applicable international law

Various events organized by the ICRC helped magistrates and other government officials strengthen their grasp of IHL and other norms and standards, and of their role in ensuring respect for them. At advanced IHL courses abroad (see *Egypt*, *Lebanon* and *Tunis*), a senior official from the foreign ministry, two magistrates,

a military judge and other government officials learnt more about international law covering detainees, victims of sexual violence and people seeking and providing health care. At ICRC workshops, some 30 magistrates who monitored detainees' treatment and living conditions reviewed international law and other norms/standards applicable to detention.

At an ICRC workshop, 15 magistrates – past beneficiaries of IHL training – practised instructing their colleagues in IHL. At a conference in Jordan, a member of the Algerian national IHL committee gave a presentation on applicable frameworks for implementing IHL to his Jordanian counterparts.

The defence ministry agrees to use ICRC expertise to train troops

Following the Senior Workshop on International Rules governing Military Operations (SWIRMO), hosted by Algeria in 2015, an agreement was reached with the defence ministry to help improve military education. Under the agreement, the ICRC would assist in updating the military's IHL manual and, on an ad hoc basis, organize courses on treating people wounded by gunfire. Two senior officers attended the 2016 SWIRMO in Switzerland (see *International law and policy*), and some 40 senior officers were briefed on IHL issues by a military academy and the ICRC.

The interior ministry and the ICRC continued to discuss possibilities for joint training initiatives.

Academics, diplomats, prison officials and religious leaders learn more about the Movement

Continued support for Algerian government officials, religious leaders and academics facilitated ICRC activities in Algeria. The ICRC also strove to broaden awareness among them of IHL and the Movement. Meetings and other events organized by the ICRC helped to clarify the ICRC's mandate and its activities in the region. The Algerian foreign minister visited ICRC headquarters in Switzerland, where he and the ICRC's president discussed the ICRC's activities for detainees and its operations in Syria and other countries experiencing armed conflict.

Around 50 diplomats and diplomats-in-training exchanged views on the ICRC's work in Syria at a panel discussion organized jointly with the Algerian diplomat's school, and some 60 university students learnt more about IHL at briefings conducted with the Algerian Red Crescent. Penitentiary administrators and prison guards in training, and jail guards were briefed on the ICRC's activities for detainees.

Organizations and bodies such as the National Commission for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, the committee following up implementation of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, the senate and academic and religious centres invited ICRC representatives to give talks about humanitarian issues at their events. At the request of the organizers, the ICRC made presentations – on its neutral, impartial and independent humanitarian approach – at two international gatherings of Islamic leaders and scholars.

The ICRC concluded an agreement with Algeria's national archives to produce, for public use, digital copies of ICRC documents pertinent to Algeria's war of independence. The ICRC promoted this partnership and its IHL-related publications at an international book fair. The national IHL committee and the ICRC

organized a seminar for 22 media professionals on the protection afforded by IHL to journalists. The public continued to learn about issues of concern to the ICRC from newspaper articles and television interviews.

RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

The Algerian Red Crescent responded to the needs of vulnerable people in Algeria, including those who had fled from Mali or Syria. Acting on behalf of the Algerian government, it assisted conflict-affected people in Libya, Mali and Niger.

ICRC financial and technical support helped the National Society strengthen its organizational structure and the capacities of its volunteers in various areas. Volunteers were trained to: restore family links (see *Civilians*); care for wounded people, during

first-aid sessions and a Health Emergencies in Large Populations course; and carry out assistance activities, during a study trip with the Senegalese Red Cross Society. They were also briefed on ways to reduce their safety risks, in line with the Safer Access Framework. With ICRC support, the National Society promoted IHL and sent its legal adviser to an IHL conference abroad (see *Dakar*).

The National Society, with the Arab Red Crescent and Red Cross Organization, the International Federation and the ICRC, organized an event to celebrate World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day in Algeria; this served, among other purposes, to encourage closer cooperation between Movement components in the region. The National Society continued to lean on ICRC expertise in such matters as observing the Fundamental Principles and coordinating with other Movement components.

MAIN FIGURES AND INDICATORS: PROTECTION		Total			
CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)					
RCMs and other means of family contact			UAMs/SC		
RCMs collected		11	1		
RCMs distributed		11			
Phone calls facilitated between family members		11			
Tracing requests, including cases of missing persons			Women	Girls	Boys
People for whom a tracing request was newly registered		28	3	1	3
<i>including people for whom tracing requests were registered by another delegation</i>		15			
Tracing cases closed positively (subject located or fate established)		21			
<i>including people for whom tracing requests were registered by another delegation</i>		17			
Tracing cases still being handled at the end of the reporting period (people)		68	12	8	5
<i>including people for whom tracing requests were registered by another delegation</i>		23			
Documents					
Official documents relayed between family members across borders/front lines		1			
PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)					
ICRC visits			Women	Minors	
Detainees visited		22,388	281	63	
			Women	Girls	Boys
Detainees visited and monitored individually		223	3		4
Detainees newly registered		158	1		4
Number of visits carried out		56			
Number of places of detention visited		50			
RCMs and other means of family contact					
RCMs collected		32			
RCMs distributed		20			
Phone calls made to families to inform them of the whereabouts of a detained relative		412			

MAIN FIGURES AND INDICATORS: ASSISTANCE		Total	Women	Children
PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)				
Health				
Visits carried out by health staff		15		
Places of detention visited by health staff	Structures	16		