

# Mid-Year report



International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

## Palestine Red Crescent Society

Appeal No. MAAPS001

30 August 2010

This report covers the period 1 January 2010 to 30  
June 2010



A Red Crescent volunteer in Hebron facilitates access to the Al-Ibrahimi Mosque to the elderly. Photo: PRCS

### In brief

**Programme outcome:** Support the Palestine Red Crescent Society respond to the needs of the most vulnerable in the occupied Palestinian territory and the Palestinian refugees in the Diaspora.

**Programme(s) summary:** The humanitarian situation in Palestine continues to be very difficult. In Gaza, reconstruction has not started yet, since access of building materials has been denied. The West Bank is still fragmented by a very complex system of checkpoints, the separation wall, the expansion of settlements and the subsequent expropriation of land, the strict control over movements and an ongoing expulsion of Palestinians from East Jerusalem.

Possibly the only Palestinian institution able today to work independently in the whole of the occupied Palestinian territory and the Diaspora abroad, the Palestine Red Crescent Society has continued to deliver quality services to several hundreds of thousands of vulnerable people in the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem, through programmes such as disaster management, psycho-social support, primary and secondary health care, rehabilitation and abilities development and emergency medical services (ambulance). In Lebanon, Syria and Egypt, the Palestine Red Crescent has continued supporting the Palestinian refugees through its network of hospitals.

Despite the extremely challenging external environment, the society has also been investing in

improving its capacities in order to gain efficiency and achieve greater impact. The results of the evaluation of the Gaza operation have been transformed into management processes to revise and improve its disaster management systems and procedures and to streamline decision-making processes. The process of gradual decentralization of programme management to the branches is being coupled with attention to leadership development. The Operational Alliance has been revived and the cooperation mechanisms streamlined.

Generous financial support has come from a wide range of sister Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies, the ICRC and the Palestinian Authority for its programmes, and technical and programmatic support by the International Federation. This report tries to cover the whole range of the Palestine Red Crescent's activities and the support and cooperation of its partners.

**Financial situation:** The original 2010 budget was Swiss francs 244,569. Overall expenditure during the reporting period was Swiss francs 125,529. The budget has been revised to Swiss francs 291,837 (USD 288,588 or EUR 226,367), of which Swiss francs 341,308, or 117 per cent, is covered. This revision reflects both the income and the expenditure rates in the first half of the year and foreseen expenditure until the end of the year. It includes the generous contribution from the Italian Red Cross, supporting the position of the International Federation representative in Palestine.

[Click here to go directly to the attached financial report.](#)

**No. of people we have reached:** The Palestine Red Crescent Society is presently developing a monitoring system to capture the exact numbers of beneficiaries of its activities, moving from a system that registers services provided to a system that records beneficiaries too. The International Federation is focusing its support on organizational development, disaster management and coordinating its cooperation.

**Our partners:** Eight National Societies working directly with the Palestine Red Crescent Society have a presence in Palestine (Danish Red Cross, German Red Cross, Italian Red Cross, Norwegian Red Cross together with Swedish Red Cross, Qatar Red Crescent, Spanish Red Cross, Turkish Red Crescent and United Arab Emirates Red Crescent), while a number of other National Societies support directly, but have no permanent presence in Palestine (British Red Cross, Finnish Red Cross, French Red Cross, Icelandic Red Cross, Netherlands Red Cross). The Italian Red Cross has been supporting the International Federation plan for 2010-2011. The Australian Red Cross has showed interest in supporting the society in the near future. Close working relations are maintained with ICRC within the framework of the Seville agreement and its supplementary measures.

In addition, the Red Crescent receives generous support from the Palestinian Authority and has excellent partnerships with a large number of organizations and agencies. We would like to recall the French Cooperation agency, Asamblea de Cooperacion por la Paz, UNRWA, Norwegian Aid Committee, Norwegian Palestine Committee, Save the Children, UNICEF, amongst others.

## Context

Despite international condemnation and the many resolutions passed by international bodies (UN, international courts) the expansion of the settlements, the eviction of Palestinians from their homes in Jerusalem and the West Bank as well as the confiscation of land have not stopped. The highly complex segregation system in place, made of hundreds of checkpoints and roadblocks inside the West Bank, movement restrictions and travel permits, and the wall/fence surrounding the West Bank and three sides of the Gaza strip, all render life for Palestinian miserable and inhuman; and more so for those Palestinians living in the overcrowded refugee camps in Lebanon, Syria and inside the West Bank and Gaza.

The indirect ('proximity') talks between the Palestinians and the Israelis have not given the results hoped by some. Direct talks have been announced for the beginning of September. The positions of the two parties to the talks are quite far. Israel has an interest to extend the talks while continuing with land annexation and expansion of settlements. The PLO leadership, weakened by the

uninterrupted Israeli policy of setting difficult tasks on the ground, needs some concrete results, and has announced that in case the peace talks should fail, they would proceed with a unilateral declaration of the Palestinian state in late 2011.

The window of opportunity left open by the Arab League (a comprehensive Middle East peace agreement if a peace settlement is found) ends at the end of September. The local elections, due to take place in June, were postponed. Reconciliation talks between Hamas and the Palestinian Authority have resumed, after some failed attempts, but have not given concrete results so far.

The blockade on Gaza has eased a little, under strong international pressure after the Israeli raid on the aid flotilla that killed nine peace activists, but most construction materials are still banned both by Israelis and Egyptians. The Rafah border between Gaza and Egypt has been opened 'indefinitely' to movement of persons, and the Egyptian government has publicly announced that all humanitarian aid entering Gaza from Egypt will be channeled through the Egyptian Red Crescent Society. In the West Bank, the process of developing the structures of the (future) Palestinian State has advanced. The economy has improved, and the IMF estimates a 5.5 per cent real increase in GDP per person in 2009, an impressive growth albeit insufficient to cover the real 13 per cent decrease between 2000 and 2007. The area around Ramallah has seen a dramatic change with flows of investment and construction. A very different picture from Gaza, where 55.7 per cent of the population lives below the poverty line, compared to 37.2 per cent in 2004. Source: UNDP HDI oPt.

The relationship between Israel and some of its stronger allies was severely undermined by at least three incidents. The assassination of a Hamas leader in Dubai, by most attributed to the Israeli Mossad, strained relations with several European countries, whose citizens saw their passports cloned by the perpetrators. The insult to the US vice-President of the declaration of some 16,000 new units to be built in settlements, illegal under international law, during his visit to Israel, angered the US administration. More recently, the killing of nine Turkish peace activists aboard the aid flotilla heading to Gaza created a serious diplomatic incident with Turkey.

During the period there has been recurrent speculation about a possible extension of the conflict to other Middle East countries. Threats include reports of supposed Syrian involvement in the provision of long-range missiles to Hezbollah militias in South Lebanon as well as reference to the nuclear threat posed by Iran and a possible role in a 'preemptive airstrike' by Israeli air forces.

## Progress towards outcomes

*Despite the severe limitations, the Palestine Red Crescent Society has continued providing humanitarian support and quality programmes and services to the vulnerable in Palestine, in full respect of the Fundamental Principles, enhancing its cooperation with several Movement and non-Movement partners.*

*While the International Federation secretariat has not been directly supporting all of the following programmes, it has been supporting the Palestine Operational Alliance and more generally the facilitation of the cooperation between the society and its partner National Societies (PNSs). It is therefore important to report on the whole of the programme activities and the support provided by its partners in order to reflect the International Federation's overall service delivery in Palestine. Where the International Federation secretariat has directly- either financially, technically or in other forms- supported a specific programme of the Palestine Red Crescent, this is specified in the text.*

*Additional detailed information is available upon request from the Palestine Red Crescent through its 6-month programme reports.*

**Strategic aim 1: Save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disasters and crises (Disaster Management)**

**Outcome:** Effective operational linkages between disaster management and other programmes are established, thus contributing to improved disaster management capacities and adjustments to its organizational structure.

**Achievements:** Disaster management is a rapidly growing area of work. The Palestine Red Crescent Society responded to flash floods in Gaza in January and February. With support from the International Federation disaster response emergency fund (DREF), 1,437 beneficiaries were assisted. Please refer to the DREF final report for details.

The recently-established disaster risk reduction programme counted on a training facilitated by the International Federation's zone coordinator for key staff and volunteers from the headquarters and branches. The community-based project, supported by the German, Norwegian and Swedish Red Cross Societies was visited by a specialist from the German Red Cross, who supported the Red Crescent team establish a plan of action for 36-months. In addition, with funds from the American Red Cross through the International Federation, the Red Crescent has started the pilot phase of its school-based disaster risk reduction activities.

As part of the implementation and follow-up to the recommendations from the evaluation of the Gaza operation, the Red Crescent has put in place a task force of key staff and invited its partners (ICRC, International Federation and interested PNSs) to an advisory group to support the process. Three working groups have been set up, one on developing the disaster management strategy and the revising the management processes of emergency appeals; the second on the contingency planning for Gaza; and the third on logistics. The Gaza contingency plan has been revised in a very participatory way during a series of meetings with volunteers, partners and communities and is almost ready. In logistics, the British Red Cross has announced the secondment of an expert for a first mission in September; both ICRC and the International Federation will take part to the process.

The awareness campaigns about disaster preparedness continued, with more than 18,000 people receiving information during lecture days, mostly in schools. The disaster management department took part to the preparation and development of the youth camp, attended by 855 boys and girls. 500 posters on earthquake preparedness have been distributed, and a first aid manual and information materials on disaster risk reduction were distributed to students in several West Bank schools. In addition, 2,751 first aid kits were distributed to volunteers in branches and schools, universities and communities.

An additional 856 volunteers were trained as National Disaster Response Teams (NDRT) in 22 workshops. 250 participants were trained during 12 workshops on earthquake and flood preparedness. In addition, the Red Crescent implemented a workshop for awareness on unexploded devices. It also continued its capacity building effort through 14 workshops targeting staff and volunteers from headquarters and branches.



**A drill / simulation exercise done in the month of May in Jericho. Photo: PRCS**

**Constraints or Challenges:** The ongoing restrictions of movements between the West Bank and Gaza have limited the full development of Red Crescent's capacities in disaster management. In addition, the present structure, with a coordinator in the West Bank and a coordinator in Gaza to respond to the movement difficulties, needs to be streamlined to ensure programme cohesion.

## Strategic aim 2: Enable healthy and safe living (Health and Care)

### Outcomes

- Affordable and quality primary health care services and health education are regularly delivered to the people in the oPt.
- The Palestine Red Crescent hospitals in oPt and the Diaspora continue providing secondary health care (SHC) services to the Palestinian population.
- People residing in oPt have access to emergency medical services.
- Quality of life of persons with disabilities and their families in the Palestinian community are improved through rehabilitation and development of their abilities towards better integration.
- Individuals from the Palestine Red Crescent staff and volunteers, beneficiaries and selected underserved groups are equipped with skills and individualized tools that aid in the reduction of personal damages and negative external effects and behaviour in the psycho-social support programme.

**Achievements:** The range of services the primary health care programme provided during the first semester of 2010 extends from curative to diagnostic, to women's reproductive health, to mother and child care, to chronic diseases control, to awareness campaigns on H1N1.

More than 215,000 primary health care services were delivered in medical consultations, laboratory tests, x-rays, dental care, community based and home visits through the network of the National Society's centres throughout Palestine. The programme is supported by the Swedish, Norwegian, Spanish (with funding from the Spanish Cooperation Agency AECID), German and Finnish Red Cross Societies and the Qatar Red Crescent.

As part of the primary health care programme, 14,492 women benefitted from antenatal care, postnatal care, consultations, family planning sessions and tests. An additional 4,841 women took part in health education sessions on reproductive health, while over 75 safe motherhood committees were created with an approximate number of 1,000 women volunteers that supported 13 micro-projects on women's empowerment.

The five centres in the West Bank for child care have seen some 2,838 children attending their services, while 8,068 persons have been reached by evening clinics in the remote areas. 16,248 persons have been visited through 252 home visits by Red Crescent volunteers and staff or took part to the 142 community workshops of the home based care programme. Finally, with support from the International Federation, 500 posters and 20,000 leaflets were produced and distributed together with protective kits (masks, gloves, etc) as part of the global H1N1 campaign.

**Constraints or Challenges:** The ongoing restrictions on goods to Gaza, although eased after the reaction to the attack to the aid flotilla, have limited the supply of medical equipment and medicines.

**Secondary health care achievements:** The network of 15 Red Crescent hospitals has continued offering a wide series of medical services to Palestinians both in Lebanon, Syria, Egypt, as well as in the West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza. The five hospitals in Lebanon are facing new challenges since UNRWA has indicated that Palestinian refugees can choose between Palestine Red Crescent and Lebanese private hospitals for medical treatment. This has reduced the number of patients and cash flow. Historically, in case of problems, the refugee camps are sealed off by the Lebanese authorities, and the only medical services the refugees can access are Palestine Red Crescent operated ones. A discussion will be held with UNRWA to reconsider this decision.

In East Jerusalem, the Red Crescent bought a building for its hospital, to move from the present situation where the hospital is renting its premises; but it has been facing delays in obtaining all the required authorizations by the Israeli authorities. In Hebron, the new building besides the existing hospital has been finished. It will host the Paediatric division, and it is in the process of being equipped. It is estimated that it will be fully functional by 2011. The hospitals in Al-Bireh (Ramallah), Tulkarem, as well as the 3 hospitals in Syria are working regularly. In Nablus the construction of the

new area for paediatric and maternity has been finished, and the Red Crescent is now looking for donations to finish an equip it. The foreseen date of functioning is 2013.

The master plan for the rebuilding and upgrade of the hospital in Gaza is finished. With support from the Qatar Red Crescent the rehabilitation of part of the premises has finished; the renovation of another part is almost finished, and counted on the generous contribution by the French Cooperation agency; and the reconstruction of the administrative building, seriously damaged during the conflict in Gaza in 2008-9, is starting with support by the Moroccan Government. The equipment of the hospital will be provided by some 10 donors, among which it is important to mention the ICRC.

The Palestine Red Crescent Cairo hospital has seen an increase of referral of Palestinian patients after the decision of the Egyptian Government to open the Rafah border to humanitarian cases.

**Constraints or challenges:** The mentioned decision by UNRWA in Lebanon is threatening the viability of the Palestine Red Crescent hospitals. A series of meetings is needed to clarify the importance for Palestinians of counting at all times on an efficient network of these hospitals.

**EMS achievements:** The 33,928 services provided through the network of 9 stations and 26 sub-stations in the West Bank and Jerusalem, 5 stations in Gaza, and East Jerusalem with 200 volunteers and paid staff, aboard a fleet of 139 ambulances, are in line with the services provided the previous year. The Red Crescent manages the 101 emergency number in the West Bank and Gaza, while in East Jerusalem a special number has been assigned for those who need the services.

The Red Crescent has been refining its standards both in equipment and training of its staff, and a total of 2,921 persons benefitted from trainings developed by its emergency medical institute. In addition, some 30,873 persons took part to first aid community sessions.

The programme counts on the support of the Norwegian Red Cross and the ICRC.

**Constraints or Challenges:** In some areas and through some checkpoints Red Crescent ambulances still face huge difficulties to access patients. In others, like H2 (the old city of Hebron, under Israeli control), no progress has been achieved to providing the service to people living in this area. These issues are being discussed as part of the follow up to the 2005 agreement between MDA and the Palestine Red Crescent. Despite progress, work is still needed with the relevant Israeli authorities so the Red Crescent can provide humanitarian assistance to those in need.



**North West Jerusalem- Outreach rehabilitation programme. Photo: PRCS**

**Rehabilitation and ability development achievements:** The Palestine Red Crescent has long been leading the development of appropriate support to people with disabilities in Palestine and the Palestine Diaspora. It promotes coherent advocacy measures, like the 2005 and 2009 national conferences on rehabilitation. The Palestine Red Crescent ability development college in Gaza is the only college in the oPt that graduates professionals in the domain of rehabilitation with a degree accredited by the Ministry of Education.

During the first half year, 641 children with mental disabilities attended daily ability sessions and rehabilitation session. 314 students attended the school and the 4 centres for youth

with complete deafness adopting the Total Communication approach (the deaf students in the schools are taught the national curriculum which is assigned by the Ministry of education). 82 children affected by cerebral palsy took part to a comprehensive rehabilitation programme. In

addition, 661 persons with disabilities received specific psycho-social support. Palestine Red Crescent also runs an orphanage in Tulkarem, a house for the elderly in Nablus and 18 kindergartens.

The programme counts on the generous support by Asamblea de Cooperacion por la Paz, the Norwegian, Swedish, Spanish (funding from European Union, AECID and the Junta Castilla la Mancha) and Netherlands (Open Studion in Khan Younis) Red Cross Societies, NORAD and Atlas Alliance through Signo Foundation, Handicap International and the Ministry of Education.

**Constraints or Challenges:** Despite the continuous work done in this sector, more than 50 per cent of persons with disabilities are 'hidden' and do not receive any kind of support. In most cases, the economical situation for the families of the disabled in Palestinian communities is difficult, and this explains the lack of specialists in the rehabilitation domain of speech therapy and special education. This calls for a coordinated work with the authorities to continue fighting the stigma around disabilities and promoting full implementation of the existing legislation.

**Psycho-social support programme achievements:** Tackling an acute and often neglected dimension of humanitarian assistance, the psycho-social support programme provides psycho-social support to children affected by the armed conflict integrating their overall social environment including parents and caregivers, teachers and school counselors, and the community.

The programme is based on recreational and psycho-education activities, focusing on how to release stress, to share feelings and thoughts, to learn social skills as well as coping mechanisms such as managing stress and grief. It is articulated in school based activities and in psycho-social support centres, and includes counseling, family crisis management and tracing, and collaborates with the Primary Health care programme on hypertension and diabetes control.

During the period, more than 52,387 persons from both Gaza and the West Bank have participated in community workshops and/or have taken part to individual or group psycho-social sessions. The Palestine Red Crescent also trains Jordan Red Crescent and Syrian Arab Red Crescent volunteers working for Iraqi refugees in Jordan and Syria on management and implementation of psycho-social support programme activities.

The successful consortium of four Movement partners - the Danish, French, Icelandic and Italian Red Cross – jointly supporting the Palestine Red Crescent psycho-social support department programme held its annual meeting, with the participation of the Federation, where a draft document of the PSP strategy has been presented and discussed. The consortium has been fostering a multi-stakeholder ownership of the programme and its challenges. The programme counts on the support, besides its members, of ECHO.

**Constraints or Challenges:** The delegate for the consortium was deployed to Haiti, and has received a proposal to return to the large humanitarian operation. This could help spread the approach of improved cooperation, but would pose some difficulties in the continuity of the support to the programme that is being discussed among the consortium members.

### **Strategic aim 3: Promote social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace.** **(Fundamental Principles and Humanitarian Values)**

**Outcome:** All the staff and volunteers are sensitized and trained on humanitarian values according to the National Society's code of conduct and the knowledge of the public about humanitarian values is increased (information, dissemination and international humanitarian law).

**Achievements:** A total of 26 days were devoted to workshops disseminating the Fundamental Principles and International Humanitarian Law (IHL) to some 102 Red Crescent staff and volunteers and some 79 members of the community, mainly students and graduates of the main universities. In addition, 98 members of the military and police attended a total of 10 days of IHL training programmes, and 66 medical personnel and others attended 3 one-day workshops on the emblem.

A training of trainer's workshop was held on communications and media for staff and volunteers from the main branches. Two editions of 1,000 copies each of its quarterly magazine "Panorama", both in Arabic and English were distributed, along with 2,000 posters and 5,000 T-shirts and hats for the 8 May, World Day of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, in 9 major cities and towns.



**World Red Cross and Red Crescent day Celebration in Hebron. Photo: PRCS**

### **Enabling action 1: Build strong National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (Organizational Development)**

#### **Outcomes**

- The Palestine Red Crescent organizational systems are increasingly efficient, effective and able to contribute proportionally to the well being of the most vulnerable in the oPt and Diaspora.
- Potentials and deepened knowledge about the Palestine Red Crescent principles and goals are promoted among volunteers, which bring investment in social development.

**Achievements:** To increase programme efficiency and the impact for the local communities, organizational development is being integrated into the different programmes and services areas of at the same time enhancing integration of different programmes/ activities at the field level. It has established nine programme management committees at governorate level in the West Bank to gradually transfer programme management to these committees.

The organizational development department has supported the development of sectoral strategies, but two of them, systems and processes and human resources, have been postponed until completion of the system audit process funded by the Norwegian Red Cross. The report should be available during the second half of the year.

Within the framework of leadership enhancement, the new boards of 4 sub-branches received an orientation course on roles and responsibilities. With support from the Federation, a new database for volunteers is being developed and a specialized company was contracted to transfer all information to this new integrated database. Six staff from Ramallah and the Palestine Red Crescent-Lebanon took part in training on reporting skills held in Amman. With support from the International Federation, a training course was conducted by an external specialized company to improve administrative skills of staff, while in a second training of 15 persons was in advanced computer skills. Finally, 20 persons from the branches and headquarters participated in a project cycle management workshop carried out by an external specialised trainer.

The organizational development coordinator paid a visit to the branch in Lebanon, to follow up on the strategic plan which was prepared in 2009. The organizational development coordinator took part to a mission to the Yemen Red Crescent Society within a team that included the Danish and Norwegian Red Cross representatives to review the community based health development, the organizational development and twinning programmes, around which the Operational Alliance as a cooperation model was created in Yemen.

**Constraints or Challenges:** There is a need to continue and enhance supporting these activities by partners. The Palestine Red Crescent has achieved important results in developing its capacities, but more needs to be done to modernize the organization to respond to the extremely challenging environment in which it operates.

**Achievements in Youth and Volunteers:** A total of 4,859 volunteers have been active, of which some 2,134 have been supporting programmes and 2,725 participating in social, environmental, artistic and sports activities. Those volunteers have benefitted some 200,000 beneficiaries.

It is worth mentioning the participation of volunteers in the Palestinian marathon held in Ramallah with the participation of the Palestinian prime minister. The youth camp was facilitated by some 70 youth volunteers, held together with the Al-Quds University, focused on disaster risk reduction issues and benefitted some 855 youth from Palestine. Youth representatives took also part in meetings in Spain, Egypt, France, Italy and Turkey.

A new revised plan was worked out, including a new database and new IDs for all volunteers.

**Constraints or Challenges:** Funding and ongoing support are problems for this important activity.

### **Enabling action 3: Function effectively as the International Federation (Working in partnership)**

#### **Operational Alliance**

Facilitated by the International Federation and launched in 2006, the Operational Alliance in Palestine covers, different to other places, all of the Palestine Red Crescent programmes.

During the period several activities took place. A national workshop gathered leadership and programme managers together with its partners present in Palestine and rebuilt the history of cooperation in Palestine, aligning some of its newer members. The different mechanisms in place to coordinate cooperation were analyzed, streamlined and inter-related, and the Terms of Reference for several of them were drafted and approved. Two rounds of one of those mechanisms (the so-called sectoral meetings) were held during the period, joining all the Palestine Red Crescent's partners around each programme coordinator to analyze the successes, problems and ways to improve impact. The bimonthly Movement meetings were held regularly. Two Movement meetings were held for the first time with all Movement partners in Gaza, and one in Lebanon. Both the Turkish Red Crescent and the Qatar Red Crescent representatives started attending coordination meetings, improving overall Movement coordination and communication.

The next steps include the revision of each programme in a participatory manner, with partners, using the 7 ONEs to define where attention should focus; and the establishment of 4 processes to tackle the issues common to all programmes.

For 2011, it is hoped that the planning process for 2012 will include partners and take into due account the advances and needs in relation to the 7 ONEs. The expected result would be a Federation-wide country plan for Palestine based on the Red Crescent's priorities and needs.

#### **Palestine Red Crescent- Magen David Adom memorandum of understanding, signed in 2005**

The Movement-appointed monitor for the memorandum of understanding (MoU) between Palestine Red Crescent and Magen David Adom (MDA) visited the region in March, and his legal advisor came back in June. This follows the report presented at the Council of Delegates in Nairobi in November 2009. It is important to recall that the findings of the Monitor will be presented at the next International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, and that while some advances have been reached on the facilitation of access for the Red Crescent ambulances, work still needs to be done on the full recognition of the so-called geographical scope of the MoU by MDA.

#### **Partners of Palestine Red Crescent**

Eight National Societies working directly with the Red Crescent have a presence in Palestine (Danish Red Cross, German Red Cross, Italian Red Cross, Norwegian Red Cross together with Swedish Red Cross, Qatar Red Crescent, Spanish Red Cross, Turkish Red Crescent and United Arab Emirates Red Crescent), while a series of other National Societies support directly the Red Crescent but have no permanent presence in Palestine (British Red Cross, Finnish Red Cross, French Red Cross, Icelandic Red Cross, Netherlands Red Cross). The Italian Red Cross has been supporting the Federation appeal. The Australian Red Cross has showed interest in supporting the Red Crescent in the next future. The society maintains close working relations with the ICRC within the framework of the Seville agreement and its supplementary measures.

In addition, the Red Crescent receives generous support from the Palestinian Authority and has excellent partnerships with a large number of organizations and agencies. We would like to recall the French Cooperation agency, Asamblea de Cooperacion por la Paz, UNRWA, Norwegian Aid Committee, Norwegian Palestine Committee, Save the Children, UNICEF, amongst others. The European Union has also supported emergency operations of the Red Crescent through ECHO replenishing DREF allocations, most recently during heavy flash floods in January.

## Contributing to longer-term impact

The Palestine Red Crescent has been responding to the enormous needs and challenges of its environment with innovative approaches. Its consolidated effective work in specific areas like disabilities and psycho-social support, complementing its more traditional services in primary and secondary health and emergency medical services, are a direct contribution to achieving the strategic aims of Strategy 2020.

The results of the external evaluation of the Gaza operation done in 2009 are being mainstreamed in the programmes with continuous involvement of its partners. The future results of the systems audit should indicate ways to improve the overall business processes and increase operational efficiency. More recently, the positive experience gathered in Palestine of working in consortium on an innovative programme like psycho-social support is being replicated in another setup like Haiti, thus demonstrating the ability for our membership to learn from positive experiences.

The Palestine Red Crescent is an active member of the International Federation, both at the regional level (with its active role in supporting training in some areas for neighbouring National Societies) and at the global one. The quality of its mature cooperation relationship with its partners is an example for many others.

## Looking ahead

The attention of the world will be on the direct peace talks between the Palestinian Authority and the Israeli Government. The expectations are high, and many see these talks as a last opportunity for peace; but many are skeptical about any result at all. A few members of the Palestinian authority and parts of the civil society have been indicating that in the absence of concrete results on the final issues- refugees, borders, water, settlement, east Jerusalem- there could be an implosion of the authorities in the West Bank and the recognition of a single state, shifting the focus from the quest for a country to the search for equal rights within Israel. This could open unpredictable new scenarios and unforeseeable consequences for the whole Middle East.

In both cases, the humanitarian needs of the Palestinian population will require increasing external support to the Palestine Red Crescent Society, which confirms itself as a key element of stability and attention to the needs of the vulnerable in this fragile and volatile environment. It is the only Palestinian institution able today to work independently in the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, East Jerusalem, and for the refugees in Lebanon, Syria and Egypt. To garner the needed further support, the Palestine Red Crescent Society is arranging for a partnership meeting in October.

### How we work

***All 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.***

<p>The IFRC's vision is to:</p> <p>Inspire, encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by National Societies, with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.</p>	<p>The IFRC's work is guided by Strategy 2020 which puts forward three strategic aims:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disaster and crises.</li> <li>2. Enable healthy and safe living.</li> <li>3. Promote social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace.</li> </ol>
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