

OPERATIONS UPDATE



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

HUMANITARIAN CRISIS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Appeal No. MDR81001
3 August 2006

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 185 countries.

In Brief

Operations Update no. 2; Period covered: 28 July to 3 August 2006;
Appeal target: CHF 1,329,000 (USD 1 million or EUR 846,000).

[\(click here to go directly to the attached map of the Middle East region.\)](#)

Appeal history:

- Launched on 21 July 2006 for CHF 1,329,000 (USD 1 million or EUR 846,000) for three months to assist 50,000 beneficiaries.
- Disaster Relief Emergency Funds (DREF) allocated: CHF 200,000 (USD 159,120 or EUR 127,455).

Operational Summary: The ICRC provides the overall leadership in and around the Lebanon crisis. Movement actors have different roles and responsibilities within this. This operations update is being issued to provide information on Federation and Red Cross/Red Crescent National Society support to those affected, or left vulnerable, by the crisis in the Middle East.

Red Cross Red Crescent National Societies intending to support the affected National Societies are requested to work within the coordinated Movement response. Those NSs wishing to send donations to Lebanon via Syria should coordinate with, and notify, Lebanese Red Cross (LRCS) and the Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARCS) of any donation, copying ICRC Amman, ICRC Beirut and ICRC Damascus, and inform the Federation Secretariat Headquarters. National Societies currently supporting the affected National Societies with donations are doing so bilaterally or via ICRC.

At this stage, and until further notice, the Federation has not established a mobilisation table for goods for the SARCS or the LRCS and until this changes the Federation is not coordinating any mobilisations and are not responsible for tracking or reporting on donations.

The SARC (SARC) with support from the Federation, ICRC, bilateral Partner National Societies, private donors and other humanitarian actors is responding adequately to the immediate needs of the people who crossed from Lebanon into Syria following the outbreak of armed conflict and hostilities in Lebanon. The reception centres at the four border crossing points are on high alert and functioning very well providing water, ready meals, snacks, First Aid, transportation, diapers, telephone services for family links, psychological support and hygiene materials to the new comers. The temporary shelters at schools, youth camps, mosques, university campuses around the country are well run by SARCS. The food provided by civil society organizations, private donors, the Syrian Government and other charitable organizations inside the country and distributed by SARCS staff and volunteers met the needs of the affected people. Dry rations in the form of food parcels are distributed to families who host affected families accommodated with relatives

and friends.

SARC branches reports as of 29 July showed around 140,000 people crossed from Lebanon into Syria. Out of this figure 11,366 are directly assisted by SARC in temporary shelters in schools, community centres, youth camps and other public buildings and 24,609 stayed with families supported by SARC through distribution of food parcels and other forms of assistance.

The Federation has received a number of initial pledges and offers of support for this appeal and final plans of action for ongoing support to the SARCS, LRCS and the Red Cross on Cyprus have been prepared, in close consultation with the ICRC as described in the Joint Statement, and presented for approval for an amended appeal.

Thanks to generous support from multi lateral and bi-lateral donors, inside and outside the country, Syria Arab Red Crescent has been able to provide vital humanitarian services to those affected by the hostilities in Lebanon. OPEC has made a pledge through the Federation to the LRCS for USD 1.2 million, for Lebanese victims. A proposal for mobilising these funds via this appeal is being agreed with OPEC.

Spanish Red Cross a direct cash contribution of EUR 30,000 to SARCS to help in the relief efforts and SARCS announced that they have received EUR 260,000 from Netherlands Red Cross, four Pick Up vehicles from Kuwait Red Crescent to support their logistical operation. The Federation has provided USD 69,106 to SARCS from DREF allocation for emergency relief activities.

The Algerian Government sent two cargos of food, drugs, a generator, tents and blankets and a thirteen-person medical team made up of surgeons, doctors and anaesthetists to Lebanon and Syria on 28 July. The team plans to be there for a week to evaluate the needs and see if they can intervene in supporting the authorities in Syria or Lebanon. Algerian RC was associated with this mission, organized by the Ministry of Solidarity. Three Algerian RC staff are part of the mission: First Aid coordinator, DM officer and a surgeon from the Mascara branch and relief items (blankets, tents) were sent from their stocks.

Turkish RC has sent trucks with medications and diapers to Lebanon.

The International Federation undertakes activities that are aligned with its Global Agenda, which sets out four broad goals to meet the Federation's mission to "improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity".

Global Agenda Goals:

- Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters.
- Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies.
- Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability.
- Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

- *In Amman (for Syria and Jordan): Ahmed Gizo, Head of Middle East Office, phone: +962 6 56 94911, + 962 6 5694556, mobile: +962 79 5158204, ahmedadam.gizo@ifrc.org*
- *In Tunis (for Egypt): Anne Leclerc, Head of North Africa Regional Office, phone: + 216 71 86 24 85, fax: + 216 71 86 29 71, ae.leclerc@ifrc.org*
- *In Cyprus: Tore Svenning, Federation Representative on Cyprus, phone + 35 79 99 57 106, tore.svenning@ifrc.org*
- *In Geneva:*
 - *Iain Logan, MENA Coordinating Desk, phone: +41 22 730 4889 , mobile: +41 79 249 3380, iain.logan@ifrc.org*
 - *Marie Françoise Borel, Media and Communications Department, phone: + 41 22 730 4346, mobile: + 41 79 217 3345, mf.borel@ifrc.org*

➤ **John English, Operations Support Coordinator,**
phone: + 41 22 730 4527, mobile: + 41 79 251 8023, john.english@ifrc.org

All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations \(NGO's\) in Disaster Relief](#) and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

For longer-term programmes in this or other countries or regions, please refer to the Federation's Annual Appeal. For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, or for national society profiles, please also access the Federation's website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

Background

More than 860,000 people are displaced inside Lebanon and more than 140,000 others have fled to Syria and other neighbouring countries since hostilities began on 12 July. The situation in Lebanon has had repercussions on neighbouring countries Syria, Cyprus and Turkey amongst others. Large numbers of people crossed the border between Lebanon and Syria in the early days of the crisis, and subsequently there was a large scale evacuation of people to Cyprus and also people trying to escape through Turkey.

This, in addition to fatalities, injuries and extensive damage to infrastructure in both Lebanon and Israel which the conflict has caused, has left many countries in the Middle East and Europe stretched as they try to meet the needs of these new arrivals.

Residents of South Lebanon and the southern part of Beirut were the most affected. The flow of people crossing the four entry border points from Lebanon to Syria is continuing, however, some people have started to go back to Lebanon, while the incoming traffic of people slowed down. For example, a total of 3,368 people (2,881 Lebanese, 186 Arab nationals and 301 other third nationals) crossed Al-Dabousiyeh border on 30 July. On the same day, a total of 1,491 people crossed from Syria to Lebanon (1,312 Lebanese, 75 Arab nationals and 104 other nationalities). The traffic at the border is normal and has seen a lot of cross border trade activities.

In Cyprus, so far, approximately 41,000 individuals have arrived, most of who have been able to travel onward within a short period of time. As of 26 July the total number of departures was about 36,000, while the pace of arrivals had slowed to 2- 3000 per day. The ability to process arrivals and arrange for their departure in a short period of time is the result of significant efforts on the part of the Government of the Republic of Cyprus and its agencies – supported by the Red Cross on Cyprus – in close co-operation with representatives of the governments whose citizens have been affected.

It is foreseen that as time goes by, and the flow of evacuees continues, the composition will change towards people with fewer personal resources and originating from countries with perhaps less capacity to immediately assist their nationals. Should this happen, the evacuees' need for assistance will change both qualitatively and quantitatively, and that there may well be an increased need for accommodation and food and other humanitarian assistance and for longer periods of time. The Federation is aware of this and is making plans to take care to ensure support for all those in need including the so called "stranded migrants." The Government of Cyprus is also calling for co-operation with member states of the European Union in terms of arrangements which would allow third-country nationals to travel onwards from Cyprus and not remain on the island indefinitely.

Magen David Adom (MDA) continues to respond to the ongoing needs in northern Israel.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Goal: To alleviate the suffering of the affected population by supporting National Societies in the countries neighbouring Lebanon in their efforts to effectively deliver assistance, particularly in the event of large population movement to Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Turkey and other countries. This support includes assistance to host families and potential returnee refugees (primarily in Syria) to be provided with returnee packages prior to returning to Lebanon.

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Since the Emergency Appeal was issued on 21 July 2006, joint assessments have been conducted in Syria, Cyprus and Lebanon. As noted planning for ongoing RC/RC operations to meet the needs of beneficiaries in each country are almost complete. In addition to reporting on what these NSs have already done to assist those affected by the humanitarian crisis in the region, details of how the operations will develop, based on these assessments, will be provided in the next operations update along with an amended appeal.

Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC)



SARC volunteers assisting children in shelters

The Syrian Arab Red Crescent Society (SARC) responded to the situation by organizing registration centres at various locations in the country and providing relief items, health care and shelter to those in need. To date, over 35,000 people of Lebanese nationality and other nationalities were assisted by SARC.

Arrivals from Lebanon are being sheltered mainly in schools, youth camps and community centres, but alternative accommodation will soon be found for these people as the schools will revert to their primary purpose by the end of August. It is unclear at this time as to when these people will be able to go back to their homes or when the conflict will end. Around 500 SARC volunteers are

involved in this relief operation.

An unidentified number of displaced Palestinians, who do not hold proper travel documents, remain at different border crossings. They are in desperate need of assistance. SARC held a meeting with the Palestinian RC branch in Syria on 25 July to coordinate establishment of medical teams and provision of assistance to this group of people. SARCS managed to handle the cases of 68 Palestinians who need special care due to their health conditions. These people will be under SARC care for sometime and the cases of the other Palestinians will be handled by the competent government authorities.

Assistance to arrivals from Lebanon is collaboratively provided by SARC, supported by the Federation, ICRC and bilateral Partner National Societies (PNS), civil society organizations, private charitable organizations, the Syrian government and the UN agencies. The following table illustrates numbers of people assisted by the different SARC branches as of 29 July.

Table 1: Numbers of people assisted by SARC branches

Branch	Number of arrivals staying in public shelters	Number of arrivals hosted by local communities and provided with assistance by SARC	Number of RC volunteers involved
Homs	2,721	5,724	40
Damascus	3,286	9,500	45
Rural Damascus	3,719	5,300	50
Tartous	0	783	10
Al-Qunaitira	0	130	10
Aleppo	600	880	150
Edleb	0	224	20
Deir Ezzour	0	85	15
Daraa	0	300	10
Al-Hasakeh	0	0	10
Hama	680	718	30
Lathiqiya	350	950	20
Al-Riqa	0	15	15

Al Swida	10	135	15
Total	11,366	24,609	440

The SARC has done a remarkable job since the beginning of this crisis, amply covering the current needs of the most vulnerable refugees. The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and sister national societies are now providing technical support, and donations from other Red Cross and Red Crescent partners are coming in. Timely response to the emerging humanitarian needs of people fleeing the conflict and crossing the border entry points from Lebanon into Syria was the main concern of SARC. The response operation is having several dimensions- registration and sheltering of evacuees, logistical support, health activities, maintaining family links, coordination with local and international governmental and non-governmental organizations and donors.

The SARC, is working with several international organisations to support the most vulnerable refugees from Lebanon. It is working as part of WHO coordination in all health-related activities for the refugee population together with the Ministry of Health, other UN agencies and NGOs.

Its strong national presence is valuable in collaboration with UNHCR to deliver assistance and care for thousands of Lebanese throughout Syria. In Damascus, the Syrian Red Crescent and UNHCR teams are distributing blankets and non-food relief items to displaced people in schools and SARC has been working relentlessly to provide aid and shelter and restore family links for Lebanese who have crossed into Syria.

The uncertainty of the situation in terms of when the conflict will end or how it will develop is the major factor affecting the humanitarian situation and programme implementation.

Many humanitarian actors and donors are sending items to Lebanon through Syria which will increase the workload on the SARCS. Logistical support and coordination assistance has been offered to SARC by both ICRC and Federation.

The operation is contributing to meeting the needs of the target group through the provision of shelter, relief items and health care. Additionally, SARC staff and volunteers are benefiting from 'on the job' training in the field of disaster management, coordination and logistical support, and financial management and reporting. SARC is the lead in Syria supported by the Federation and ICRC. A more detailed joint assessment with ICRC, SARC, and PNSs is now completed and an action plan has been drafted, for approval by the SARCS.



Arrivals from Lebanon at a registration centre

Health and care

Objective 1: The health situation of the targeted beneficiaries is maintained at satisfactory level within the emergency period of three months.

SARC volunteers and first aid teams rotate in shifts at border crossings at Al-Jdaideh, Al-Daboossieh and Al-Jooseh, Al-Areedah where they provide people crossing from Lebanon (evacuees) with food, water and non-food relief items, first aid and psychological support for those in need.

Volunteers from Homs branch are carrying out medical examinations for arrivals staying in shelters/reception centres in Homs governorate. They also provide psychological support as needed. Damascus branch registers arrivals at its premises and provides medical examinations, food and medicines. Volunteers from Tartous branch

provide first aid services at AlAreedah border crossing point, and distribute food and non-food relief items for evacuees as needed.

Al Qunaitira branch collects in kind donations and distributes them to arrivals. A group of female volunteers was established to communicate with displaced women in order to ensure that their special basic needs are being met. A total of 150 Aleppo branch volunteers continue to participate in the response activities ensuring that basic medical needs for people in public shelters are met and they distribute food too. The paediatric hospital in Aleppo, which belongs to the branch, treats displaced children free of charge. Aleppo branch physicians rotate in daily shifts at shelters from 8 am to 12 pm.

The Syrian Government hospital and SARCS medical centres and hospitals are mobilized to provide free medical care to all Lebanese nationals and other third country nationals affected by the conflict. As of 1 August, the health needs of people sheltered in public places are met either by the Syrian Government or the SARCS.



Relieving some of the psychological burden by playing.

The need for psychological support will be assessed with bilateral assistance from the Danish Red Cross as requested by the National Society. The Danish Red Cross offered the services of a specialist in PSP to conduct this assessment which will be done as part of a coordinated plan of action for an amended Federation Appeal.

In Lebanon and Syria, the World Health Organization (WHO) is working to implement disease surveillance systems that are compatible to each other to enable comparisons and joint monitoring. In Syria, WHO reached an agreement with the Ministry of Health and other health partners on the use of the surveillance form proposed by WHO for the Early Warning and

Response Network in the Syrian shelters for Lebanese refugees. Training on the appropriate use of the form will be conducted soon. The WHO is preparing to conduct rapid health assessments in the shelters hosting Lebanese refugees. A disease surveillance system is being set up in several shelters.¹

Objective 2: National societies in the region are better prepared to respond to man-made and natural (including epidemics) disasters.

The SARC health staff and volunteers who have been trained in disaster management through the series of National Intervention Team (NIT) exercises covering relief and related health issues enhanced their experience through participation in this relief operation which provided them with on the job practical training. This will build the capacity of SARC for better preparedness to respond to future disasters.

The PSP needs assessment is expected to highlight elements that may promote the existing SARC PSP programme as well as the regional PSP programme. As noted, the PSP component will be supported bilaterally and will be incorporated in the revised appeal.

The rapid development and uncertainty of the crisis situation is a major concern that is affecting planning and implementation.

Collecting and analyzing timely and accurate data is a major factor affecting timely reporting. Compiling accurate statistics of people hosted by relatives, friends or through private arrangements is difficult and will remain a challenge.

¹ http://www.emro.who.int/EHA/PDF/Lebanon_health_sitrep_14_29July06.pdf

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Action plans for epidemic outbreaks, particularly for diarrhea diseases are not yet developed as the health infrastructure, public and private in Syria is capable of meeting the needs of the evacuees. In preparedness for any eventuality, the health professionals in the delegation and SARCS are revisiting the WHO guidelines. The WHO publication 'Communicable Disease Control in Emergencies - A Field Manual' may be a useful tool for health staff and volunteers. To access this document, click

http://whqlibdoc.who.int/publications/2005/9241546166_eng.pdf

Planned activities

Future activities are planned possibly coinciding with the return of evacuees to Lebanon. Details provided in the forthcoming revised appeal. Areas already identified as needing additional attention are:

- Provide minimum emergency wat/san stocks for the national society to assist returning populations.
- Train volunteers in wat/san emergency response.
- Co-ordinate building of new partnerships.
- Monitor impact and adjust programme accordingly.
- Develop community based relief management systems where appropriate.
- Monitor market price changes.
- Assess and develop support services for populations returning home when appropriate.

Relief: distribution of food and basic non-food items.

Objective: Displaced persons, and host families, in countries surrounding Lebanon have access to adequate shelter, food, and other appropriate emergency support services.

SARC volunteers continued to supply the temporary shelters with non-food items such as mattresses, blankets, pillows and medical care. This is in addition to the food parcels which include items such as rice, milk powder, sugar, wheat flour, tea, pasta, canned vegetables, cooking oil and canned tuna fish. Ready cooked hot meals continue to be provided in places like schools where cooking is not allowed. Many other organizations are doing the same. At border points, SARC volunteers continued to provide arrivals from Lebanon with drinking water, snacks, first aid, hygiene materials, baby powder, diapers toys and psychological support.

Volunteers at Homs branch have prepared food baskets, each for four days, and distributed them to families hosting evacuees from Lebanon. Homs branch provided 97 Sudanese Nationals who crossed from Lebanon on Friday 28 July and Saturday 29 July who are accommodated in one schools near the University town awaiting transportation to their country. The assistance included transportation by buses from Al-Dabousia border crossing to Homs city, provision of cooked meals and medical care for those in need. A medical doctor and a nurse from SARCS Homs medical centre make daily visits to the school to provide medical check up and treatment.

SARC reported receiving donations of relief items including baby food, bottled water, biscuits, jerry cans, mattresses, blankets, and hygiene and kitchen sets. These were distributed to people in the temporary shelters in different governorates as well as to some families hosting Lebanese families.

The United Arab Red Crescent announced a contribution of food parcels worth approximately USD 200,000 including cash contribution to SARCS to cover the overheads for the handling and distribution of the food parcels. This project will be implemented bilaterally between UAE Red Crescent and SARC.

A Spanish Red Cross cargo flight carrying 11 MT of relief items arrived and off loaded in SARCS warehouse near Damascus airport. The consignment contains 5,000 blankets, 2,800 jerry cans, 180 family hygiene kits, 50 First Aid 'backsac', 700 tarpaulins packed in ten bale units. The Spanish Red Cross and SARCS will use the information from the joint assessments to distribute these items to the places where there is immediate need. The Spanish Red Cross delegate announced that, they are ready to send another plane if requested meanwhile, they made a direct cash contribution of EUR 30,000 to SARCS to help in the relief efforts.

SARCS announced that they have received EUR 260,000 from Netherlands Red Cross through bilateral arrangements. Kuwait Red Crescent handed over four Pick Up vehicles to SARC to support their logistical operation. ICRC announced that they are sending six vehicles (second hand) from their fleet in Iran as donation to SARCS. The Federation has provided USD 69,106 to SARCS from DREF allocation for emergency relief activities.

Concerns have been expressed regarding the possible inclusion of baby milk powder in relief donations. A reminder that this commodity is in breach of the decision adopted by Federation Governing Board at the 8th Session of the Governing Board in Geneva, 21-23 October 2003. Quote, “The International Federation and each individual National Society shall: Not accept or distribute donations of Dried Skimmed Milk (DSM) or other milk powder, e.g. whole milk powder, unless this is done as part of a premix for supplementary feeding or under special circumstances where supervision of preparation and access to sufficient clean water is possible. This recognises the inherent difficulties of ensuring adequate hygiene and appropriate use of milk powder when provided as a separate item for distribution.”

Shelter

Objective 1: Adequate shelter facilities are maintained for the targeted population for the emergency period of three months.

SARC continues to provide shelter and assistance to arrivals from Lebanon in cooperation and coordination with governmental institutions (Ministries of Social Affairs, Labour, Health, Education and Higher Education), and non-governmental organisations and charities located in the different governorates. Through this coordination, SARC managed to furnish several schools, monasteries and dormitories with beds, covers and pillows to accommodate the evacuees. UN agencies such as UNHCR, WFP and UNFPA are in contact with SARC to establish partnerships. The Federation is advising SARC to enter into such partnerships based on clear agreements. Several more activities are planned, with more details provided in the forthcoming revised appeal. Areas already identified as needing attention in the revised appeal are:

- Provide disaster management training for staff and volunteers.
- Establish a good co-ordination system.
- Co-ordinate building of new partnerships.
- Improve existing programmes.
- Develop new programmes.

Information and Media activities

Objective: supporting the National Societies to improve their communications capacities and develop appropriate communications tools and products to support effective operations.

The Information officer from the Federation Middle East Regional office wrote two stories for the Federation website which were already posted on the Federation website. The information officer gave crash training to the newly appointed SARC information officer on how to prepare press release and conduct an interviews.

The Regional Information officer joined the regional support team in Damascus. He will, with the NS information officer, issue a newsletter for SARC, press release and organise press conferences. He will collate data and write more stories about SARC response efforts.

Coordination

The Federation team from the Middle East Regional office in Amman deployed to Syria since 16 July have set up an operations room to coordinate the support and respond to the organizational needs of SARC. The Regional Finance controller from Amman office joined the team in Syria to train SARCS accountants in the Working Advance management and the Federation financial management rules and procedures.

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The Federation's Senior Field Logistics officer who arrived from the Regional Logistic Centre in Dubai will carry out logistics assessment to identify the needs for the operation and develop a plan of action. He is finalizing his assessment report which will be shared with the Middle East Regional office and SARC for further action

Upon request from SARC, the Spanish Red Cross deployed two ERU logistics delegates to support the SARC response efforts. The two delegates will monitor the distribution of the relief items donated by the Spanish Red Cross.

The Head of Regional Office (HoRO) attended a meeting between World Food Programme (WFP) country office in Syria and SARC president where discussion focused on WFP response to the crisis in Syria. It is agreed that WFP and SARC will carry out field visits to designated areas where families have hosted some of the people who crossed from Lebanon. Dry food rations will be distributed to the affected families. A bakery project is also considered if need arises. Prior to the WFP meeting, the HoRO met separately with SARC President for consultation and to discuss the progress of the operation and Federation support to the NS response to the crisis.

Syrian Arab Red Crescent meetings

SARC held a meeting with the Federation Regional Disaster Management (DM) delegate and Qatar Red Crescent to discuss logistical procedures related to the passage of assistance from Qatar Red Crescent to the Lebanese Red Cross. The Regional DM delegate advised Qatar RC to liaise with the ICRC for coordination on the logistical arrangements of relief convoy to Lebanon. The Qatar Red Crescent provided a list of the donated items which is required to be shared with the ICRC and Lebanese Red Cross.

SARC and the Federation met the Algerian RC delegation who accompanied a relief plane sent by Algerian Government to Lebanon to coordinate passage of donations. SARC received separate visits from the President of the Jordan Red Crescent and Chairman of the RC/RC Standing Commission, the Swiss ambassador and the Qatar Ambassador to Syria to provide support and discuss mechanisms for regional cooperation, and the needs and ways to support SARC efforts.

SARC held meetings with: IOM representative to discuss the return of arrivals from different nationalities to their countries; Palestinian RC branch in Syria to coordinate establishment of medical teams and provision of assistance to Palestinian arrivals caught between the borders; and participated in a teleconference organised by ICRC with different National Societies and Federation to discuss the current situation and the expected response.

Federation, ICRC and SARC hold regular coordination meetings to update on the response and coordinate support to SARCS. A joint assessment exercise is being carried out by the three components of the movement to draft an action plan and the future interventions. The Federation HoRO met his counterpart, the ICRC HoD twice during his three day visit to Syria for briefing and consultation.

Other meetings:

The SARC hosted the Arab Red Cross Red Crescent Organization Executive Committee meeting on 30 July 2006. The meeting was attended by the executive committee members from Syria, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Sudan, Palestine, Jordan and as invitees, The Chairman of the RCRC Standing Commission, the Secretary General of the Egyptian Red Crescent, Kuwait Red Crescent and the Federation Head of Middle East Regional office in Amman. The main agenda item was the humanitarian crisis in the Middle East, with discussion focusing on the importance of coordination between National Societies in their response to their crisis. The Federation HoRO explained to the participants the Federation response and distributed the Preliminary Appeal document and the ICRC/Federation joint statement on the crisis in the Middle East.

On the sidelines of the Arab Secretariat Executive Committee meeting the HoRO met with the UAE Red Crescent delegation where he advised them on how to coordinate with other movement partners. He emphasized to them the importance of keeping both the NS in Lebanon and Syria and the ICRC informed about any plans to send in-kind donations to Lebanon or Syria.

The Red Cross on Cyprus

An extensive assessment has been carried out on Cyprus, resulting in a plan of action to support the Red Cross assistance to evacuees. There are three phases of operation reflecting the possible scenarios

Current phase – rapid turnover evacuee processing

The around 41, 000 persons who have arrived in Cyprus so far (including 26 July) have been relatively fast processed through formalities and repatriated to their countries of origin in co-operation with their respective embassies. Some 35 000 have already left in this way, and with the influx seeming to slow the number remaining in Cyprus should go down.

It is expected, however, that approximately 1000/2000 a day will continue to arrive for some time. Among these one can expect a number that do not fit easily into the system and consequently may be left out of the process. A possible further new development is the arrival of some evacuees via air from Syria to Cyprus, but it is too early to draw any conclusions as to whether this is the beginning of a trend, or just an occasional event.

Second phase, slow turnover

There are concerns over changes in the composition of the evacuee caseload – away from relatively well-off citizens of fairly rich countries and towards third-country nationals and possibly poorer Lebanese citizens.

While it is not certain that this will come to pass, the concern is strong enough – and the situation in Lebanon seems to validate this – to warrant planning and preparing for a second phase which would be characterised by the arrival of people whose processing time would be longer, and a proportion of whom would not or could not proceed to another destination, or who will need assistance in reaching a third destination. This includes Bangladeshi, Filipinos, Sri Lankans and others. Whilst IOM will probably do the repatriation it would be possible for them to set up a link through the Federation and the CRC in order to provide welcome/protection/messaging.

This would lead to an increase of the evacuee population actually in Cyprus, with attendant requirements for accommodation, food, social and other services and the need to address protection issues.

Timelines

The current planning encompasses a period of six weeks from the beginning of the evacuee crisis, until the end of August. However the planning may need to look at the longer term with six weeks as the initial time frame. Red Cross capacity will have to be evaluated for the possibility of what can be carried out in the longer term and with the help of the Federation prepare now. During that period the situation should become clearer, and if a renewed flow of evacuees becomes a reality, the RC would have much more capacity to meet the needs of the new beneficiaries in a systematic and planned manner,

Red Cross Action- current operation

- The 24 hour presence at Larnaka port and airport has been reduced due to the reduced number of evacuees coming on board a reduced number of vessels. In the past couple of days, The Red Cross maintains a minimum number of personnel at these locations, and has established a system whereby volunteers are requested to go to the port when an arrival is confirmed. Evacuees are provided with water and other drinks, sandwiches, biscuits and similar to provide a little comfort during until they are able to leave the port area for the airport or overnight accommodation.
- Targeted assistance to those who travel with babies or small children (practical items such as nappies and other baby/child oriented items)
- Provision of wheelchairs to assist individuals with mobility problems (mostly people who are feeling ill, or more generally, elderly people exhausted after their long journeys)
- Assistance to individuals in need of transport to specialised clinics or hospitals (typically people who have chronic diseases or have recently undergone medical procedures in Lebanon, which need following up)
- Some assistance to individuals in arranging accommodation (primarily people who are unable to travel from Cyprus, and who have no resources of their own)
- Preparing for the eventuality that the evacuee flow might increase, its composition change, and the length of stay in Cyprus of each individual grows longer.

- Public fundraising campaign designed to mobilise resources to support the evacuees operation.
- An assessment of the RC capacity to participate in Restoring Family Links (RFL)/tracing and RC messaging should be carried out and support to develop this provided by the Federation team.

There is no quantitative data on the number of beneficiaries, but informally, it is estimated that well over 75 per cent of the evacuees, so far, has received some form of support, assistance or service from the Red Cross. This translates into a number around 30 000 individuals.

Red Cross Action – continuation of current operation

It is expected that the flow of evacuees from relatively rich countries will continue for some time, and that these evacuees will be able to be processed into and out of the country with comparatively little delay – mostly within 24 to 36 hours or less. However care will need to be taken to identify those less competent of looking after themselves. For these beneficiaries, the Red Cross intends to continue its current activities and services.

The resources utilized for these activities come from a number of sources. Red Cross on Cyprus own reserves, donations (cash and kind) from the general public and the private sector and from government partners such as Civil Defence. There are no estimates available of the volume or value of the in-kind contributions, but in both terms it is significant and has sustained Red Cross' activities so far. Early coordination with other actors such as IOM, UNHCR, OCHA, WFP is important.

In support of the continuation of the activities it is proposed that the Federation provide resources that supplement those already available to the Red Cross to enable them to purchase and distribute goods, to support the volunteers who do the job, and to strengthen their management capacity in order to stabilise the action. Details will be provided in the revised appeal

Red Cross Action – outline for phase two

A possible second phase will involve evacuees who for various reasons cannot be repatriated with the same speed as those already coming through. There might be two “classes” of such evacuees: people with relatively small personal resources and coming from less affluent countries with limited capacity to support the repatriation and, possibly, people of Lebanese nationality who arrive in Cyprus to escape the fighting and its difficult aftermath, even in the case of a ceasefire.

Needs:

In addition, the beneficiaries will need, and Red Cross on Cyprus, will endeavour to provide:

1. Short-term accommodation

The Red Cross has access to two schools empty for the summer, which may be able to accommodate up to 600 persons. The reality of this figure needs to be checked. However this option can only be viable if the time is available to ensure the facilities can be ready for the school return in September. Consequently alternative permanent/semi permanent accommodation should be identified

2. Food

Each school has a kitchen which may be used to prepare meals in addition to distribution of water, and similar.

- Access to medical assistance – a facilitation service
- Advice on practical matters associated with a temporary stay in Cyprus and as well as RFL and tracing support and the provision of information on which people who may want to return sooner rather than later can make an informed choice
- Food purchases and staff to prepare the meals.
- Specialised food for vulnerable groups such as small children and babies; elderly people; people with chronic diseases .

At the present time the scenarios available are not precise enough to base a plan or an estimate on. Based on Red Cross capacity, it is felt that taking care of a number of people that can be accommodated in the schools mentioned

would represent a ceiling. This ceiling could be lifted, if necessary, by using tents in the school grounds, which are suitable for that purpose.

3. Non-Food

Requirements for such an eventuality would include

- Camp beds, sheets and blankets for up to a 1000 persons at any one time
- If the case load increases to a 1000 individuals, it is foreseen that up to 200 tents might be required to accommodate them
- Hygiene articles
- Transport
- Communications

Developing a more precise plan of action with associated costs would be one of the tasks of the delegate suggested below.

Surge capacity:

It is suggested that the Federation provides one international staff for a month. One of these would be dedicated to assisting CRC in organising and running the operation, including planning for the eventuality of the arrival of evacuees who may stay for longer periods on the island. Regional delegation media and financial staff can assist periodically in these areas to ensure accurate reporting and fiscal management.

Operations Co-ordination

The Red Cross on Cyprus would be financially assisted to hire a suitably qualified person to provide operations co-ordination and support to the volunteers. This staff position would be expected to stay in close touch with the volunteers, support their activities, collect information on beneficiaries and their needs from official sources and from the beneficiaries themselves, collate and analyse this information and provide the management and leadership of the Red Cross with a daily update. He/she should be prepared to act as a link between the volunteers and headquarters, as well as with volunteers in different locations, arrange practical matters such as purchasing and transport, and generally be a trouble shooter.

Financial Management

The rules and regulations of the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement require international financial assistance to be kept separate from the ordinary financial management of a Red Cross or Red Crescent Society. The International Federation has its own accounting/reporting requirements and additional requirements might emanate from acceptance of contributions from particular donors.

It is suggested that the Red Cross hires a suitably qualified person to prepare financial accounting and financial reports. It is not unlikely that the Secretariat of the International Federation would dispatch an experienced financial manager from one of its offices or from Geneva to provide the recruited person with the necessary knowledge, tools and guidance to ensure that the financial management is in line with what is required.

Initially this position would probably not be a full time occupation, and the person selected should be able and willing to participate in other aspects of the administration of the operation such as purchasing, processing of payments, preparation of budgets, and the like.

Warehousing and Transport

Red Cross on Cyprus is receiving considerable amounts of both in-kind and financial support from a variety of sources. Much of the financial support is eventually converted into physical goods. In co-operation with ICRC, the Red Cross has gained access to warehouse space some distance from the main area of activity (the port of Larnaka), and has a smaller storage capacity at the port itself.

There would be advantages in centralising the warehousing of goods, including better tracking, distribution and recording, as well as better overview of what is at any one time available and what is required over some period of time. It would also allow Red Cross on Cyprus to receive in-kind contributions from the International Federation and/or National Societies in an orderly fashion.

It is suggested that the Red Cross hires a warehouse “manager” – someone who has experience in the receipt, storage and recording of stock movements. He or she should provide daily reports on stock movements so as to keep the leadership and management of Red Cross on Cyprus up to date on the position.

Lebanese Red Cross

Lebanese Red Cross (LRC) has placed all its departments on high alert and work towards managing the growing humanitarian crisis.

The LRC has been implementing a response plan to cope with the rapidly deteriorating humanitarian situation. The LRC, with the largest network of volunteers covering the entire country, working under the lead of the ICRC, has mobilized its entire resources. However, the operational activities of the LRC face immense challenges. This operations update focuses on the capacity of LRC and its operational activities on the ground, detailing the challenges facing its relief efforts.

A Relief Coordination Room (RCR) was established as a central coordination and informational unit. The RCR, supported by the ICRC-Federation, is providing a link between all relief organizations work and ensuring high-level coordination between the LRC and other humanitarian organizations.

The death toll, according to Lebanese RC figures, has reached 750 with 2000 injured and 850,000 Internally Dispersed People (IDP). Civilians who fled the south are being sheltered all over the country. Over 120,000 IDPs are estimated to be located in Beirut, 44,000 in Saida and around 95,000 around Jbeil. All are living under harsh habitable conditions. As the increasingly crowded parks, overcrowded schools and other barely habitable places do not meet the minimum required shelter standards and as a result are not meeting proper hygiene and sanitation conditions. This might lead to an increase in incidence of diseases. Problems have started to emerge on sanitation levels.

The LRC has mobilized more than 4,000 volunteers divided between various departments:

- The First Aid /Emergency Medical Services (EMS) teams have carried out, to date, a total of 750 wounded, 300 corpses and 2203 emergency medical transports. The First Aid /EMS teams have a total of 2400 volunteers and 200 vehicles distributed over 42 active centers spread nationwide
- The youth division is working with the IDPs on the sanitation and hygiene problems, and is conducting surveys to assess the needs of the IDPs. They have started a psychiatric support programme to lessen the impact of the war on affected people and a programme to entertain children. The youth division has a capacity of 1,400 volunteers distributed over 35 active centres all over the country.
- Socio-medical services covering the IDPs’ health care have distributed a total of 15,000 medications and have made more than 5,500 field visit to 90 IDP shelters. Socio-medical services have a network of 24 fixed primary health centers, 24 dispensaries, ten mobile clinics and 11 Blood bank covering Lebanon. Nine blood banks have delivered more than 600 blood unit with a reserve of 200 unite from all types. Two blood banks have had to be evacuated for security reasons.
- Communications team have been keeping track of the situation and updating the media on the relevant developments.
- Logistics department has been receiving, sorting, storing, and distributing ten tons of medications provided by the State of Kuwait, 15 tons of nutritional items and 20 tons of hygiene related aid provided by UNICEF, the United Nations Children’s Fund and partner of the Lebanese Red Cross.

The Lebanese RC is doing all it can within its capacity. However, problems faced can be categorized as either security related, logistical and operational.

Security: the LRC, with its modest resources, is still operating under dangerous and in some cases life threatening situations. Several security incidents involving Lebanese Red Cross operations have occurred, preventing ambulances from reaching some villages and direct attacks on two ambulances .

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Logistical, there have been communications problems, as the regional telephone network failed and the relevant wireless communication equipment was unavailable within the Lebanese Red Cross. Infrastructure, including bridges and roads, has been damaged, hampering humanitarian assistance.

Operational: insufficient resources were evident. Not having sufficient 4-wheel drive vehicles within the LRC hindered the society from more effectively fulfilling its humanitarian role in the damaged infrastructure of the country.

Therefore, there remains a huge need for more donations to continue the relief operation. Youth Dept of LRCS are commencing a pilot project for water delivery trucks tomorrow and this will later be later handed over to Logistics to coordinate.

Completion of the setting up of the Saudi field hospital and a visit by the Federations Logistics Coordinator will be arranged soon, in coordination with LRCS.

Turkish Red Crescent

A total of 8,882 people from 31 countries have arrived in Turkey fleeing from the fighting in Lebanon since July 19. Among them, Australians, Americans, French and Turkish people were the largest groups.

Turkish Red Crescent Society opened up two temporary shelters in its southern provinces of Adana and Hatay in order to help its own people and citizens of third countries, fleeing the fighting in Lebanon.

An estimated 1,200 Canadians who arrived at Mersin port by boat on July 20 were welcomed by about 50 Turkish RC workers and volunteers, who distributed food packages containing bottled water, fruit juice, biscuits, chocolates, cakes and provided health services to evacuees. A total of 400 blankets, 1,080 mattresses, 100 sleeping bags, 300 pillows and 80 bad sheets were made available for them at the shelters that also have shower facilities.

The Turkish Red Crescent Society has dispatched humanitarian aid to Palestinians in an effort to assist the victims of hostilities in the Middle East. The consignment carried 630 tonnes of flour and is first part of a total of 10,000 tonnes planned to be sent as part of an agreement with the Palestinian Red Crescent, who will distribute to those in need. Turkish RC mobilized a second convoy carrying 870 tones of flour shortly after the arrival of its first convoy in Ramallah.

Turkish Red Crescent also sent two truck-loads of relief packages to Lebanon on July 25 to support the Lebanese Red Cross humanitarian activities. Baby food and biscuits, jam, kitchen utensils, sanitary pads, diapers and medical supplies were among the relief items which were dispatched. The Turkish RC relief convoy arrived at Arida Border Gate, the nearest place to Turkish -Syrian border, on July 28. There, consignments were handed over to Lebanese Red Cross and subsequent relief convoys will follow the same route.

Capacity of the Federation and coordination

The Middle East regional office in Amman, Jordan will coordinate Federation support to the National Societies in the region in line with Strategy 2010 and the Federation Global Agenda Goals and Framework for Action. The main focus is to strengthen the capacities of the National Societies to enable them to respond positively and effectively to the needs of the most vulnerable people.

On 26 July 2006, the ICRC and the Federation issued a joint statement on coordination of the movement's response to the conflict in Lebanon and Israel, which describes the ICRC overall leadership responsibility for coordination of the movement's response to the conflict in Lebanon and its consequences in neighbouring countries. Needs assessment and plans of action are to be developed and resources are to be mobilized jointly between ICRC, Federation and National Societies.

[Map of Middle East region below; click here to return to the title page and contact information.](#)



Humanitarian crisis in the Middle East

