

# EMERGENCY APPEAL



International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies  
Fédération Internationale des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge  
Federación Internacional de Sociedades de la Cruz Roja y de la Media Luna Roja  
الاتحاد الدولي لجمعيات الصليب الأحمر والهلال الأحمر

## LEBANON: EMERGENCY SUPPORT FOR THE LEBANESE RED CROSS AMBULANCE SERVICES

Appeal no. 05EA006  
11 April, 2005

The Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity. It is the world's largest humanitarian organization and its millions of volunteers are active in over 181 countries.

### In Brief

**THIS EMERGENCY APPEAL SEEKS CHF 387,000 (USD 320,550 OR EUR 249,814) IN CASH, KIND, OR SERVICES TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE FOR 3 MONTHS**

*(click here to go directly to the attached Appeal budget)*

All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct](#) and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable. For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, or for a full description of the national society profile, please access the Federation's website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

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*For longer-term programmes, please refer to the Federation's Annual Appeal.*

### The Situation

Following a period of political turmoil in Lebanon, on 14 February 2005, a powerful car bomb ripped through the motorcade of former Prime Minister Rafik al Hariri. A total of 17 people were killed, including Hariri, and 40 people were seriously injured. The assassination was followed by demonstrations in the centre of the city, and on 18 March a series of car bombs occurred targeting predominantly Christian neighbourhoods of Beirut. Although

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causing mainly material damage, the bombs have increased people's fear over a return to the situation experienced during Lebanon's civil war (1975-1990). The assassination of former Hariri provoked further turmoil, preventing the Lebanese Parliament from passing a budget law in preparation for the 2005 state budget.

This impasse has had consequences for the Lebanese Red Cross (LRC) which, since 1975, has built a reputation as a reliable, effective, and professional paramedical service provider. In 1995, the Government of Lebanon decreed that the LRC would be the national provider of First Aid and ambulance services for the entire population. Funding has been provided by the Government to the LRC, and services have been provided free of charge for the population. Because of the halt in Government funding, the LRC's nation-wide ambulance services have been left without support in 2005 to continue implementation of its mandate, directly impacting the population that rely on these critical services.

In 2004, the LRC First Aid/Ambulance services responded to over 161,000 requests for assistance (over 440 a day). The LRC covers more than 80% of all ambulance missions in Lebanon; the remaining 20% is covered by private operators and the Civil Defence. The Federation is responding to an LRC request to launch an Emergency Appeal to provide support in addressing urgent and critical medical needs, ensuring a continuous delivery of emergency medical services to the entire population of the country for a three month period, particularly during this time where political instability may result in civil disturbance and the increased need of emergency medical services.

### **Red Cross and Red Crescent action**

CHF 100,000 has been allocated from the Federation's DREF to offer immediate help to the Lebanese Red Cross in coping with this very serious, but hopefully temporary, situation. The Lebanese Red Cross currently operates 180 ambulances and 20 technical support vehicles from 42 stations spread throughout the country. At least 35 of the stations are open 24 hours every day. Three operation centres are coordinating the service (*Baabda* for Beirut and the surrounding areas, *Tibnin* for the south and *Tripoli* for the north). The operation centres are in direct contact with hospitals, police, security forces, civil defence, fire departments and the armed forces. The LRC ambulance services are managed by a team of 5 full-time staff consisting of a director, a vehicle fleet manager, a telecommunications manager, a secretary and an accountant. All other positions are covered by volunteers receiving per diem compensation during the service hours.

Over the last 7 years the LRC First Aid/Ambulance service has received 59 ambulances from different donors, far short of the actual need. The majority of the ambulances operated by the LRC were received during the civil conflict (1975-1990) and are in need of constant maintenance and repair. The government support is not sufficient to cover investments in new ambulances, thus increasing the maintenance burden on the LRC.

The LRC first aid/ambulance services have continued their regular missions, and are responding to the significant added needs during demonstrations. This massive increase in missions is not sustainable and, in the absence of the external (governmental) funding, the LRC's reserves are not sufficient to keep this essential and life saving service at the minimum required operational level.

### **The needs**

The three-month support phase will focus on supporting the LRC First Aid Teams to ensure a continuation of life-saving operations until a state budget is agreed, most likely after Parliamentary elections scheduled for May and the formation of a new government in June.

In order to ensure the sustainability of the LRC's First Aid/Ambulance services, the following support is needed:

- Financial support for the maintenance of the ambulances (100 of the 180 came before the end of the civil war in 1990).
- Fuel supplies for the ambulances.
- Daily allowances to several hundreds volunteers who are composing the staff of the ambulance service.
- Financial support to cover the costs of running 42 stations for the next 3 months.

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A complicating factor is the nature of the missions performed by the LRC. Lack of appropriate safety gear for the First Aid volunteers seriously threatens their safety and security. The car bombs triggered severe fires, one in an industrial area causing highly toxic fumes. On other occasions, falling debris from damaged buildings also posed a grave danger. All of the car bombs have occurred at night time. It is therefore urgent to equip the First Aid stations in the urban areas with:

- helmets.
- flack jackets and boots.
- gas masks or face masks.
- head lamps.

It is expected that parliament elections will take place in May and this will lead to the formation of a new government by the end of June. As of June, it is anticipated that the Lebanese Red Cross will successfully negotiate a new contract with the government and resolve its immediate financial crisis.

**Coordination**

The LRC is working in close cooperation with the Ministry of Health (MoH), the armed forces, security services, police and the civil defence. To ensure a proper management of this emergency situation, the High Committee for Relief and Emergencies is supervising and co-ordinating events. The regular ambulance services are being monitored and supported by the Ministry of Health.

The Federation and the ICRC are both supporting the LRC First Aid/Ambulance department. The ICRC support dates back to 1975 and the start of the civil conflict. Today, the ICRC is financing second and third level training for the First Aid volunteers. The ICRC also contributes to the provision of basic medical equipment for the ambulance service and telecommunications equipment for first aid centres. Since 1988 the Federation has assisted the LRC with ambulance fleet renewal, medical equipment and technical advice. A thorough assessment of the ambulance services is planned for 2005 which includes management systems, coordination mechanisms, fleet management and communication procedures. Movement support to the LRC is coordinated through regular meetings between the Movement components and sharing of essential information. Continued coordination between the LRC, ICRC and the Federation will be essential.

**Budget summary**

See Annex 1 for details.

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Secretary General

**[Budget below; click here to return to the title page and contact information.](#)**

**BUDGET SUMMARY**

APPEAL No. 05EA0006

**Lebanon - Ambulance services**

TYPE	VALUE
<b>RELIEF NEEDS</b>	IN CHF
Clothing & textiles	24,000
Medical & first aid	18,000
Utensils & tools	74,000
Other relief supplies	1,000
<b>TOTAL RELIEF NEEDS</b>	<b>117,000</b>
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<u>CAPITAL EQUIPMENT</u>	
Computers & telecom. equipment	15,000
<u>PROGRAMME SUPPORT</u>	
Programme support (6.5% of total)	25,000
<u>TRANSPORT STORAGE &amp; VEHICLE COSTS</u>	
Transport & vehicle costs	35,000
<u>PERSONNEL</u>	
National staff	149,000
<u>ADMINISTRATIVE &amp; GENERAL SERVICES</u>	
Administrative & general expenses	46,000
<b>TOTAL OPERATIONAL NEEDS</b>	<b>270,000</b>
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<b>TOTAL APPEAL CASH, KIND, SERVICES</b>	<b>387,000</b>
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<b>LESS AVAILABLE RESOURCES (-)</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>NET REQUEST</b>	<b>387,000</b>
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