

# EGYPT



ICRC delegation

## EXPENDITURE (IN KCHF)

Protection	468
Assistance	-
Prevention	1,112
Cooperation with National Societies	481
General	-
	<b>2,061</b>
	<i>of which: Overheads 126</i>

## IMPLEMENTATION RATE

Expenditure/yearly budget	<b>79%</b>
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## PERSONNEL

Expatriates	<b>6</b>
National staff (daily workers not included)	<b>44</b>

## KEY POINTS

### In 2012, the ICRC:

- ▶ with the International Federation, supported the Egyptian Red Crescent Society in creating, training and equipping 20 additional emergency action teams
- ▶ with the Egyptian Red Crescent, conducted a series of first-aid workshops for journalists to enable them to act as first-responders, as well as a course for surgeons on treating weapon-related injuries
- ▶ with the National Society, continued running a phone service to help people stranded at the Egyptian-Libyan border to re-establish or maintain family links
- ▶ in the framework of the global Health Care in Danger project, organized, together with the National Society, a regional experts' workshop on developing measures to enhance the safety of health care services
- ▶ supported the newly established committee in reviewing the level of IHL integration into the training curriculum and operations of the Egyptian Armed Forces
- ▶ continued to promote IHL in Egypt and across the region, including through its cooperation with the League of Arab States

The ICRC has been in Egypt, with some interruptions, since the beginning of the Second World War. In view of the risk of civil unrest, it works closely with the Egyptian Red Crescent Society to boost its preparedness to respond to emergency humanitarian needs arising from situations of violence. It also seeks to visit people detained in Egypt. The ICRC's regional legal advisory, communication and documentation centre works in close 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.

## CONTEXT

In May 2012, the Egyptian parliament let the country's 31-year-old emergency law expire. The Muslim Brotherhood candidate, Mohammed Mursi, took over the presidency after winning the country's first democratic elections in decades. In June, former President Hosni Mubarak and former Minister of Interior Habib el-Adli were sentenced to life in prison for their parts in the killing of protesters during the January 2011 uprising.

Instances of unrest occurred throughout the year, with tensions flaring in the run-up to both the parliamentary and the presidential elections; following the elections, protests took place over the general lack of progress in the country's security situation and economic state. Sectarian tensions between Muslim and Coptic communities occasionally erupted into violent clashes. Lengthy public debates, demonstrations and a reshuffling of the drafting assembly took place before a new constitution was approved by a national referendum and signed into force by President Mursi at the end of 2012.

In Sinai, relations between the Egyptian authorities and Bedouin tribes remained strained over the government's handling of the area's economy and the alleged presence of Islamist militants on the peninsula. Almost a dozen attacks and bombings targeting the gas pipeline to Israel and Jordan took place throughout the year, disrupting the gas supply in the area. Violence escalated abruptly in August 2012 when 16 Egyptian soldiers were killed during an attack on a checkpoint in North Sinai, triggering a joint military and police operation which resulted in the deaths or detention of dozens of suspected members of armed groups.

## ICRC ACTION AND RESULTS

Given the continued need for first-aid care and medical evacuation as a result of the instability in Egypt in 2012, the ICRC focused on supporting the Egyptian Red Crescent Society in meeting those needs. The two organizations worked together to strengthen the country's emergency response capacities; with the International Federation, they created, trained and equipped additional emergency action teams, which were regularly deployed during bouts of violence to provide the appropriate treatment or evacuate those in need of higher-level care. With a view to increasing medical capacities outside the Movement, the National Society and the ICRC conducted a series of first-aid courses for journalists, who were often present during the unrest. Doctors volunteering for a medical NGO also honed their surgical skills at a workshop, with a specific focus on treating weapon-related wounds.

Main figures and indicators	PROTECTION	Total		
<b>CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)</b>				
<b>Red Cross messages (RCMs)</b>				
RCMs collected		41	UAMs/SCs*	
RCMs distributed		73		
Phone calls facilitated between family members		17,141		
<b>Tracing requests, including cases of missing persons</b>				
People for whom a tracing request was newly registered		137	Women	Minors
People located (tracing cases closed positively)		96		
<i>including people for whom tracing requests were registered by another delegation</i>		2		
Tracing cases still being handled at the end of the reporting period (people)		144	46	47
<b>UAMs/SCs*, including unaccompanied demobilized child soldiers</b>				
UAM/SC cases still being handled by the ICRC/National Society at the end of the reporting period		1	Girls	Demobilized children
<b>Documents</b>				
People to whom travel documents were issued		1,686		
Official documents relayed between family members across borders/front lines		5		

\* Unaccompanied minors/separated children

To encourage long-term action to protect health care services during armed conflict and other emergencies, as part of the global Health Care in Danger project, the National Society and the ICRC organized a regional workshop that brought together experts from different countries to share best practices and make recommendations on addressing the issue.

The two organizations also continued to enable asylum seekers, refugees, migrants and the families of detainees held abroad to re-establish or maintain contact with relatives. Third-country nationals stranded at the Egyptian-Libyan border after fleeing the Libyan conflict in 2011 were the main beneficiaries of these services.

Despite the instability experienced by several countries in the region, the Cairo-based League of Arab States and the ICRC pursued their partnership in promoting IHL and its implementation through a series of seminars and events attended by officials of the region's governments and by armed forces officers. Meanwhile, the ICRC continued its dialogue with the Egyptian authorities on its offer of services to visit people deprived of their freedom, and briefed officials and prison staff on its working methods. The Egyptian Armed Forces received ICRC support, at their request, for a review of IHL integration into their training and operations, and showed interest in pursuing training initiatives, including on legal provisions and other norms pertinent to law enforcement operations. The Interior Ministry drew on similar support for the design of a training curriculum and the conduct of a course for police instructors.

With a view to increasing understanding and acceptance of IHL and neutral, impartial and independent humanitarian action within society as a whole, the ICRC focused on strengthening its relationships with representatives of academia, the media, political parties and NGOs.

The delegation's regional resource and communication centre continued to support ICRC efforts to increase knowledge of and respect for IHL throughout the Arabic-speaking world by producing written and audiovisual materials in Arabic, as well as keeping the ICRC's Cairo-based, Arabic-language website updated.

## CIVILIANS

Some 1,700 nationals of third countries who in 2011 had fled the conflict in Libya remained stranded in Salloum at the Egyptian-Libyan border while awaiting possible resettlement abroad.

Despite the closure of the ICRC office in Salloum, they were able to keep in touch with relatives, making over 17,000 calls using ICRC-supported Egyptian Red Crescent phone services. Other people in Egypt, including asylum seekers, refugees, migrants and people with relatives detained abroad, restored or maintained contact with family members using the tracing and RCM network. The families of people held in the US internment facility at Guantanamo Bay Naval Station in Cuba and in the Parwan detention facility in Afghanistan had direct contact with their relatives through video calls or passed on oral greetings to their family members via ICRC delegates.

Cooperation with other actors working in favour of foreigners continued, including with the embassies concerned, UNHCR, and the Africa and Middle East Refugee Assistance (AMERA). Using ICRC-issued travel documents, 1,686 foreigners resettled in third countries or reunited with their families. Unaccompanied foreign minors, particularly those awaiting family reunification and those without papers and who had lost all support upon reaching the age of majority, received legal aid and psychological and vocational counselling through an ICRC-funded initiative of AMERA.

In light of the unrest in the country, the National Society continued receiving support to enable it to provide first aid and medical evacuation to those in need (see *Wounded and sick* and *Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement*).

The conditions and well-being of migrants allegedly held and abused by people-trafficking gangs in the Sinai Peninsula remained a cause of concern and the subject of ICRC dialogue with the Egyptian government. While the ministries involved expressed their willingness to work with the ICRC to address some of the migrants' needs and participated in discussions on how that might be done, a planned field assessment in northern Sinai did not materialize in 2012.

## PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM

On the basis of the right of initiative conferred on it by the Movement's statutes, the ICRC reiterated its offer to visit people deprived of their freedom, during a number of bilateral meetings with the authorities.

Despite the transition process under way in government institutions, a number of officials learnt more about international standards relating to detention, with two representatives of the Ministry

of the Interior attending a regional seminar on health care in detention (see *Jordan*). Over 30 prison officers participated in a course organized by the Ministry of Interior on IHL, international human rights law and other applicable international norms, as well as on the ICRC's desired role in activities related to detainees and detention (see *Armed forced and other bearers of weapons*).

Egyptian nationals previously held at Guantanamo Bay and repatriated received individual follow-up and ad hoc support, including travel documents enabling them to resettle in third countries; in one case, a former detainee was fitted with a prosthetic limb.

### WOUNDED AND SICK

In view of the unrest that occurred in Egypt throughout the year, cooperation with the National Society and other members of civil society continued to be crucial to meeting the ensuing needs for first-aid and surgical care.

With ICRC and International Federation support, the National Society increased its emergency response capacities, creating 20 more emergency action teams, 10 of which were funded by the ICRC, bringing the total to 30 countrywide. They were deployed regularly during bouts of instability, treating and evacuating more than 1,200 people. To ensure the sustainability of these teams, the National Society received equipment to rehabilitate one of its first-aid training centres.

In parallel, some 160 journalists learnt first-aid skills to help them act as first-responders during the violence, while 50 surgeons from the Arab Medical Union strengthened their capacities to handle weapon-related wounds.

In a bid to encourage the actors concerned to take action to ensure the protection of the wounded and sick and health care providers/facilities during armed conflict and other emergencies, the National Society and the ICRC organized a regional experts' workshop as part of the Health Care in Danger project. The workshop provided its 40 participants with the opportunity to exchange best practices and propose measures to address health care insecurity.

### AUTHORITIES

At regional level, the Arab League and the ICRC continued to jointly promote IHL implementation, including by organizing and participating in related seminars and meetings held across the region. Representatives of Arab governments attended regional events on IHL-related topics, including the difference between IHL and international human rights law, mechanisms for ensuring IHL implementation, concerns covered by the Health Care in Danger project, and other ICRC activities (see *Kuwait* and *Lebanon*). Similarly, judges from different Arab States learnt more about the importance of protecting civilians in armed conflict during an Arab League-organized seminar in Cairo. All these events allowed the participants to share experiences and learn from their counterparts.

To increase awareness of crimes falling under the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court and of how domestic law could be adapted accordingly, the ICRC released a publication on the matter.

Owing to the country's political transition, efforts to promote and implement IHL domestically often stalled. Nevertheless, high-ranking civil servants attended the aforementioned regional seminars, while military prosecutors enhanced their knowledge of

IHL and the ICRC during presentations held in the country. An essay competition organized by the Justice Ministry and the ICRC for judges and prosecutors also helped stimulate interest in IHL. Work with the newly reactivated national IHL committee included discussions on planning its activities, as well as advice on a draft law on the protection of cultural property during armed conflict.

Representatives of the international community in Cairo and the ICRC regularly discussed respect for IHL and the consequences of ongoing armed conflicts in the region, particularly in the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen. Discussions took place during bilateral meetings and workshops, where ICRC delegates stressed the importance of neutral, impartial and independent humanitarian action.

### ARMED FORCES AND OTHER BEARERS OF WEAPONS

In light of the unrest that swept Egypt in 2012, several scheduled training courses were postponed. Despite this, discussions with the Egyptian Armed Forces resulted in the creation of a committee to review the inclusion of IHL in the military's procedures and training curriculum. Following the committee's request for support, the ICRC participated in joint brainstorming sessions and provided technical advice and a proposal on a trainers' workshop.

The Interior Ministry drew on ICRC assistance to update its training programmes for the police and security forces, including by enabling five instructors to attend a refresher course to enhance their capacities to teach IHL and international human rights law; the instructors subsequently applied these skills during courses they conducted for police officers working in prisons (see *People deprived of their freedom*) and for members of the Central Security Forces.

Moreover, 60 officers scheduled to participate as military observers in UN peacekeeping missions, as well as 18 Egyptian officers already attending IHL courses, enhanced their understanding of IHL, international human rights law and other applicable norms, and the ICRC's work, during different dissemination and training sessions. At regional level, high-ranking officers from several Arab countries benefited from similar training at an Arab League/ICRC-organized event in Cairo.

### CIVIL SOCIETY

In recognition of the importance of traditional and social media, the ICRC worked to strengthen its relationships with media representatives. Because of regular ICRC briefings and up-to-date material posted on the organization's Arabic-language website and social media, journalists produced more accurate reports on the Movement and its humanitarian action. They also participated in first-aid workshops (see *Wounded and sick*) and received information on the protection due to them during armed conflict.

To increase awareness of and support for IHL within academia and among future decision-makers, several universities benefited from IHL presentations and received IHL materials. Moreover, two academics honed their skills at courses organized by the Arab League and the ICRC (see *Lebanon*). During meetings and roundtables, university officials displayed a willingness to further integrate IHL into their institutions' curricula.

Other influential members of civil society, including NGOs, State-sponsored religious bodies and Islamic scholars, familiarized themselves with humanitarian principles and action during ICRC events.

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## RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

With Movement assistance, the National Society offered family-links services (see *Civilians*) and stressed the importance of health care during emergencies, including by providing first aid, supporting first-aid courses and co-organizing an international workshop as part of the Health Care in Danger project (see *Wounded and sick*).

The National Society remained a major channel for assistance to the Gaza Strip. With Movement support, it undertook an assessment mission to its branch in North Sinai to assess its capacities to respond to the humanitarian needs in the area and established a plan to strengthen the branch's emergency preparedness. Moreover, the branch was provided with limited supplies of relief materials that could be distributed during emergencies.

The National Society continued receiving technical assistance for its website and learning opportunities on a range of topics, including the Safer Access approach, family-links services, IHL and the Movement.

Movement components met regularly to ensure coordination of their activities.