

MOROCCO

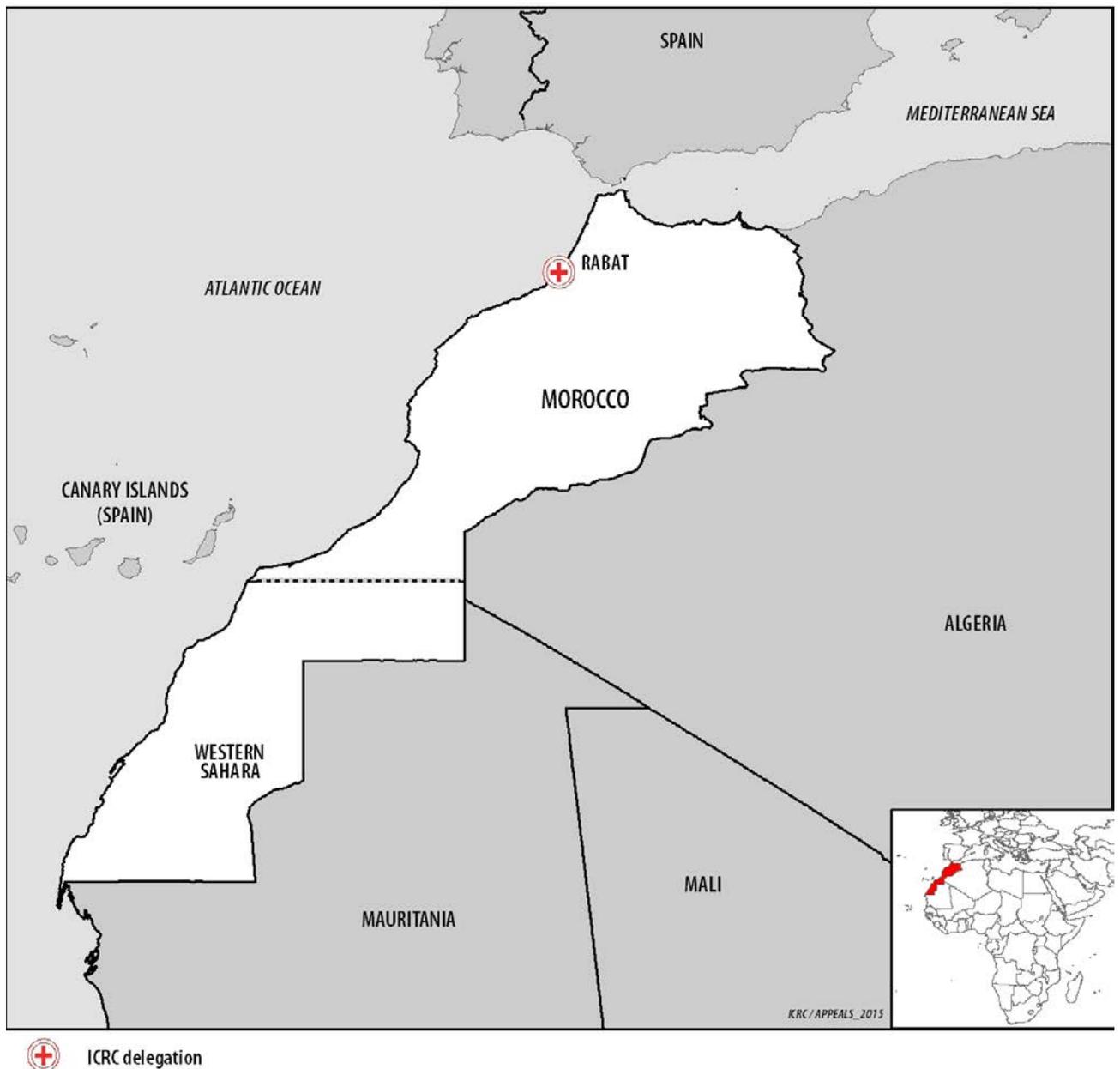
The ICRC's work in Morocco dates back to 1975 during the Western Sahara conflict. Opening in 2015, its delegation aims to encourage cooperation with the Moroccan authorities, so as to facilitate IHL promotion and implementation at national level. It also seeks to support the Moroccan Red Crescent in building its operational capacities, particularly in family-links services and mine-risk education.

BUDGET IN KCHF

Protection	703
Assistance	-
Prevention	462
Cooperation with National Societies	625
General	-
Total	1,789
<i>Of which: Overheads</i>	<i>109</i>

PERSONNEL

Mobile staff	3
Resident staff (daily workers not included)	10



 ICRC delegation

MAIN TARGETS FOR 2015

- ▶ Moroccan troops, including peacekeepers deploying abroad, respect IHL and human rights principles during their operations and facilitate neutral, impartial and independent humanitarian action, following briefings by the ICRC
- ▶ people separated from their families by armed conflict – for example, in relation to fighting in Iraq – detention or migration restore contact with them through the family-links services of the ICRC and the Moroccan Red Crescent
- ▶ the authorities and armed/security forces grant the ICRC access to detainees – including people held for security reasons – and draw on ICRC technical expertise to advance ratification/implementation of IHL treaties
- ▶ irregular migrants and other vulnerable foreigners gain official status in Morocco or ease their travel home/onwards thanks in part to documents relayed or issued to them by the ICRC with the authorities' consent

CONTEXT

Moroccans feel the effects of a worsening economic crisis, in the form of higher unemployment rates and reduced State subsidies. This, coupled with the desire for political reform, generates unrest. Armed/security forces allegedly arrest and detain people in relation to protests and regional insecurity.

The status of Western Sahara remains a point of contention between Morocco and the Polisario Front; the UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) has been extended to 2015. In relation to the 1975–91 Western Sahara conflict, families risk death or injury from mines and explosive remnants of war (ERW), while thousands await news of missing family members. Moroccans reportedly involved in unrest abroad – for example, in Iraq or in the Syrian Arab Republic (hereafter Syria) – lose contact with their families or are detained upon their return.

The authorities are working, in cooperation with the international community, to update State policies regarding asylum seekers and the tens of thousands of irregular migrants in the country.

HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

In 2015, the ICRC will open a delegation in Morocco, with a view to bolstering the authorities' efforts to advance the implementation of IHL and its incorporation in military training and operations. Personnel from the armed/security forces, including those deploying abroad, will add to their knowledge of IHL and international human rights law through information sessions and advanced courses abroad. The ICRC will work with the national IHL committee, the national human rights council and other influential actors to foster support for and understanding of IHL and the ICRC's work among State officials and armed/security force commands, with a view to securing formal agreements on IHL teaching and access to people deprived of their freedom. Once it has access, the ICRC will visit detainees and provide the authorities with confidential feedback afterwards, helping them improve the treatment and living conditions of detainees.

The Moroccan Red Crescent and the ICRC will help families separated by armed conflict, detention or migration to reconnect. The ICRC will expand its activities for vulnerable foreigners in Morocco; to this end, the National Society and the ICRC will assess the assistance and protection needs of irregular migrants – particularly unaccompanied minors and victims of human trafficking. They and other vulnerable foreigners will receive help for obtaining the documents

necessary to gain official status in Morocco or travel home/onwards. People will maintain contact with relatives detained abroad, or receive news of missing family members, through Movement family-links services. State actors and health facilities will be able to draw on ICRC technical support for identifying the remains of deceased migrants and, where appropriate, returning them to their families.

The Moroccan Red Crescent, with ICRC support, will respond to emergencies throughout the country and, in the Morocco-controlled parts of Western Sahara, alert communities to the dangers posed by mines/ERW. Coordination between the National Society and other humanitarian actors will help identify unmet needs and prevent duplication.

HUMANITARIAN ISSUES AND ICRC OBJECTIVES

CIVILIANS

Moroccan families await news of relatives detained/interned abroad, including in relation to armed conflict in Iraq or Syria. Some migrants and asylum seekers in the country are granted work visas or recognized as refugees, but many others have no official status and therefore no easy access to essential services; some are forced to shelter in forests.

Objective

Vulnerable foreigners and Moroccans maintain contact/reunite with family members separated from them by armed conflict, violence, detention or migration. Families are informed of the fate of relatives unaccounted for, including since the Western Sahara conflict.

Plan of action and indicators

Protection

- ▶ prepare to conduct protection/assistance activities for irregular migrants – particularly unaccompanied minors and victims of human trafficking – by:
 - assessing their needs, including in terms of psychosocial support, and collecting allegations of abuse
 - conducting a comprehensive study of domestic legislation applicable to them

Restoring family links

- ▶ provide financial, material and technical support – for example, sponsorship for participation in a workshop abroad (see *Dakar*) – to help the National Society:
 - enhance its family-links services and better incorporate them in its emergency response, and coordinate with other National Societies on migration issues

- assess the family-links needs of vulnerable people in the south, complementing a 2014 assessment conducted in the north

With the National Society:

- ▶ help families separated by armed conflict, detention or migration to restore contact; in particular, enable families to send RCMs and parcels and make regular video calls/visits to their relatives detained/interned abroad, at the US internment facility at Guantanamo Bay Naval Station in Cuba, for instance
- ▶ so that families receive news of their missing relatives:
 - provide tracing services for them, particularly for those who lost contact with their relatives in relation to armed conflict abroad
 - coordinate with State actors, health facilities and others concerned to identify the remains of deceased migrants and, where appropriate, return them to their families
 - organize meetings and information sessions for State actors and workshops for personnel at 5 health structures, and encourage them to adopt good practices in handling the remains of deceased migrants, particularly those who perished at sea
- ▶ after securing the authorities' consent, relay official documents to vulnerable foreigners or provide them with ICRC travel documents, to help them gain official status in Morocco or travel home/onwards
- ▶ promote family-links services among vulnerable foreigners through brochures, information sessions and other means

PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM

Overcrowding in prisons exacerbates poor living conditions and affects the penitentiary authorities' ability to enforce discipline and monitor the treatment of inmates. With the help of the international community, the authorities are building new places of detention.

Moroccan armed and security forces reportedly arrest/detain people in relation to regional insecurity and armed conflict abroad, for example Iraq and Syria, political protests and migration.

Objective

Detainees, particularly those held for security reasons, are afforded treatment and living conditions, including respect for their judicial guarantees, in accordance with internationally recognized standards.

Plan of action and indicators

Protection

- ▶ seek to formalize the ICRC's access to prisons and places of temporary detention through a memorandum of understanding with the authorities and military/security force commands (see *Actors of influence*)
- ▶ after securing approval from the authorities, visit detainees in accordance with the ICRC's standard procedures; afterwards:
 - provide the authorities with confidential feedback, helping them to improve treatment and living conditions for detainees
 - discuss the unmet needs of detainees, and develop an assistance plan, with the authorities

ACTORS OF INFLUENCE

Moroccan troops participate in peacekeeping operations abroad and conduct mine/ERW-clearance activities in the Morocco-controlled parts of Western Sahara. The authorities have ratified major IHL treaties, including some pertaining to arms control. The Foreign Affairs Ministry has expressed interest in developing Morocco as a hub for IHL promotion in the region. IHL instruction in higher education is well established.

The national human rights council, civil society organizations and NGOs seek to influence State policies on detention, IHL and migration. The council and the "Sahrawi Red Crescent" are the main actors involved in clarifying the fate of people missing since the 1975–91 Western Sahara conflict (see *Tunis*).

Journalists report on humanitarian action in Morocco and neighbouring countries; some are influential in political circles.

Objective

The Moroccan authorities and military/security forces know and respect IHL and other fundamental rules applicable to vulnerable foreigners and people affected by unrest, and incorporate these into their decision-making processes. The media, academics and local organizations help foster awareness of humanitarian issues and IHL among these actors and the wider public, thus achieving greater respect for human dignity. All actors understand the ICRC's mandate and support its work.

Plan of action and indicators

Prevention

- ▶ facilitate the ICRC's activities in Morocco, with help from the national IHL committee and the national human rights council, by:
 - discussing the ICRC's mandate and work with the authorities and military/security forces commands, with a view to signing a memorandum of understanding on IHL promotion and access to detainees; reinforcing discussions with information sessions for State officials and penitentiary officials/staff, and IHL courses abroad for the former
 - learning more about the situation of Moroccans detained or involved in fighting abroad, through close contact with their families and the Foreign Affairs Ministry
 - encouraging journalists, through seminars and workshops abroad (see *Dakar* and *Egypt*), to report on humanitarian issues accurately
 - organizing information sessions and IHL courses abroad for representatives of local organizations and academic circles, for example members of the diplomat's school
 - promoting – with the National Society – IHL and National Society/ICRC action in Morocco
- ▶ encourage weapon bearers to observe IHL and human rights principles during operations through:
 - information sessions for up to 250 troops, including those in training; in particular, brief peacekeepers on neutral, impartial and independent humanitarian action, to gain their support for Movement action in their place of deployment

- events abroad, including advanced IHL courses and a seminar on the humanitarian consequences of using anti-vehicle mines (see *Dakar*) for senior military officers
- discussions with military/security forces commands on ways to improve incorporation of IHL in military training and doctrine
- ▶ advise the authorities on the ratification and implementation of IHL treaties

RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

The Moroccan Red Crescent is the main humanitarian actor in Morocco. It delivers assistance to people affected by natural disasters and conducts projects in the field of health and social services. With the ICRC, it helps vulnerable people reconnect with their relatives and promotes safe conduct among communities living in areas contaminated with mines/ERW.

Objective

The National Society has a strong legal basis for independent action and carries out its core activities effectively. The activities of all Movement components are coordinated.

Plan of action and indicators

Cooperation

- ▶ provide funds, training, materials and expertise to help the National Society:
 - conduct family-links activities (see *Civilians*), respond to emergencies and promote safe conduct among communities in areas contaminated by mines/ERW, in line with the Safer Access Framework
 - promote humanitarian principles and the Movement
 - strengthen its statutes and legal base
- ▶ coordinate with the National Society and other humanitarian actors, thereby helping identify unmet needs and avoid duplication