

Mid-Year report

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Palestine (oPt), Palestine Red Crescent Society

Appeal No. MAAPS001

15 August 2011

This report covers the period 01st January
2011 to 30th June 2011



PRCS volunteers practicing in water and sanitation as part of the training to become National Disaster Response Teams (NDRT) in Bein Na'im, near Hebron – photo: PRCS, June 2011

In brief

Programme outcome: Support the Palestine Red Crescent Society to implement its strategic vision and increase impact at the community level in the occupied Palestinian territory and for refugees in the Diaspora; to facilitate its cooperation with partners, its positioning in the international community and its contributions to the Federation.

Programme(s) summary: In a very unpredictable context dominated by the Arab uprising and its consequences, the lack of resumption of any peace talks and the UN initiative by the Palestinian National Authority to get recognition of a Palestinian State, the humanitarian situation of millions of Palestinians living in the West Bank, in East Jerusalem, in Gaza, in the camps in Lebanon, Syria and Egypt continues to be extremely difficult. The ongoing blockade of Gaza seriously challenges the respect of human dignity and renders life almost impossible for yet another generation of Palestinians.

The Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRCS), despite the enormous challenges of working in such a context, has been defining a gradual shift towards community work as one of its future priorities. This will be discussed together with other humanitarian issues in a participatory manner during the new strategic planning process in 2012 that will culminate in a new 5 years strategic plan. PRCS has at the same time increasingly contributed to other national Societies in the region in areas where it holds high standards and expertise.

PRCS has a mature cooperation with a wide number of Movement partners as well as non-Movement partners, including several Partner Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies, the ICRC, the Palestinian national Authority. Due to the elevated degree of uncertainty and unpredictability of the future, and the ongoing needs of large parts of the population, the Federation

invites partners and donors of PRCS to heighten their support to PRCS and renew their commitment to work for a better future for Palestine.

Financial situation: The total 2011 budget is CHF 547,751 of which CHF 326,224 (60%) has been covered during the reporting period (including opening balance). Overall expenditure during the reporting period was CHF 146,875 (27% per cent) of the budget. .To narrow the gap between the budget and expenditure figures, the budget has been revised downwards (from CHF 586,430 to CHF 547, 751)

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

Our partners: The Italian Red Cross and Swedish Red Cross have been supporting the Federation revised plan 2011, while the Danish Red Cross will do so in the second part of the year.

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). In addition, PRCS receives generous support from the Palestinian Authority and has excellent partnerships with a large number of organizations and agencies.

Context

Against a highly unstable and unpredictable background of rapidly changing context triggered by the Arab uprising, and after the definitive failure of the 'peace talks' brokered by the American administration, there have been sporadic attempts to revive some form of negotiation by the Quartet (UN, US, EU and Russia) and France, but without results so far.

The positions of Israel and Palestine seem quite distant today. On one side the Israeli Government insists on the recognition of the Jewish state by the Palestinians as a precondition for any talks but at the same time shows contradictory positions within the same Cabinet, with most of the coalition parties on an even harder line denying the possibility of any concession or talks. On the other hand the Palestinian negotiators insist on the complete freeze of constructions in any settlement, including East Jerusalem, as a precondition to sit at the negotiating table.

As requested by the international community, the four-year stalemate between the two main Palestinian factions, which had resulted into Hamas controlling Gaza and Fatah the West Bank, ended after an Egypt-brokered reconciliation agreement was signed in Cairo in May. The agreement, reached also thanks to the internal pressure and the new scenarios drawn by the ongoing Arab uprising, has yet to create the caretaker unity Government consisting of technicians that should prepare elections (presidential, legislative and administrative) before May 2012. The major discrepancies seem focusing on the person of the Prime Minister.

Israel has reacted strongly to the reconciliation and refuses any contacts with any Palestinian Government that includes Hamas.

The Palestinians have, after the interruption of the talks, announced that they will submit a request to the UN General Assembly in September for full recognition of a Palestinian State within the pre-1967 borders and the admission of such State to the UN membership. With the most recent move by most Latin American countries, some 116 Governments (mainly from Asia, Africa and Latin America) have already bilaterally recognised the Palestinian State within the pre-1967 borders; this represents approximately 60% of the UN membership, just short of the 2/3rds (128 votes) qualified majority needed in the UN general Assembly. The diplomatic effort by Palestine is focusing on the European States as the next step.

In order to be recognised by, and admitted to as a member, the UN, Palestine should obtain a positive recommendation by the Security Council, where a simple majority of 9 votes out of 16 is needed in addition to no veto from any of the 5 members with such a right. The US administration has already indicated that it sees this request as a mistake, hinting at the fact that the US would use their veto in the Security Council, should a vote on the recommendation reach the 9 favourable votes needed. Even in the case of a US veto, the General Assembly could still issue a resolution affirming Palestine's right to statehood, categorising it as a *non-member state*, although this would have less legal significance. The US has already used a veto in the Security Council earlier this year; to avoid a pronouncement requested by Palestine that the settlements are a major obstacle to ending the conflict.

The economic situation seems also suffering after a period of relative expansion, at least in the West Bank. Although a limited easing of restrictions could still boost GDP in both the West Bank and Gaza, neither will experience real, sustainable growth unless the Israeli blockade on Gaza and restrictions in the West Bank are ended. In the West Bank, real GDP per capita in 2011 will be well below its 1999 level¹.

On the humanitarian side, the period has been characterised by a steady increase of both wounded Palestinians and demolitions in the West Bank. For the five months until the end of May, some 1,072 Palestinians² have been injured by Israeli Defence Forces or settlers, and some 57 have been killed. Of the wounded, an astonishing 322 are children. Some 1,523 Palestinians were detained by the Israeli forces, and the estimated average of detainees is still in excess of 5,500. Some 223 Palestinian structures (including homes, water cisterns, etc) have been demolished during the period. Palestine is still home of some 64 permanently staffed check-points, 26 partially staffed ones, and 428 unstaffed obstacles (roadblocks, earth mounds, earth walls, road gates, road barriers and trenches, excluding Hebron City H2), to which we must add up to 665 flying checkpoints, all of which render economic activity hardly possible and life very far from normal. During the same period, there was a bomb that exploded at a bus station in West Jerusalem in April, and there were 1 death and 67 wounded on the Israeli side, plus a family of 5 Israeli settlers killed in their house in the Itamar settlement, for which 2 Palestinians have been indicted.

In Gaza, the announcement of the opening of the Rafah border with Egypt, following both the change in Government in Egypt and the reconciliation deal, had raised a lot of expectations about a possible end of the blockade from the Egyptian side and the beginning of the reconstruction, but slightly more than one month after the opening the number of people allowed to cross into Egypt is still limited to 400 - 500 a day, and no goods have been allowed in. The tunnels are still the main source of supply for people in Gaza.

Palestine Red Crescent Society's programmes and work with partners, progress during the reporting period

In this extremely challenging environment and counting on continuous support by a number of Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement partners as well as external ones, the Palestine red Crescent Society has continued during the first part of 2011 to deliver quality services to the population in the whole of the national territory as well as to Palestinian refugees in the camps in Lebanon, Syria and Egypt. Detailed information about the overall activities of the PRCS is available on the Society's website (www.palestinerccs.net) this report covers the achievements and challenges related to the Secretariat –supported programmes

¹ Source: Economist Intelligence Unit + UNSCO Socio-Economic Report May 2011.

² Source of data for this paragraph: OCHA, 'The Monthly Humanitarian Monitor, May 2011', available online at OCHA's webpage: http://www.ochaopt.org/documents/ocha_opt_the_humanitarian_monitor_2011_06_16_english.pdf

Secretariat supported programmes, progress towards outcomes

Strategy 2020 Strategic aim 1 – Save lives, protects livelihoods, and strengthens recovery from disasters and crisis

Outcomes

Component outcome 1: *The existing pilot initiatives in school-based disaster risk reduction are replicated and mainstreamed within the disaster management programme.*

Component outcome 2: *The logistic capacities of PRCS, developed with technical assistance and support from the British Red Cross, are aligned with global Federation practice and policy*

Component outcome 3: *The PRCS is supported in its coordination with neighbouring National Societies (Egypt, Jordan) and the ICRC to better coordinate humanitarian aid to Palestine vulnerable, within the framework of a regional IDRL perspective*

Achievements

While PRCS continued its school-based DRR activities in the pilot schools, the lack of funding at the opening of the year (funding that had been initially guaranteed by the then DM coordinator of the Zone office) induced both PRCS and the Federation not to extend the piloting to other schools. On the other hand, PRCS has during 2010 developed a solid framework of community based disaster risk reduction, and when the new DFID / Federation partnership was approved towards the month of June, PRCS indicated its interest in concentrating efforts at the community level extending the present coverage of 15 communities to 30. The support by DFID through the Federation, starting at the moment of writing this report, expands the pilot supported by German, Norwegian and Swedish RC to 15 new communities, 5 in Jenin, 5 in the Jordan Valley ('area C') and 5 in the southern part of the Gaza strip, where micro-projects will complement the community risk mapping. In addition, the proposal, initially funded for the first 2 years with possible extension and expansion in the following 2 years, contemplates the systematization of the methodology to approach the community, and a component of branch leadership development.

In logistics, the expert sent by the British RC was hosted for one week in the Federation logistic base of Dubai before his mission and received all relevant information about Federation standards and policies; and in the second half of 2011 the Federation will establish at the zone office a new centre for logistic support to NSs aligned with the global programme. The latter should finally make available the capacities to properly support PRCS and the British RC to maximise their cooperation. A person has in the meantime been identified as Logistics manager by PRCS and will start in July his assignment.

To be noted that during the period, upon solicitation by the Federation, an initiative to determine the roles and responsibilities of each member of the RCRC Movement in Palestine has been started. This will cover both conflicts and disasters / non conflict emergencies, determining in each scenario what role will each member play. The Partner National Societies will be invited to contribute and subscribe to the pre-agreement.

As to the IDRL initiative, this was included in the plans for the Zone office, but despite several offers to contribute to its development; to date this has not happened yet. We recall that in this region, where movement of humanitarian aid and personnel is very difficult, such an initiative should be given priority, as the cases of the recent internal unrest shows.

Constraints or Challenges

The cancellation of the announced funding for the school-based DRR initiative and the delays so far of an initiative on IDRL with neighbouring countries have limited in the first part of the year the sought impact.

Strategy 2020 strategic aim 2 – enable healthy and safe living

Outcome

Component outcome 1: *PRCS staff and volunteers capacities to deliver public health during emergencies, crisis and conflicts are improved.*

Achievements

A clear need identified by the 2009 evaluation of the response to the 2008/09 Gaza war was the need to develop a coherent approach to Public Health in Emergencies.

During the first half of the year the Federation has supported PRCS with a 10 days mission of a specialist (Panu Saaristo, Emergency Health Coordinator Senior Officer, based in Geneva). The aim of the mission was to support PRCS in determining the framework and the priorities in this area. With his counterpart the director of PHC from PRCS, and with support and guidance by a wider cross-sector task force that gathers the main programmes and partners, Panu gathered existing advances on the issue and will provide shortly technical suggestions on how to shape the approach to Public Health in Emergency in PRCS preparedness and contingency plans, ongoing and future trainings, NDRT specific trainings, directly contributing to the integration of programme activities.

The plan of action that results from this technical support will be discussed and agreed by PRCS with its partners, and it is foreseen that specific activities will start in the second half of the year.

Constraints or Challenges

In order to properly support the next phase of the development of this approach, needed to face health emergencies in the peculiar context of Palestine, the Federation calls for donors to contribute either directly to PRCS or to its 2011 appeal budget.

Strategy 2020 strategic aim 3 – promote social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace

Outcome

Component outcome 1: The capacities of PRCS branches to manage its volunteers is enhanced

Achievements

The Youth as Agents of Behavioural Change is by now recognised by PRCS as a valid tool to promote the dissemination of the RCRC fundamental principles. PRCS has during the period identified 23 youth members fluent in English and highly motivated to receive the training by YABC external certified trainers. Unfortunately the training had to be postponed three times due to limited availability of Arabic-speaking trainers (3 so far).

The problem has been raised with the Head of Humanitarian Principles and Values Department, and it has been agreed to postpone the training to the month of October 2011 in order to make sure that at least 1 of the trainers is fluent in Arabic. After that, the trained youth will start implementing activities in the selected communities in Palestine, and the best ones who have already attended training will be invited to co-facilitate training abroad, completing in this way the training process. After that, the roll-out of the programme will be possible, and the global programme will count on a few more Arabic-speaking trainers.

Constraints or Challenges

The limited number of Arabic-speaking trainers, their multiple occupations and the prevailing difficulties within the Middle East and North Africa for mutual support and movement of Red Cross and Red Crescent personnel and volunteers are the constraints that have so far affected the implementation of this initiative.

Strategy 2020 enabling action 1 – Build strong National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Outcomes

Component outcome 1: The planning and reporting capabilities both at branches (including Egypt, Lebanon and Syria) and at headquarters levels are improved.

Component outcome 2: The new strategic planning cycle (foreseen for 2012) is properly planned

Component outcome 3: The existing PRCS financial management is strengthened

Component outcome 4: A proper human resources capacity for both staff and volunteers is developed in PRCS

Achievements

The Federation has been requested to support PRCS in preparing the main outlines for the strategic planning process that will take place in 2012: it has done so sharing both the existing Guidelines for National Societies in Strategic planning, adapting a short summarized version of these guidelines to the specific context and challenges of PRCS, making its Federation Representative available for inclusion in the PRCS Strategic Planning Task Force, whose first meeting is foreseen in the second half of 2011, taking part in meetings both in Ramallah, Gaza and Lebanon (PRCS Lebanon branch) to start preparing for the process, and highlighting that a participatory process with the inclusion of the representatives of the beneficiaries and of PRCS's stakeholders would present a huge value added for a proper strategic focus for the next 5 years period.

The Federation office is supporting technically the Director, planning and development, PRCS on this issue. The process was approved by the PRCS national Administrative Council in a meeting held in Amman.

During the period, the new Federation Programme Officer based in Gaza has been selected and started working at the beginning of April. The Federation Plan of Action in support to PRCS Gaza developed after consultation and discussion with the Director General, Gaza Branch, PRCS, consists of three main directions: support the managerial capacities of PRCS branches in Gaza, support the inclusion of the Gaza branches in the next strategic planning process, and facilitate the cooperation of PRCS partners. On the first of these directions, the Programme Officer run 2 workshops with the top management of the branch, and PRCS established after that 3 Participatory Problem solving working groups supervised by a Strategic oversight committee. The first initiative decided by this process is a three-day workshop run by the Federation Programme Officer on managing people.

As discussed with the PRCS OD coordinator, it is foreseen that the Programme Officer will be asked in the future to support PRCS branch development in Lebanon and Syria, as well as the West Bank. This is depending on the receipt of a travel permit to allow him to move to the West Bank, permit that so far has not been issued.

The position is funded by the Swedish Red Cross.

The support on planning and reporting capabilities has not yet concretized, since the person in charge of this file for PRCS resigned from her position. The Federation has offered its support to define the appropriate profile for such a position, and to be part, should this be appropriate and useful, to the selection process. It is expected that during the second part of the year the support will start once the new person will be in place.

Similarly, the Human Resources Manager for PRCS has recently resigned from her position, and the file has to be postponed until a new manager is in place.

As to the financial software, preliminary indications by the work done by Ernst & Young in support of the revision of the business processes seem indicating that the problem does not lay with the software in use, which is a good one, but more on the processes, informatized or not. This is where PRCS is investing more attention, and where the Federation has offered its support for the next 6 months.

Constraints or Challenges

The early departure of 2 PRCS key staff (Planning and reporting; and Human Resources) has seriously limited the capacity to properly support PRCS on these two files. The high turnover of staff at coordinator level represents a challenge for the PRCS, confronted with increasing competition for qualified personnel by actors in international cooperation and international NGOs.

Outcome

Component outcome 1: PRCS's policies on youth and volunteering are revised in line with Federation ones

Achievements

After an open discussion of priorities for support to PRCS with the Danish RC Regional Representative, the Danish RC has approved the deployment of a Federation Organizational Development Delegate seconded by the Danish RC and specialized on Youth action and Volunteering development. The Delegate will at the same time represent the Danish RC with its donors and continue developing opportunities to access funding to better support PRCS in this and other domains. The selection process for the Delegate was slightly delayed for technical reasons, and the deployment is now expected for the month of September. The Delegate, under the line management of the Federation representative, will work directly with the PRCS Youth and Volunteering department.

In addition, PRCS has indicated the Danish RC, and the Federation has supported, that one of its utmost priorities for support for its new 3 years project is in Youth action and Volunteering Development (alongside with Disaster Management and an innovative approach to support the development of PRCS's Humanitarian Diplomacy agenda). As a result, programme funds from this project will be directed towards this critical area. As part of the project, and part of the technical support by the Federation delegate, amongst many others, there is the proper development of policies for Youth and Volunteering.

To be noted that PRCS has a new manager for the Youth and Volunteering department and a new coordinator for the youth activities.

Constraints or Challenges

During the period, the PRCS coordinator for the Youth and Volunteering department resigned and was substituted by a new one, which resulted into a slight delay in the revision of the department's plan of action.

Strategy 2020 enabling action 2 – Pursue Humanitarian Diplomacy to prevent and reduce vulnerability in a globalized world

Outcome

Component outcome 1: The cooperation between PRCS and Australian Red Cross on technical support to develop PRCS's capacities in PR and communication is accompanied and supported

Achievements

The planned support by the Australian RC could not concretize, and the technical support for the development of a coherent strategic approach to Public Relations and Communication has been instead provided directly by the Federation Media department in Geneva. A senior member of that team has paid a visit to PRCS and together with the PRCS manager, PR and communications, held meetings with key stakeholders, internal and external, and come up with a draft plan for the development of the strategy in PR and communications. Since then, distance support has been provided, the plan has been refined and the first activities are being implemented.

It is envisaged that in the second part of the year, other actors, including one Partner National Society that has already indicated its availability, will continue supporting the development of specific issues within the wider strategic approach.

To be noted that the regional (MENA) skill share initiative should now take place in the second half of 2011, after being delayed.

Constraints or Challenges

In order to continue supporting the process, the Federation calls for contributions from donors.

Strategy 2020 enabling action 3 – function effectively as the International Federation

Outcome

Component outcome 1: PRCS and its partners have been supported in mainstreaming the Palestine operational alliance, enhancing cooperation at programme level using the seven ones for each programme, and adopting the results of the main processes on planning, performance tracking, accountability and reporting

Achievements

As planned, during the first half of 2011 the articulated coordination mechanism for the relation between PRCS and its different partners has been streamlined, stabilized and mainstreamed into PRCS life. In most programmes, by now, the relationship between PRCS and its partners is very much aligned to the principles of the Operational Alliance, where PRCS is in the driving seat, the partners discuss openly about manners to better coordinate and avoid duplications (the best examples are around DRR and PSP), and innovation and creativity to find solutions to the problems are a given. We want to express our gratitude to the Partner National Societies for their commitment to improved cooperation, and invite all to go down the road of further improvements.

In addition, the sectoral meetings have been linked to the normal planning cycle of both PRCS and its partners, as two of such meetings were held, the first in January to discuss together the achievements and difficulties of 2010 and revise the plans for 2011, and the second in May to launch the planning process for 2012. At both meetings, still perfectible, other departments were invited to attend, fostering inter-department coordination. The next round of sectoral meetings is foreseen for September, in order to revise jointly the plans in each programme, including support by partners, and wrap them up into a complete Annual Plan for PRCS with support by its partners.

In the meantime, most of the Delegates of Partner National Societies have been or are going to be soon substituted, and in light of an almost complete new team of partner delegates for PRCS, the foreseen working groups have been delayed to give room during the second half of 2011 to some discussions about the principles of good cooperation and the underlying principles that underpin the seven ones.

It is foreseen that the scheduled strategic planning process for 2012 and its preparation during the second half of 2011 will represent excellent opportunities to jointly revise the state of the art of PRCS's cooperation with its partners and seek opportunities to further improve it.

PRCS 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 and Swedish Red Cross have been supporting the Federation appeal, while the Danish Red Cross will do so in the second part of the year. 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.

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

During the first six months of 2011, there were two more PAM (progress Assessment meetings with the presence of MDA and PRCS leaders, a visit by four representatives of the Technical committee set up by the Arab Red Crescent and Red Cross Organization to follow up on the MoU, and a visit by four senior representatives (the President of the French Red Cross, the President of the Indonesia Red Cross, a member of the Governing Board of the American Red Cross and a Top Manager of the Turkish Red Crescent) organized by the Federation upon request by the Standing Commission. It seems that the intensive efforts 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 have received a valid support by these visits, and the results of this will be presented to the 31st International Conference of the Red Cross and red Crescent in Geneva at the end of 2011.

To be noted that the Federation Secretary General has appointed a focal point for this issue in Geneva, Mr. Frank Morhauer, head of department for Governance Support.

Status agreement

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has notified the Federation that it will proceed to the signature of a Status Agreement with the Federation. It has since sent the standard agreement to all Ministries to receive feedback. It is foreseen that by end September the final document could be ready for subsequent signature.

Management and Regulations

After the establishment of *Security regulations* and *Rules and Regulations for Local Personnel*, the Federation Representative has contracted a *Legal advisor* for the Federation, developed a *Welcome package* for short-term visitors, a new *Salary scale* based on market survey with competitors, has issued a new contract for the Finance and Administration officer and for the newly recruited Programme Officer, duly revised by the lawyer, and identified the most convenient *Insurance coverage* for the 2 local staff with a local company.

Constraints or Challenges

None

Contributing to longer-term impact

The extremely challenging conditions of the environment where PRCS is working have not limited its capacity to reach the vulnerable in the West Bank, East Jerusalem, Gaza, and for the Palestinian refugees in Egypt, Lebanon and Syria. At the same time PRCS is aware of the need to improve systems and business processes to support the change process towards more efficiency and impact.

In line with the Federation's Strategy 2020, PRCS has taken a clear strategic direction towards more community based work, and towards more integration of its programmes and services at the community level, without reducing its specialized services provision in a context which still bears many unknown for the future. The proper preparation of this process is a major advance and a clear indicator of better impact in the medium and long term for the vulnerable communities of Palestine, whatever the political setup will be.

PRCS has the potential to give more to other National Societies in the region and elsewhere. Its mature cooperation with key partners, with innovative models like the consortium approach now replicated in Haiti or the coordinated programme support on DRR is just an example. Its active support to other NSs in specific domains (DM, PSP) should be better supported and nurtured by our Federation. The learning capacity, reflected by the acceptance and implementation of the recommendations of evaluations and of recommendations by external partners like Ernst and Young, all contribute to making our Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement a more professional, focused, efficient and needs-based one.

Looking ahead

The second part of the year will be dominated by the attempts to re-start some form of peace talks on the final issues (refugees, borders, water, settlements and Jerusalem) before any submission of the mentioned (see above, context) request by Palestinians for recognition of statehood and admission to the UN. Should no peace talks resume, and the request of statehood to the UN be frustrated, there is high potential for a renewal of confrontation combining peaceful revolt with pressure on the borders and the settlements, opening unforeseen scenarios of renewed violence.

On a wider regional level, the situation in Syria seems particularly worrying for the potential far-reaching consequences on the political equilibriums in the area. The outcomes of the Arab uprising are still not clear too, and while Egypt and Tunisia have so far successfully and peacefully started managing a difficult transition towards a new political model, in the cases especially of Yemen,

Libya and Syria the outcome is still widely unclear. The overall implications for the Palestine-Israel conflict that has so long been at the centre of the world politics are still to be seen.

With these old and 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.

How we work	
<p>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>	
<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"> 1. Save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disaster and crises. 2. Enable healthy and safe living. 3. Promote social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace.
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