

# Annual report



International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

## Palestine Red Crescent Society

Appeal No. MAAPS001

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Palestine Red Crescent organization development training, photo: PRCS

### In brief

**Programme outcome:** Support the Palestine Red Crescent Society (Palestine RCS) response to the needs of the most vulnerable in the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt) and the Palestinian refugees in the Diaspora.

**Programme(s) summary:**

After the failure of the 'peace talks' in 2010, the Palestinian National Authority has announced it will unilaterally declare the State of Palestine within the 1967 borders and seek UN and international recognition at the UN General Assembly in late 2011. At the same time, while a strong push towards political change has begun interesting most of the Middle East, the situation of the Palestinian population has not improved and the occupation still impeded during 2010 a normal life or proper social and economic development. Gaza has for the whole period still been under a tight blockade, and no meaningful reconstruction has even started. The settlement expansion and the eviction of Palestinians have increased during 2010 in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, where the separation wall and the many checkpoints impeded free movement of people and goods. For millions of refugees abroad the right of return is still a dream after up to 62 years of exile.

The Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRCS) has during 2010 strengthened its community work in Disaster Risk Reduction, Primary Health care, Psycho-social support and Rehabilitation, continued developing its Disaster Management capacities, and continued providing services to several hundreds of thousands of Palestinians both in the West Bank, Gaza, East Jerusalem, Lebanon and Syria camps, and Egypt. Committed to learning and improving its operational capacity, PRCS has maintained during 2010 a mature cooperation with 14 partner Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies, the ICRC and a number of other actors, including the Palestinian National Authority. It received technical and programmatic support by the Federation. This report covers the whole of PRCS's activities and the support and cooperation of its partners.

**Financial situation:** The revised total 2010 budget is CHF 291,837, of which CHF 352,008 (121% per cent) covered (328,873). Overall expenditure during 2010 period was CHF 270,135 (92% per cent) of the budget.

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

**No. of people we have reached:** the Palestine Red Crescent Society has been working on 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. In 2010, several hundreds of thousands of persons were reached by the different programmes run by PRCS.

The Federation focused its support to PRCS in OD, DM and coordination of its cooperation.

**Our partners:** Eight National Societies working directly with PRCS 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, and Turkish Red Crescent), while a series of other National Societies support directly PRCS but have no permanent presence in Palestine (British Red Cross, Finnish Red Cross, French Red Cross, Icelandic Red Cross, Netherlands Red Cross, United Arab Emirates Red Crescent). The Italian Red Cross has been supporting the Federation appeal. PRCS maintains close working relations with the ICRC.

In addition, PRCS receives support from the Palestinian National 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

Another year, the 43<sup>rd</sup> so, has passed without a solution to the conflict and military occupation of the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem, or the solution for millions of Palestinian refugees living in the camps in Lebanon, Syria or inside the West Bank and Gaza. Life in Palestine today is rendered almost unbearable, and social and economic development barely possible, by a complex system made of the separation concrete wall, the checkpoints and the travel permits; the ongoing blockade of Gaza; the continuous expansion of the hundreds of settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem; the ongoing evictions of Palestinians from their houses in East Jerusalem, as well as the destruction of water sources and infrastructure in the Jordan valley.

2010 was marked by the failure of the renewed direct talks between the Israeli Government and the Palestinian Negotiators on the core issues of borders, settlements, and return of refugees, East Jerusalem and water sources, talks sponsored by the Obama Administration. After some rounds of indirect talks first and direct ones later, the refusal by the Israeli government to extend the freeze on new constructions in the settlements (extension requested by the Palestinians as a precondition to continue the talks) resulted in the suspension of the talk's altogether. The attention has since shifted towards the announced unilateral declaration of the State of Palestine foreseen for September 2011.

At the same time, the Palestinian National Authority Government in the West Bank has continued building the institutions of the future Palestinian State. Several countries, notably from South and Central America, have recognized the State of Palestine within the pre-1967 borders. There have been also renewed efforts, unsuccessful so far, to reconcile Hamas and the Palestinian Authority, and the elections have been once more postponed in the absence of the conditions to hold them.

In Gaza, the easing of the blockade after the 'flotilla' case (when 9 peace activists trying to force the naval blockade and heading to Gaza were killed by Israeli forces) was not meaningful for significant improvements of the living conditions of the people. Construction materials are still

banned from entry to Gaza, and most reconstruction projects approved after the war 2008/2009 have not started yet. The Gaza economy is still largely dependent on the hundreds of tunnels under the border with Egypt, and only a minimum quantity of exports have been allowed to resume in comparison to the pre-blockade era. The de-facto authorities in Gaza have increasingly controlled extremist groups, resulting in a decline of hand-made rockets from Gaza into Israel.

East Jerusalem has recurrently been in the forefront of confrontation during 2010, as the areas of Silwan and Sheikh Jarrah saw both destruction of Palestinian homes and approval of large numbers of new constructions for Israeli settlers. In 2010 the demographic balance between Israelis and Palestinians living in the territory considered East Jerusalem by the International community shifted for the first time in favour of the Israelis, thus confirming the policy and practice of evictions of Palestinians from East Jerusalem and the increasing presence of settlers.

## Progress towards outcomes

Despite the difficult working conditions due to the limitations of movements for its staff and volunteers, Palestine RCS has during 2010 continued providing humanitarian support and quality programs and services to the vulnerable in Palestine, in full respect of the Fundamental Principles, in cooperation with several Movement and non-Movement partners.

While the International Federation secretariat has not been directly supporting all of the following programmes, the present report summarizes the whole of the programme activities of the Palestine RCS 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 Palestine RCS, this has been specified in the text.

Additional detailed information is available upon request from PRCS through its annual report.

### **S2020 strategic aim 1: Save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disaster and crises (Disaster Management)**

#### **Outcome(s)**

Effective operational linkages between disaster management and other programmes are established; thus contributing to improved Palestine RCS disaster management capacities and adjustments to its organizational structure.

#### **Achievements**

PRCS's DM programme aims at strengthening the capacity of the National society and local communities to respond to emergency situations.

The advances in disaster preparedness have been significant during 2010. PRCS has continued implementing the recommendations issued from the evaluation of the relief operation for the victims of the Gaza war of 2008/09. With support from the advisory group that includes ICRC, interested PNSs and the Federation, the task force established by PRCS has created 3 working groups charged of finalizing the contingency planning exercise for Gaza, the Disaster Management strategy (including the appeal management process) and the establishment of a professional logistics department. The British RC has made available an expert in logistics for the latter, the ICRC has made available an expert in medical logistics, while the German RC and the Federation have announced support to the contingency planning process and the support towards the establishment of a public health in emergencies approach. Some 1,823 volunteers have been trained as National Disaster Response Teams, while some 250 were trained on earthquake and floods preparedness. A national Operation Room and 3 regional ones in Hebron, Nablus and Gaza were established and the operating procedures designed and tested.

PRCS was invited by the Civil Defense in Jericho and Salfit to facilitate the establishment of district contingency plans.

The community based Disaster Risk Reduction programme, supported by the German, Norwegian and Swedish RC, targets some 150,000 persons in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. During 2010 the first training courses in community based first aid were delivered to the targeted communities. The programme, based on the empowerment of the community to identify its priorities, includes the establishment of local committees to follow-up community-based interventions in the areas of disaster and crisis, as well as training in community leadership.

During 2010, with funds from the Global Alliance on Disaster Risk Reduction, PRCS has started the pilot phase of its school-based disaster risk reduction activities in 7 schools in Qabatiyah, targeting 165 students and 64 teachers, in partnership with the Directorate of Education, the Municipality of Qabatiya and the Directorate of Civil Defence in Jenin. This initiative complements the community-based activities supported by the German, Norwegian and Swedish Red Cross. Based on the positive assessment of the experience, PRCS has decided to continue the work with the seven identified schools and extend the initiative to other schools in the West Bank.

In addition, some 27,413 school students, especially in marginalized villages in the Jenin and Tubas areas and the Gaza Strip, were reached by the community awareness program. Some 999 persons attended workshops and lectures on Disaster management, and more than 2,000 posters and 1,500 leaflets on emergency measures in case of earthquake and floods were distributed, along 17,250 posters and leaflets on the risks of remnants of war, for which the authorities have appointed a dedicated phone number.

During January and February 2010, PRCS responded to flash floods that hit parts of the Gaza strip. With support from the International Federation's Disaster Response Emergency Fund, a total of around 1,437 beneficiaries received non-food relief items like tents, kitchen kits, hygiene kits, blankets. Please refer to the DREF final report for additional information. PRCS also performed an assessment in 24 villages of the Jordan Valley (North, Central, and South) in order to gather information on the risks, their exposure to those risks and their ability to adapt and recover from disasters.

As part of its support to specially vulnerable families, with the support of the Malaysian Red Crescent Society, PRCS distributed food aid to 1,500 families in the Gaza Strip, along with food parcels for some 4,000 families during Ramadan with support by the Turkish Red Crescent Society and 13,200 families with food parcels provided by the United Arab Emirates Red Crescent Society.

### **Constraints or Challenges**

The complexity of the environment and the limitations in terms of movements render any contingency planning exercise a difficult one. In addition, there is a need to tackle at the regional level the issues related to disaster response highlighted in the Gaza evaluation, such as needs-based donor ship and improvement of the overall regional logistic capacities.

## **S2020 strategic aim 2: Enable healthy and safe living (Health and Care).**

### **Outcomes**

- Affordable and quality primary health care (PHC) services and health education are regularly delivered to the people in the oPt (primary health care).
- The Palestine RCS hospitals in oPt and the Diaspora continue providing secondary health care (SHC) services to the Palestinian population (secondary health care).
- People residing in oPt have access to emergency medical services (EMS).

- 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 (rehabilitation and ability development).
- Individuals from the Palestine RCS 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 (psycho-social support programme).

### Primary Health Care

#### **Achievements**

PRCS has been increasingly focusing on community based primary health care, while continuing providing services through its network of clinics. It has continued talks with the Health authorities in order to discuss plans for the future gradual handover of the clinics to the Ministry of Health.

The programme focuses on health prevention and promotion and the provision of health and community services within and outside the primary health care clinics. A total of 641,452 services, from medical consultations, laboratory tests, x-rays, dental care, home visits were performed during 2010 by the network of clinics and PHC centres. Within these, some 18,433 Bedouins in the Tabah area were reached by home-based visits by mobile clinics.

In community based primary health care, with support by the German, Norwegian and Swedish RC, PRCS has trained some 1,050 women volunteers in 75 communities through the so-called safe motherhood committees. Thirty micro-projects for women's empowerment have been started like kindergartens and nurseries, community centres, women's centres, libraries, as well as a garden for people with special needs. In addition, 121,561 people benefited from health education awareness-raising activities and 27,619 women received services related to women's reproductive health, including family planning, pre-natal and post-natal care, through a network of 11 health care centres. An additional 5,110 children under 5 y.o. in 5 centres in the West Bank received attention by PRCS in psychological, medical and social support.

With support by the Spanish RC, PRCS has continued complementing the Ministry of Health's attention to patients with chronic diseases, focusing on diabetes and hypertension. Through home-based visits, 35,381 people were constantly monitored, and where necessary psycho-social support was provided to the patients and their families in partnership with the Psycho-Social Programme.

27,870 school students and teachers received lectures and took part to workshops on personal hygiene, early marriage and behaviours such as smoking. 13 summer camps were held for approximately 1,300 children between 6 and 12 y.o.: recreational activities were mixed with awareness-raising issues like behavioural change and personal hygiene.

### Secondary Health Care

#### **Achievements**

PRCS continues providing secondary health care services through a total of 15 hospitals located in the West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza, as well as in Syria, Lebanon and Egypt for the Palestinian refugee population living in these 3 countries.

The 5 hospitals in Lebanon (Hamshari, Haifa, Balsam, Safad and Nazareth) provided 381,377 medical services to which we should add 80,056 ones provided by medical centres for a total of 461,433 medical services. The number of beds in the five hospitals is of 190, while the average bed occupancy rate was 47%. It is worth mentioning that the number of patients received in 2010 was significantly less than what was received in 2009, due to a new agreement signed by UNRWA with Lebanese private hospitals that reduced referrals to PRCS hospitals. With support by the Netherlands RC and funding from, amongst others, ECHO, PRCS has since invested to upgrade existing conditions as indicated by internal and joint assessments. This issue was recurrently raised by PRCS and its partners at the highest level of UNRWA, since it could undermine the capacity of PRCS to properly support the Palestinian refugees in the Diaspora and could affect its capacity to face emergency health situations in the camps.

In Syria, the branch has been running 3 hospitals in addition to 6 clinics and a factory for artificial limbs. These provided in excess of 411,216 medical services in outpatient clinics, internal medicine, paediatrics, obstetrics, ear, nose and throat, orthopaedic, general surgery, heart surgery, skin diseases, physiotherapy and dental care, in addition to some 116,815 laboratory tests and 14,315 x-rays as well as over 3,000 births and 1,697 surgeries.

The Palestine Hospital in Cairo, Egypt, provided a total of 92,803 medical services.

In the West Bank, the hospital in Tulkarem provided 4,140 among surgeries and deliveries. The Mother and Child Hospital in East Jerusalem provided 58,540 hospital medical services, including 3,060 deliveries and 762 Caesareans, while 54,718 medical services were provided by the Khaldiya clinic. PRCS has for some years purchased a building on the Mount of Olives in East Jerusalem for its hospital, but the Municipality has not issued the necessary renovation permits yet, and in one occasion has temporarily stopped the procedures on allegations that 'no renovation will be allowed whilst the international community does not allow for new constructions for Israelis in [East] Jerusalem [settlements]'. In Hebron, the hospital consists of eight floors each of 480 m<sup>2</sup> and has provided 32,175 medical services in 2010. The Hebron branch has been equipping the new paediatric and maternity section of the hospital with support from other National Societies and other donors.

In Gaza, the Al-Quds Hospital, severely damaged by the war in 2008 – 09, is still pending the necessary green light by the Israeli authorities controlling the border for the construction materials (cement, iron and aggregates – all blocked from entry into Gaza strip) needed to rebuild the destroyed part of the building. This reconstruction is funded by the Kingdom of Morocco. On the other hand, the partial reconstruction and equipment of the emergency services of the hospital has been finalized with the support of the Agence Francaise de Development (AFD); a second phase of the project, including support in upgrading information management and managerial capacities, is foreseen for the period 2011 – 2014. The hospital performed 39,424 medical services in 2010, has a bed turnover rate of 54 %. The Khan Younis Hospital provided 178,620 medical services in 2010.

### **Constraints or Challenges**

The decision by UNRWA to contract private hospitals and clinics in Lebanon besides PRCS's had negative effects on PRCS's cost-recovery and could have very negative effects should a crisis erupt in Lebanon whereby Palestinian refugees would not be allowed to move freely outside the camps.

The ongoing blockade in Gaza, especially for construction materials, made it impossible so far to reconstruct the wing of the Al Quds Hospital destroyed during the 2008 – 09 war.

### **EMS**

#### **Achievements**

From 14 main stations and 26 sub-stations covering the West Bank, East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip, more than 200 among PRCS staff and volunteers with a fleet of 139 ambulances provided emergency medical services to 70,598 people including accidents, births, and transfer from hospital to hospital. Of these, 1,487 only were transferred to and from Jerusalem due to the ongoing limitations of access through the separation wall for PRCS ambulances. PRCS ambulances also covered sport events, rallies and other public events.

In order to optimize outreach and efficiency, 2010 was also the year in which PRCS proceeded to the re-evaluation of the geographical coverage and the redistribution of sub-stations; this process will continue in 2011. In addition, PRCS installed GPS tracking for all ambulances and finished equipping VHF radios to all stations.

PRCS's emergency medical institute provided 207 training courses for 4376 people in addition to some 189 sessions on first aid provided to various institutions of the country, benefiting 4060 people.

The programme is supported by the Norwegian Red Cross and the ICRC.

## **Constraints or Challenges**

The access through the many checkpoints has somehow eased after the closing of several of them in the West Bank, but remains an issue for the access of ambulances to and from Jerusalem. The new 5 ambulances positioned in East Jerusalem are now functioning, but the issuing of the permits for the personnel has been somehow difficult. Finally, soon PRCS will have to start renewing its vehicle fleet of ambulances.

### Rehabilitation and Ability Development

#### **Achievements**

The PRCS has long been leading the development of appropriate support to people with disabilities in Palestine and the Palestine Diaspora (Lebanon, Egypt, and Syria) and promoting coherent advocacy measures, like the 2005 and 2009 national conferences on Rehabilitation.

In 2010, the National society has been able to reach 41,425 persons with disabilities, especially children, in addition to the elderly and the wounded. It has done so through community based special education, rehabilitation mobile teams, and a network of 27 rehabilitation centres that include eight specialized centres in the rehabilitation and development of children with mental disabilities, four centres for the deaf, two specializing in the rehabilitation of children with cerebral palsy, ten specialized in physical therapy.

PRCS also developed pilot activities for the early detection of disability with the Hospital in Al-Bireh, Ramallah. Children who suffer from cerebral palsy benefit from comprehensive rehabilitation services in Nablus and Khan Younis in the Gaza Strip. The community awareness activities provide support to parents of children with disabilities, while awareness and advocacy activities in public schools reached 10,373 students; and some 34 Committee of Friends of Persons with Disabilities made up of parents, neighbours and schoolmates were formed in the various provinces.

In addition, 12 summer camp and 1 winter camp (in Jericho) to integrate children with disabilities and their peers were attended by 1,855 children, of whom 429 with a disability; and participants to the various activities took part to the Special Olympics in Syria.

The PRCS 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. Seventy-nine students were enrolled during the academic year 2010/2011. Palestine RC also runs an orphanage in Tulkarem, a house for the elderly in Nablus and 18 kindergartens.

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

## **Constraints or Challenges**

According to the Ministry of Education, despite the continuous work done by the PRCS in this sector, more than 50 % of persons with disabilities do not receive any kind of support yet, since the disability is still perceived as a stigma for the family. In most cases, the economical situation for the families of disabled in the Palestinian communities is quite difficult, and this sums up to the lack of specialists in the rehabilitation domain (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**

In line with public policies and with the Federation emphasis on psycho-social needs, the programme aims at providing the often neglected 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 includes counseling, family crisis management and tracing, and collaborates with the Primary Health care programme on hypertension and diabetes control.

During 2010, more than 83,292 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:

- In cooperation with the Ministry of Education, the programme has reached 45,730 beneficiaries in 147 schools in Tubas, Nablus, Qalqilya, Gaba, Jerusalem, Tulkarem and Hebron, involving 283 teachers and 143 volunteers.
- 25,880 people benefited from support during 402 community workshop and open days
- 3,479 Children have benefited from visits to the PRCS PSP centres
- 4,690 parents were also interviewed and
- 3,513 people attended 42 theatre pieces

in addition, the Palestine RCS 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 programme has also developed its internal contingency plan in order to be ready to provide support in case of acute crisis, open conflict or natural disaster; this contingency planning exercise is being mainstreamed into the PRCS national contingency plan.

The programme might be gradually expanded, during 2011, to other PRCS locations, like the Lebanon branch in support to Palestinian refugees there. In addition, striving for efficiency, the programme has been aiming at reaching more persons with less financial resources.

The successful consortium of four Movement partners - the Danish, French, Icelandic and Italian Red Cross – jointly supporting the Palestine RC psycho-social support department programme 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 partners of the PSP consortium are aware of the need to diversify and increase the funding base for the programme.

## **S2020 strategic aim 3: Promote social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace (Fundamental Principles and Humanitarian Values).**

### **Outcome(s)**

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

### **Achievements**

During 2010 PRCS conducted a number of workshops on dissemination of the Fundamental Principles and IHL to a total of 1,137 persons from different communities, students and graduates of the main universities, members of the Palestinian military and police, medical personnel, PRCS staff and volunteers. Of these, 12 sessions in the West Bank and 4 in the Gaza Strip targeted staff and volunteers of the National society, 6 courses on advanced international humanitarian law targeted the Palestinian security, volunteers of the human rights

organizations and journalists, 5 courses interested members of the medical institutions, NGOs and students of Palestinian universities.

The department also recorded 161 violations of the medical mission, of which 159 related to denial of access to patients or delays at checkpoints, especially at checkpoints leading to Jerusalem. In addition, PRCS reported on the incidents in which its staff and volunteers were the subject of attacks by Israeli forces, like the one that took place in June near Nil'in.

PRCS also edited, published and distributed 4 numbers of 1,000 copies each of its quarterly magazine "Panorama", both in Arabic and English; distributed 2,000 posters 2,000 copies of different brochures on the Movement, emblem, Henry Denant, and PRCS and 3,000 T-shirts and hats for the 8<sup>th</sup> of May (world day of the Red Cross and Red Crescent), event that was celebrated in 11 main cities and towns of Palestine.

### **Constraints or Challenges**

The programme manager left PRCS during 2010, and has since been replaced by a new professional. This could entail some delays in picking up some of the ongoing activities.

## **S2020 Enabling action 1: Build strong National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (NS Development / Organizational Development)**

### **Outcome(s)**

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

### **Planning and Development**

#### **Achievements**

During 2010, the Planning and Development department has supported all other departments in revising their 3-years operational plans and where appropriate it has facilitated sessions to revise and adjust the strategic orientation. It has played a crucial role in establishing timely and complete mid-year and end-of-year reports. Its has been instrumental in following up with some of the main issues related to the many cooperation projects that PRCS holds with its partners. The department has also followed up the work stemmed from the Gaza evaluation, facilitating the timely organization of meetings of the task force and the advisory group as well as the support by partners to the implementation of its recommendations.

### **Organizational Development**

#### **Achievements**

PRCS has since some time decided to mainstream Organizational Development into the different programmes and services areas of Palestine RC, focusing on ways to improve impact by improving the organization's systems and processes at the same time enhancing integration of different programs / activities at the field level. This goes hand in hand with the support to the development of capacities for PRCS's governance in the branches and the gradual transfer of managerial competencies and responsibilities for programmes and volunteers to the branches. In 2010, some 68 representative from the branches received training on programme management and the project management cycle.

Both the indications coming from the systems audit as well as the first part of the recommendations of the internal audit (both processes supported by Ernst & Young) have been identifying critical issues related to business processes that have been included in plans to properly address them by the relevant departments. It is expected that the benefits from these processes will be far reaching and contribute to more efficiency and better use of resources, more capacities in terms of accountability and finally more impact.

During 2010, PRCS with support of the Federation has been reviewing the past strategic planning process, and has set the basis for the next such process. It is foreseen that during 2011 a committee will be established to steer the process, which by the early indications of PRCS will be participative and culminate into a new PRCS Strategic plan for the period 2013-2017.

The department also supported the proper inclusion of OD elements in the annual revision of the existing 3-years operational plans. In addition, 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.

The OD plan of the PRCS branches in Lebanon and Syria, prepared in cooperation with the branches' teams in 2009, was followed up during field visits and distance support. The PRCS statutes have been sent to the Joint Commission and their comments are foreseen for 2011. With the support of IFRC zone office in Amman and representing the IFRC, the OD coordinator took part to a mission to the Yemen Red Crescent Society (YRCS) to review the YRCS Community Based Health Development Programme and Organizational Development and Twinning Programme.

The programme is supported by the Norwegian RC, the Swedish RC and the Federation.

### **Constraints or Challenges**

The difficulties in obtaining visas for Lebanon and Syria somehow limit the capacity to better support the change process in these PRCS branches.

### *Youth and Volunteers*

#### **Achievements**

PRCS counts on 5,001 active volunteers, whose work benefitted some 800,000 beneficiaries through the different programmes like community-based Primary health care, Rehabilitation and Ability development, Psycho-social support, Disaster Management, EMS, social awareness, environmental, artistic, sporting and cultural events, summer camps.

During the month of December, thanks to the financial support of the regional OD programme of the Federation funded by the Norwegian RC, PRCS held its annual meeting of youth and volunteers. 85 persons took place to the meeting the first day, and another 50 on the second day, in representation of the branches of the West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza. The two-days meeting discussed the approach on youth action and volunteering development by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies; the role of volunteers in the change process of PRCS; the revised structure of the department; the need for strategies, policies and rules of procedure; the management of volunteers during disasters, and the department's annual plan for 2011. In occasion of the meeting, the Palestinian National Committee honoured 2 volunteers from PRCS within a ceremony. The President of PRCS was invited to join the committee delivering the prizes.

In September PRCS successfully organized, in cooperation with the Red Cross Centre for Cooperation in the Mediterranean and support by the Federation, an international meeting for 24 youth members from 4 countries, Palestine, France, Italy and Spain. Part of the meeting, which included themes such as youth leadership, team-building, problem solving, Strategy 2020, climate change, cultural diversity and social integration, was devoted to training in the Federation programme called Youth as Agents of Behavioural Change (YABC). PRCS will develop the programme in Palestine and a training of trainers is foreseen for the first part of 2011.

With support by the Federation, a special printer for magnetic membership cards was purchased. It is foreseen that the new cards will ease the movements of PRCS volunteers and staff through the many checkpoints. Finally, PRCS and the Danish RC have agreed to deploy an Organizational Development Delegate, who will be seconded to the Federation office, to support PRCS's work on youth action and volunteering development. The Delegate will start her/his mission during the first quarter of 2011.

### **Constraints or Challenges**

The recurrent changes in the direction of the programmes have somehow slowed the implementation of the activities.

## **S2020 Enabling action 2: Pursue Humanitarian Diplomacy to prevent and reduce vulnerability in a globalized world**

### **Achievements**

PRCS has established its focus on Public Relations, Communications and Media as part of the restructuring that took place in 2009. The department has during 2010 requested support to the Federation in order to develop its capacities and strategic focus in a sustainable way and in line with the present thinking within the Federation. Several National Societies have indicated they are willing to support PRCS in technical issues, and the Communications department of the Federation in Geneva has committed itself to support the development of the strategic direction. A first mission by a team member from Geneva is foreseen for February 2011.

In preparation for the mission, PRCS has organized a series of participatory sessions with internal and external stakeholders to define its strengths and weaknesses and gather information about the priority needs by internal stakeholders. The results will be used, together with other elements, to define the strategic orientation for the next years.

In the meantime, the department has widened its team, revised and upgraded PRCS's webpage, launched a special page on YouTube, increased its presence on Palestinian media and electronic media, delivered training courses for its personnel and media persons from the PRCS branches on photography and communications, increased its presence with articles on the Federation MENA news bulletin, edited and printed two new booklets to promote the NS, started the production of a video on Disaster management, start preparing media products in support of the International Year of Volunteers. In addition, it has facilitated the visits by several Partner National Societies, has supported the new or existing relationships with development agencies like the development agency of Brazil, Islamic Relief France, the Swedish Agency for Development and representatives from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands and Switzerland,

During 2010, PRCS has signed a new Memorandum of Understanding with the United Arab Emirates RC and has started the preliminary work for a MoU with the Qatar RC. It has continued with its extensive agreements with the Ministries of Education, Health and Youth, and its presence within the Civil Defence. PRCS is a member of many national initiatives, platforms and advisory committees on issues related to the third age, disabilities, child protection, social protection, mental health, and prisoners in Israeli jails.

The department has supported the launching of the annual campaign on planting olive trees to substitute those uprooted by Israeli forces or settlers. More than 3,500 trees were planted in 2010 by 200 farmers supported by more than 300 PRCS volunteers.

As part of the Operational alliance, PRCS has also held 3 rounds of sectoral meetings with its partners and its sixth annual Partnership meeting; and organized 9 different events in its branches in occasion of the 8 of May, International Day of the Red Cross and Red Crescent.

### **Constraints or Challenges**

The portfolio of activities under the Public Relation department is quite large, and it involves an increasing responsibility by leadership at national and branches levels to undertake Humanitarian diplomacy activities.

## **S2020 Enabling action 3: Function effectively as the International Federation (Working in partnership)**

The Federation office in Palestine is fully integrated to the National Society. It consisted in 2010 of 1 Federation Representative and 1 Finance and Administration officer. It is foreseen that by the first quarter of 2011 the team will be of 2 delegates and 2 local staff, one of which based in Gaza.

### **Operational Alliance**

Facilitated by the Federation and launched in 2006, the Operational Alliance in Palestine covers, differently than other places, all of PRCS's programmes.

After a national workshop gathering PRCS leadership and programme managers together with its partners present in Palestine and aligning some of its newer members, the different mechanisms in place to coordinate cooperation (Movement operational meetings, Movement coordination meetings, sectoral meetings, annual partnership meetings and annual friends of PRCS meetings) were analyzed, streamlined and inter-related, with revised and approved Terms of Reference for each. Three rounds of one of those mechanisms (the so-called sectoral meetings) were held during the period, joining all PRCS's partners around each PRCS programme coordinator to analyze the successes, problems and ways to improve impact. The bi-monthly Movement meetings were held regularly. Movement meetings were held with all Movement partners in Gaza and in Lebanon. Both the Turkish Red Crescent and the Qatar Red Crescent representatives started attending coordination meetings, improving overall Movement coordination and communication. In addition, PRCS successfully organized the sixth annual Partnership Meeting in Ramallah as well as a session of the 'Friends of PRCS' meeting with leaders of many National Societies during the Asia Pacific Conference in Jordan.

The sectoral meetings, a cornerstone of the coordination mechanism, have been linked to the annual planning cycle. The expected result would be a Federation-wide country plan for Palestine based on PRCS's priorities and needs.

### **PRCS – MDA Memorandum of Understanding (MoU, signed in 2005)**

Two meetings (progress assessment meeting, PAM) were held during 2010, which saw an intensive effort by the Movement-appointed Monitor for the memorandum of understanding (MoU) between Palestine RC and Magen David Adom (MDA), Mr. Par Stenback, to facilitate a solution for the full implementation of this agreement signed in 2005.

While some advances have been achieved especially in the deployment of 5 PRCS ambulances in East Jerusalem, the main remaining stumbling block in the implementation of MoU is the presence of MDA-marked ambulances in the occupied Palestinian territory, linked to the so-called geographical scope of the MoU. The resolution on the International Conference of 2007 "calls on all authorities concerned to support the full implementation of the MoU", and the Council of Delegates resolution of 2009 "requests National Societies to favourably respond to any request for help and support that the Monitor may ask of them in the fulfilment of his task up to the next Council of Delegates". In line with these, the Monitor has been calling on National Societies to support his efforts on the question of neutral markings of the transferred ambulances.

The results of the implementation of the MoU will be presented at the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, scheduled for November 2011 in Geneva. Should the results on the 'geographical scope' of the MoU quoted above be insufficient, this could result in a division on this issue amongst the participants to the Conference, a potentially negative result taking into account the profound changes and tensions that interest the whole of the MENA region in these first months of 2011.

### **Partners of PRCS**

Eight National Societies working directly with PRCS 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, and Turkish Red Crescent), while a series of other National Societies support directly PRCS but have no permanent presence in Palestine (British Red Cross, Finnish Red Cross, French Red Cross, Icelandic Red Cross, Netherlands

Red Cross, United Arab Emirates Red Crescent). The Italian Red Cross has been supporting the Federation appeal. PRCS maintains close working relations with the ICRC within the framework of the Seville agreement and its supplementary measures.

In addition, PRCS 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.

### **Status agreement**

The Federation has started the procedure, after consulting with the Palestine RCS leadership, to request a status agreement between the Palestine National Authority and the Federation. This will provide the legal status of the Federation presence in Palestine and allow for future extension of services to those PNSs that would require so. It is foreseen that the agreement be signed by September 2011.

### **Humanitarian Country Team**

The Federation Representative has been accepted as observer to the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT), the Inter-Agency country mechanism that unites the UN agencies, the ICRC and the Federation as well as a representative of the International NGOs. The HCT meets once a month.

### **Gaza office**

The Federation has finalized the selection process for a local Programme Officer based in Gaza, with a profile moulded on organizational development and capacity building. It is foreseen that by end march 2011 the person will start working. This position is funded by the Swedish RC.

### **Regulations**

The Federation Representative has established Security regulations as well as Rules and Regulations for Local Personnel, thus filling a gap that had lasted for a long time.

## **Contributing to longer-term impact**

Working under very difficult conditions both in the West Bank, East Jerusalem, Gaza, and for the Palestinian refugees in Egypt, Lebanon and Syria, PRCS has been responding to the huge needs and challenges of its environment in a highly effective way and with very mature cooperation with its partners. Even so, PRCS is aware of the need to gradually improve its systems and procedures to better support the ongoing shift from more service delivery to more community-based integrated work, in line with the strategic aims of Strategy 2020.

With support by its partners, PRCS, an active member of the Federation both at the regional and global levels, has been adopting innovative approaches to mainstream the learning generated by evaluations and assessments. The results of the external evaluation of the Gaza operation done in 2009 are being mainstreamed in the PRCS programmes with continuous involvement of its partners. The indications from both the internal audit process supported by Ernst and Young and the systems audit are being taken into account to improve business processes and increase operational efficiency. More recently, the positive experience gathered in Palestine of working in consortium on an innovative programme like PSP is being replicated in another setup like Haiti, thus demonstrating the ability for our membership to learn from positive experiences.

## **Looking ahead**

After the breakdown of the peace talks brokered by the US administration and the subsequent further isolation of Israel in the international arena, the Palestinians are consistently heading towards the unilateral declaration of the State of Palestine, foreseen for September 2011, looking for recognition by a large number of countries. This seems to be confirmed by the renewed efforts towards reconciliation between the de-facto Hamas authorities in Gaza and the

Palestinian Authority in the West Bank, a precondition for the unilateral declaration to be fully successful. This shifts the baricenter of political negotiations away from the largely unsuccessful attempts at direct talks on the final issues (refugees, borders, water, settlements and Jerusalem) to a new and somehow unpredictable scenario.

On the other hand, at the moment of writing this report, the whole region of the Middle East and North Africa is going through unprecedented turmoil and deep changes. After the popular uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt and the resulting changes in Governments and leadership, Yemen, Libya, Bahrain, Syria, Algeria, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Lebanon and Iran are facing some sort of uprising and demands for change towards more democratic political setups. While it is difficult to predict the extent of the impact of the present situation on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, it is clear that the present unrest is shaking and will redefine some of the equilibriums that have contributed directly or indirectly to a standstill situation in the Palestinian issue and the ongoing military occupation of Palestine. The new scenario could easily turn into a more favorable for peace in the region, or in a renewed arena for renewed clash of vested interests by external actors and renewed regional confrontations and conflicts.

With these new challenges in the background, the needs of the Palestinian population will continue requiring 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 highly fragile and volatile environment.

<b>How we work</b>	
<p><b><i>All Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the <a href="#">Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) in Disaster Relief</a> and is committed to the <a href="#">Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (Sphere)</a> in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.</i></b></p>	
<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>
<b>Contact information</b>	
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