



ICRC delegation

# algeria

The ICRC has been working in Algeria, with some interruptions, since the 1954–1962 Algerian war of independence. It carries out visits to people held in places of detention run by the Ministry of Justice and to people remanded in custody in police stations and *gendarmeries*. It cooperates closely with the Algerian Red Crescent Society, in particular supporting its efforts to assist women and child victims of violence and to strengthen its national first-aid network. The ICRC also works to promote IHL among Algerian civil society, the authorities and the armed forces.

## EXPENDITURE (IN KCHF)

Protection	606
Assistance	27
Prevention	503
Cooperation with National Societies	648
General	-

► **1,783**

of which: *Overheads* 109

## IMPLEMENTATION RATE

Expenditure/yearly budget	71%
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## PERSONNEL

5	expatriates
5	national staff (daily workers not included)

## KEY POINTS

### In 2006, the ICRC:

- continued visiting prisons, police stations and *gendarmeries* to assess the treatment and living conditions of people deprived of their freedom;
- worked with the Algerian Red Crescent to restore contact between families in Algeria and close relatives detained/interned abroad or living in countries where conflict had disrupted communications;
- maintained technical and financial assistance to the National Society's psychological support and vocational training programmes designed to help women and children overcome the trauma of violence and to reintegrate into society;
- strengthened National Society capacity in the areas of first aid, dissemination, tracing and restoration of family links;
- reinforced contacts with Algerian universities to promote the inclusion of IHL in law curricula;
- financially assisted a prosthetic/orthotic production unit using ICRC technology to fit destitute Algerian amputees.

## CONTEXT

The government pursued implementation of the Charter for Peace and National Reconciliation adopted by national referendum in 2005, which proposed an amnesty for people accused of involvement in the years of intense civil strife that followed Algerian general elections in 1992, and compensation for the families of victims. This led to the release of a number of people detained in connection with the violence of the 1990s and the drawing up of a compensation plan for families who had lost loved ones. Sporadic clashes nevertheless persisted between Algerian security forces and armed militants.

Increased oil revenues helped to finance government-backed social and economic reform and development programmes. The government also went ahead with reform of the country's judicial and penitentiary systems and the privatization of certain business sectors with a view to boosting the economy and reducing unemployment.

## MAIN FIGURES AND INDICATORS

PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)		WOUNDED AND SICK		
Detainees visited	15,839	<i>Physical rehabilitation</i>		
Detainees visited and monitored individually	130	Patients receiving services	Patients	40
Number of visits carried out	56	Prostheses delivered	Pieces	14
Number of places of detention visited	55	Orthoses delivered	Pieces	37
RESTORING FAMILY LINKS				
<i>Red Cross messages (RCMs) and reunifications</i>				
RCMs collected	26			
RCMs distributed	112			

## ICRC ACTION

ICRC activities in Algeria focused mainly on visits to places of detention to assess the treatment and living conditions of people deprived of their freedom and on strengthening the capacity of the Algerian Red Crescent Society to deliver humanitarian services.

The ICRC maintained its assistance to the National Society's psychological support and vocational training programmes for women and children traumatized by violence. It also worked closely with National Society staff and volunteers at regional and local level to help them develop the multi-disciplinary skills needed to respond effectively to emergencies. With the National Society, it assessed further material and training needs, particularly in the fields of first aid, psychological support, tracing and communication.

Another priority for the ICRC was to develop contacts with the Algerian authorities and key sectors of civil society, such as the media, to promote IHL and enlist their support for the organization's humanitarian mandate and activities.

## CIVILIANS

In cooperation with the National Society, the ICRC provided tracing and RCM services to help families in Algeria locate and stay in touch with family members detained/interned abroad or living in countries where communications had been disrupted by conflict.

- ▶ 26 RCMs collected and 112 distributed
- ▶ new tracing request registered for 1 person; 1 person located; 24 people (12 females, 7 minors at the time of disappearance) still being sought

The ICRC continued to support Algerian Red Crescent programmes for women and children suffering the effects of violence (see *Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement*).

## PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM

The ICRC continued to visit detainees in penitentiary centres under the terms of an agreement concluded with the Ministry of Justice in 1999. At the end of 2006, an estimated 45,000 people were being held in 127 detention facilities under the authority of the Ministry of Justice. Visits also continued to people remanded in custody in police stations and *gendarmeries*.

During visits, the ICRC monitored detainee treatment and living conditions. Particular attention was paid to women, minors and foreign detainees and to respect for judicial guarantees.

After each visit, the observations and recommendations of ICRC delegates were submitted to the authorities directly in charge of the detention facilities, as well as to the State prosecutors concerned. The ICRC also submitted to the detaining authorities a summary report on detention visits carried out in 2005 in penitentiary centres, as well as three reports on its conclusions and recommendations concerning places of temporary detention.

- ▶ 15,839 detainees visited, 130 (2 females, 2 minors) of them monitored individually, including 118 newly registered (2 minors), during 56 visits to 55 places of detention

## WOUNDED AND SICK

As part of an ongoing programme initiated in 2001, the ICRC kept up its financial support to the Ben Aknoun physical

rehabilitation centre in Algiers, which uses low-cost polypropylene technology and ICRC materials to produce artificial limbs and other orthopaedic appliances for the disabled.

- ▶ 40 people (6 women and 7 children) received services at the ICRC-supported physical rehabilitation centre
- ▶ 10 new patients (1 woman and 1 child) fitted with prostheses and 27 (5 women and 4 children) with orthoses
- ▶ 14 prostheses (2 for women and 2 for children) and 37 orthoses (6 for women and 6 for children) delivered

## AUTHORITIES

Regular meetings were held with the director of legislation and research at the Ministry of Justice to assess progress made towards the integration of IHL into Algerian legislation. A draft law on the protection of the emblem and another on the repression of crimes against humanity were about to be sent to parliament for approval as the year ended.

A proposal to establish a national committee on the implementation of IHL was also awaiting approval by the Algerian president.

## ARMED FORCES AND OTHER BEARERS OF WEAPONS

The ICRC reiterated its readiness to assist the Algerian authorities in incorporating the systematic teaching of IHL into the theoretical and practical instruction programmes of the Algerian armed forces.

## CIVIL SOCIETY

The ICRC broadened its network of contacts with academic circles and the media to promote greater knowledge of IHL and to

encourage the teaching of the subject at university level and the inclusion of basic IHL principles in secondary school curricula. During 2006:

- the ICRC gave 2 presentations at the Faculty of Islamic Studies in Algiers on IHL, the Movement and the ICRC mandate;
- 50 law students attended a first seminar on IHL at Algiers University, and 50 law lecturers received training in IHL;
- 50 students and 25 judges at the national magistrates school attended 2 seminars on the role of judges in the implementation of IHL;
- the ICRC held seminars for and meetings with representatives of the Algerian media leading to the publication of several articles in the press raising public awareness of the ICRC's mandate and activities and IHL;
- for the first time, 2 Algerian students participated in a moot court competition on IHL;
- a collection of the main IHL instruments, with a preface by the Algerian minister for foreign affairs, was compiled in collaboration with 25 Algerian legal experts;

► the ICRC's Exploring Humanitarian Law programme, launched in Algeria in October 2005, continued to be pilot-tested with positive results in a number of schools near Algiers, and teachers involved in the programme received further training;

► students regularly consulted a library of IHL publications set up at the ICRC delegation in Algiers.

### RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

The National Society, with ICRC support, organized two refresher courses for 41 first-aid trainers from the western and southern regions of Algeria, which included a presentation on stress management by the staff involved in the psychological support programme. In addition, 28 future trainers received initial first-aid training.

A standard training methodology was tested and, based on the results, was to be introduced in all first-aid courses. The Algerian Red Crescent's national training team also carried out missions to various regions of Algeria to monitor the quality of local first-aid training.

As in previous years, the ICRC provided technical, training and material support to the National Society's programme to help women and children overcome the trauma of violence and to ease their reintegration into society through psychological support and vocational training. In the context of this programme, 40 monitors at vocational and psychological support centres across the country received training to develop their capacities to identify and help women and children suffering from the effects of violence.

The ICRC also covered salaries and the transport and communication costs incurred by National Society tracing staff and volunteers in delivering and collecting RCMs between Algerian nationals detained/interned abroad and their families in Algeria.

The Algerian Red Crescent continued to publish a regular newsletter and to maintain a website with ICRC support. The ICRC also contributed to the organization of several meetings attended by National Society communication volunteers from around the country to coordinate their activities and share experiences.

The National Society and the ICRC held discussions on developments regarding the additional emblem and the Seville Agreement.