

ALGERIA



ICRC/AR_2014
 + ICRC delegation + ICRC-supported prosthetic/orthotic centre + ICRC office

KEY RESULTS/CONSTRAINTS

In 2014:

- ▶ detainees stood to benefit from efforts by the authorities to reinforce – among hundreds of health personnel, magistrates, security officers and trainee prison staff – respect for international norms on detention
- ▶ Algeria contributed to the implementation of IHL internationally by hosting the tenth annual meeting of IHL experts from League of Arab States countries and participating in the “Strengthening IHL” process
- ▶ vulnerable foreigners and Algerian families, with the help of the Algerian Red Crescent, restored contact with relatives separated from them by armed conflict, detention abroad or migration
- ▶ people in need of urgent assistance, for example Malian migrants and victims of intercommunal violence, obtained humanitarian aid solely through the National Society, which had some support from the ICRC

EXPENDITURE (in KCHF)	
Protection	1,206
Assistance	224
Prevention	772
Cooperation with National Societies	203
General	-

2,405

of which: Overheads 147

IMPLEMENTATION RATE	
Expenditure/yearly budget	80%

PERSONNEL	
Mobile staff	8
Resident staff (daily workers not included)	12

The ICRC has been working in Algeria, with some interruptions, since the 1954–62 Algerian war of independence. Aside from visiting people held in places of detention run by the Ministry of Justice 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 with it to restore links between separated family members.

YEARLY RESULTS

Level of achievement of ICRC yearly objectives/plans of action

MEDIUM

PROTECTION	Total
CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)	
Red Cross messages (RCMs)	
RCMs collected	30
RCMs distributed	95
Phone calls facilitated between family members	15
People located (tracing cases closed positively)	15
PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)	
ICRC visits	
Detainees visited	18,870
Detainees visited and monitored individually	314
Number of visits carried out	63
Number of places of detention visited	53
Restoring family links	
RCMs collected	76
RCMs distributed	47
Phone calls made to families to inform them of the whereabouts of a detained relative	266

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	200

CONTEXT

Algeria hosted major international fora and discussions on regional security issues: the Malian government and certain armed groups held peace talks in Algiers.

Algerian military/security forces conducted operations throughout the country, particularly in areas east of Algiers, to deal with threats posed by regional insecurity, armed groups and the unregulated trade in weapons; arrests and casualties were reported. Tens of thousands of troops secured Algeria's borders, which were mainly closed. The borders with Mali and Niger were opened twice a month to allow the passage of goods and people.

Demonstrations, following from political and social grievances, sometimes led to violence. In central Algeria, hundreds of people were reportedly injured during intercommunal violence in April. The remaining Malian refugees in the south, and Syrians seeking asylum in Algeria, met their urgent needs solely through State services or the Algerian Red Crescent. Algerian authorities, with the help of the National Society, began repatriating irregular Nigerien migrants at Niger's request.

ICRC ACTION AND RESULTS

The delegation worked closely with the Algerian Red Crescent and the authorities to assist and protect vulnerable people in Algeria.

The ICRC visited some 18,870 detainees, including those held by the police/*gendarmérie* and by the Interior Ministry; particular attention was paid to foreigners, women, minors, security detainees and people in solitary confinement. The authorities took steps to improve detainees' treatment and living conditions, including respect for judicial guarantees and medical ethics; they drew on the findings of ICRC visits, provided confidentially, and on expert advice from an ICRC detention doctor and an official from the Health Ministry. Information sessions organized by the authorities and the ICRC enabled hundreds of health personnel, magistrates, security officers and trainee prison staff to add to their knowledge of international norms applicable to their duties. The Justice Ministry requested, and received, reference materials on international detention norms, which it made use of while upgrading infrastructure in places of temporary detention.

Families dispersed by armed conflict, detention or migration restored/maintained contact through family-links services provided by the National Society and the ICRC: Algerian families stayed in touch with relatives detained abroad, and vulnerable foreigners in Algeria contacted relatives in their home countries or elsewhere. Foreign detainees, and Algerians held in places of detention far from their places of origin, sent RCMs to their relatives or informed them of their situation.

The National Society also responded to the needs of other vulnerable people in the country: Malian refugees, Syrian asylum seekers, and others affected by violence. During intercommunal violence in central Algeria, volunteers, supported by the ICRC, administered first aid and stabilized the condition of injured people until they could be taken to hospital. The National Society organized and participated in activities marking significant events in the Movement's history in Algeria, thereby encouraging volunteerism and support for the Movement among the public.

Through such events, international fora and direct meetings, the authorities and other influential parties were urged to support IHL and Movement activities. The authorities took steps to advance IHL ratification and implementation; the ICRC provided help, by boosting their IHL expertise through training abroad for officials, and other means. The authorities also contributed to the implementation of IHL internationally by hosting the tenth annual meeting of IHL experts from member countries of the League of Arab States and by taking part in the "Strengthening IHL" process.

CIVILIANS

Algerian families contact relatives interned in a facility abroad

The Algerian Red Crescent built its family-links capacities with ICRC help. Joint field trips and training for over a dozen family-links coordinators helped ensure the quality of services, particularly at National Society branches along Algeria's borders with Libya and Mali. Regional meetings and workshops (see *Dakar and Tunis*) – with National Societies from States hosting refugees and migrants, organizations working to benefit irregular migrants, and local associations – ensured good coordination and strengthened regional capacities.

Members of families dispersed by armed conflict, detention and migration stayed in touch through family-links services by the National Society and the ICRC. People in Algeria contacted or received news of relatives abroad. A refugee called his wife and child, who were in different countries, and one family located a relative, an unaccompanied minor, in Niger. Three families made video calls to relatives held at the US internment facility at Guantanamo Bay Naval Station in Cuba.

Two former internees, repatriated and released in 2013, had their situation followed up by the ICRC, to help ensure that their health and legal needs were met. The situation of repatriated Nigerien migrants was also monitored (see *Niger*).

The ICRC remained ready to share its expertise in responding to the needs of the families of people unaccounted for since the internal strife of the 1990s.

Wounded people receive timely first aid

Victims of intercommunal violence in Ghardaia, in central Algeria, received prompt treatment from National Society first-aiders, thereby hastening their recovery and/or stabilizing the condition of the more seriously wounded until they received hospital care. National Society first-aid posts in that part of the country coped with the surge in needs by replenishing their emergency stocks with ICRC-provided medical supplies sufficient for treating dozens of people.

PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM

Foreign inmates and Algerians detained far from their homes contact their families

Nearly 18,870 detainees held in 53 places of detention – in particular, prisons and police/*gendarmérie* stations under the jurisdiction of the Justice Ministry and an administrative detention centre run by the Interior Ministry – received visits from the ICRC, conducted according to its standard procedures. Security detainees under the purview of the police/*gendarmérie*, foreigners, women, minors and people in solitary confinement received particular attention: over 300 of them were followed up individually.

Foreign detainees and Algerians detained far from their homes could not easily benefit from support from their families. National Society/ICRC family-links services enabled nearly 50 foreigners to inform consular representatives/UNHCR of their situation, and other detainees to send short oral messages to their relatives. Some detainees stayed in touch with their relatives through RCMs, with one foreign detainee also spending time with his wife and two daughters during an ICRC-organized family visit.

After prison visits, the authorities received the ICRC's confidential feedback, helping them improve detainees' treatment and living conditions; detainees at certain prisons were visited more frequently, which yielded more concrete insight and recommendations for the authorities. Justice Ministry officials and the ICRC discussed ways to overcome obstacles to respecting judicial guarantees – for example, foreign detainees' unfamiliarity with legal procedures and local languages – and the effects on detainees of prolonged separation from their families. Through information sessions (see also *Actors of influence*), around 30 prison officers/guards at each place of detention visited, nearly 700 trainee staff in national institutions, security officers and others learnt more about international norms applicable to their duties and the ICRC's activities for detainees.

Prison staff further their understanding of the ethics of health-care provision in detention

At their request, the penitentiary authorities received reference materials on internationally recognized standards for detention, which they used while upgrading infrastructure in places of temporary detention. Two penitentiary officials attended an advanced course in international detention norms in Geneva, Switzerland.

Professional advice from an ICRC detention doctor, and from a Health Ministry official who had attended a conference abroad on ethical issues relating to health care in detention (see *Jordan*), helped the authorities to reinforce prison staff's respect for medical ethics governing the provision of care in detention, for example the need to document ill-treatment and to maintain confidentiality during medical examinations. Nearly 70 prison health staff, including doctors and psychologists, and security personnel furthered their understanding of these issues at a workshop organized with ICRC help.

Some detainees benefited from the support of religious personnel after the ICRC facilitated their access to prisons.

ACTORS OF INFLUENCE

Magistrates and penitentiary instructors become more adept at teaching IHL

Through information sessions, over 170 military/security officers and Justice Ministry officials, in addition to penitentiary staff, furthered their understanding of human rights principles and IHL applicable to their work, and were urged to support ICRC activities for detainees. Some 70 police/*gendarmerie*/intelligence officers and magistrates learnt more about international norms governing the use of force during arrest and detention. Nearly 60 civilian/military magistrates were also briefed on their role in implementing and monitoring compliance with IHL. Two senior officers attended advanced training abroad (see *International law and policy*).

Through training in presentation techniques and other means, some of these people, notably 30 magistrates who had undergone ICRC training in 2013, enhanced their ability to teach IHL to their

fellows. Eight instructors developed an IHL module for inclusion in the curricula of four training institutions for prison staff/administrators, and, with 12 of their colleagues, made use of ICRC-provided teaching materials in their work.

Algeria contributes to the “Strengthening IHL” process and regional IHL implementation

The authorities pursued efforts to advance IHL ratification and implementation, and officials drew on ICRC help to add to their IHL expertise. Six Algerian officials – some of them from the Defence and Foreign Affairs Ministries – attended an advanced course abroad (see *Lebanon*), and Algerian diplomats participated in a regional course (see *Kuwait*). Algerian officials attended experts' meetings in Geneva on autonomous weapon systems and on the legal protection for persons deprived of freedom. Officials also contributed to meetings in preparation for an initiative to enhance IHL compliance mechanisms, which helped further their knowledge of certain aspects of IHL. As part of Algeria's implementation of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, the Defence Ministry, guided by the ICRC, produced materials for promoting safe practices among children living in mine-contaminated areas.

Algerian authorities, with backing from the Algerian Red Crescent and the ICRC, contributed to advancing IHL implementation in the Arab region, Algeria hosted the tenth annual meeting of IHL experts from countries part of the League of Arab States, which was attended by members of national IHL committees, high-ranking State officials – notably the Justice Ministers of Algeria, Egypt, Lebanon, Sudan and Tunisia – and the vice-president of the ICRC. Participants exchanged good practices in implementing IHL and strengthening IHL compliance mechanisms, and for realizing the goals of the Health Care in Danger project.

Algerian authorities agreed to host the annual Senior Workshop on International Rules Governing Military Operations in 2015.

The authorities and hundreds of students learn more about the Movement's role in Algerian history

During dialogue and National Society-organized activities – and in international fora – commemorating the role of IHL and the Movement in Algerian history, influential actors were urged to support the Movement's work. Through meetings and field trips to ICRC delegations in Iraq, Jordan and Niger, Algerian authorities acquired a better grasp of the ICRC's work with the National Society and its role in implementing IHL and improving the treatment and living conditions of detainees. Extensive media coverage of public events, and interviews of high-level ICRC officials, helped spread awareness of the ICRC's work among more people.

Over 300 students learnt more about IHL and the Movement during information sessions organized by the ICRC and the Emir Abdelkader Foundation. Reference materials, provided by the ICRC to their libraries or available at the delegation, helped some 60 students and 25 instructors at two law faculties make progress in their IHL-related research. Around 30 students of the Algerian diplomat's school learnt more about their role in promoting and reinforcing IHL.

Families of detainees and religious leaders, including those working in detention, learnt more about the ICRC's mandate and its work. Some activities were cancelled/curtailed owing to security constraints and changes in priorities, in line with developments in neighbouring countries.

RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

The Algerian Red Crescent responded to the needs of vulnerable people, for example Malian refugees and Syrian asylum seekers in Algeria and delivered aid independently to conflict-affected people in the greater region. It also assisted Nigerien migrants repatriated by the Algerian government.

Due in part to these operations and to the restructuring that followed National Society elections in March, some joint activities were put on hold, including the establishment of a National Society/ICRC office in southern Algeria. The National Society continued to draw on ICRC support to strengthen its governance and operational capacities (see *Civilians*), develop a website and improve stock management. The National Society and the ICRC discussed coordination with National Societies in the region during meetings, including high-level talks at their headquarters in Algiers and Geneva.

The National Society, through its new legal adviser, also provided technical guidance for the national IHL committee and participated in IHL-themed conferences (see *Actors of influence*).

MAIN FIGURES AND INDICATORS: PROTECTION	Total			
CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)				
Red Cross messages (RCMs)		UAMs/SCs*		
RCMs collected	30			
RCMs distributed	95			
Phone calls facilitated between family members	15			
Tracing requests, including cases of missing persons		Women	Girls	Boys
People for whom a tracing request was newly registered	49	12	4	6
<i>including people for whom tracing requests were registered by another delegation</i>	16			
People located (tracing cases closed positively)	15			
<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)	80	24	9	6
<i>including people for whom tracing requests were registered by another delegation</i>	24			
Documents				
People to whom travel documents were issued	1			
Official documents relayed between family members across borders/front lines	2			
PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)				
ICRC visits		Women	Minors	
Detainees visited	18,870	214	76	
		Women	Girls	Boys
Detainees visited and monitored individually	314	10		2
Detainees newly registered	113			2
Number of visits carried out	63			
Number of places of detention visited	53			
Restoring family links				
RCMs collected	76			
RCMs distributed	47			
Phone calls made to families to inform them of the whereabouts of a detained relative	266			
People to whom a detention attestation was issued	1			

* Unaccompanied minors/separated children