

VENEZUELA

THE ICRC'S CARACAS REGIONAL DELEGATION

JANUARY - JUNE 2019



C. Goin/ICRC

The ICRC is present in Venezuela, working in support of the Venezuelan people who have been affected by armed violence and its social implications, as well as by other emergencies, and addressing their urgent needs in accordance with its mandate and expertise.

In particular, it carries out activities to help vulnerable people such as; detainees, sick and injured people, migrants and their families, and endeavours to prevent suffering by promoting knowledge of the applicable international standards and universal humanitarian principles, and strengthening their integration into national law. It works in strict compliance with its principles of neutrality, impartiality and independence and in close coordination with the competent authorities and with other Movement partners present in the country - the Venezuelan Red Cross (VRC) and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red

Crescent Societies (the Federation).

To implement its activities in States considered as priority, the ICRC has set a permanent presence through its offices in Caracas, San Cristobal and Puerto Ordaz. The regional delegation also covers Trinidad and Tobago, Aruba and Curaçao islands, where it seeks to enhance the protection of vulnerable groups, such as detained migrants or those separated from their families, supports the Red Cross National Societies and works with the competent authorities in their integration of international standards into specific laws.

HEALTH

In coordination with the authorities, the ICRC has been carrying out its work in health by focusing on 3 specific areas: hospital health, community health and comprehensive health. The ICRC supports the work of medical personnel in public hospital emergency rooms, providing training and medical supplies to those structures. Throughout the year, the ICRC will provide such support to 28 public hospitals. It also continues to strengthen prehospital care, thus ensuring support for the VRC teams, Civil Protection and other national associations. Moreover, the ICRC supports health outreach activities for members of communities affected by violence, and contributes by improving access to primary healthcare services, supporting 8 public centers. A malaria emergency response has been initiated in Bolivar State.

- 125 tons of medical supplies were imported since the beginning of 2019.
- The ICRC made over 120 medical donations to 30 health-care facilities, including public hospitals and other public health structures in the Capital District and in the states of Miranda, Aragua, Carabobo, Bolívar, Táchira, Apure, Amazonas, Mérida and La Guaira.
- Approximately 60 trauma kits were donated to public health structures in the Capital District and in Miranda, Aragua, Carabobo, Bolívar, Táchira, Apure, Amazonas, Mérida and Vargas, along with other basic medical equipment.
- A total of 6,121 wounded and trauma patients were treated at Venezuelan public hospitals.
- ICRC repaired the reverse osmosis plant, which allowed the J.M Rios Hospital Dialysis Department to re-start its life-saving services for children affected by severe kidney failure diseases.
- 217 health professionals received training in managing advanced trauma patients (Emergency Room Trauma Course); while other 48 were trained on weapon wounded surgical procedures (Weapon Wounded Surgical Course).
- Medical supplies and basic medical equipment were distributed to prehospital care providers, such as the VRC, Civil Protection, enabling them to stabilize 2,692 people injured in demonstrations and in emergencies such as the blackouts which took place in March.
- Over 250 VRC volunteers were provided with food and water while carrying out prehospital activities.
- 8 prehospital care professionals were sent abroad on an ICRC-sponsored international course for experts.
- 5 VRC ambulances have been repaired, allowing the reestablishment of services in the states of Barinas, Mérida, Aragua and Bolívar.
- ICRC carried out 5 first aid training for 100 individuals, and provided them with medical supplies and stretchers, to be able to give timely life-saving services in different communities.
- A total of 508 people were provided with health care through an outreach activity in Táchira State, which was organized along with the Venezuelan Red Cross and health local authorities.
- Already 4 primary healthcare centers are receiving regularly medical and basic equipment assistance from the ICRC, allowing, the curative and preventive care for over 4, 000 individuals.
- A comprehensive emergency response to malaria has been defined for one municipality (El Callao) in Bolivar State as part of the national response plan.
- 50,000 mosquito nets will be distributed in El Callao as part of the preventive activities within the malaria Emergency Response, from June to July.
- 29 individuals have been trained in the use of the malaria rapid diagnostic tests, and 9 diagnostic and treatment sites have been opened, to expand the malaria healthcare access to the population.
- The ICRC trained 127 health promoters who carried out a malaria census, and supported logistically and with the needed materials an entomological malaria research, aiming at strengthening and better guiding the response to the ongoing emergency.



125

TONS OF MEDICAL SUPPLIES were imported.



120

MEDICAL DONATIONS to 30 health-care facilities in Capital District, Miranda, Aragua, Carabobo, Bolivar, Táchira, Apure, Amazonas, Merida and La Guaira States.



60

TRAUMA KITS ALONG WITH OTHER BASIC EQUIPMENT for the treatment of patients were donated to public health structures in the Capital District and the States previously mentioned.



6,121

WOUNDED AND TRAUMA PATIENTS were treated at public hospitals.



217

HEALTH PROFESSIONALS TRAINED in managing advanced trauma patients (Emergency Room Trauma Course).



508

PEOPLE in the Tachira State received medical attention and health promotion activities jointly with the CRV and local health authorities.



4

PRIMARY HEALTH CARE CENTERS regularly receive medical assistance and basic material from the ICRC, which provides curative and preventive care for more than 4,000 people.



50,000

MOSQUITO NETS in El Callao as part of preventive activities in response to the malaria crisis.



127

HEALTH PROMOTERS conducted a malaria census and were trained by the ICRC. In addition, entomological malaria research was carried out (the first carried out in El Callao), to strengthen and better orient emergency response.




WATER AND SANITATION

The ICRC supports the restoration of essential services such as water, sanitation and electricity in defined priority hospitals. Hospital water systems can be damaged or interrupted as a direct, indirect or cumulative result of the lack of maintenance, supplies or trained staff.

- 4 hospitals in the Capital District, Aragua and Carabobo States received support in the form of infrastructure improvement, water distribution and supply, electrical installations, power generators and air-conditioning maintenance during 2018. This work continued throughout the first months of 2019.
- 7 hospitals in the Capital District and surrounding areas received emergency support through the donation and installation of electricity backup systems, as these hospitals lacked power generators that would allow them to function during power shortages. In total, 9 power generators with a capacity of 125 kVA to 1,200 kVA will be provided to hospitals up to the beginning of June. They will provide the energy supply that essential services need to function properly, including during emergencies.

Each hospital is capable of assisting thousands of people, with a capacity of 2,009 beds.

- Following the field assessments of emergency service infrastructure of 11 hospitals and 4 health centres under the supervision of the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Defense, tailor-made projects for the maintenance and improved of access to water, sanitation and electricity have initiated in all these facilities. A roundtable was held in Caracas with the participation of 10 hospital staffs to discuss the work plan. In total, these infrastructures operate 2,603 beds.
- 2 refectories in Petare and La Vega’s popular areas received kitchen equipment and utensils which will support about 1,350 students. 5 additional refectories were identified for similar assistance.

 4	 9	 11
<p>HOSPITALS received infrastructure improvement, water distribution and water supply, electrical installations, power generators and air conditioning maintenance during 2018. This work continued throughout the first months of 2019.</p>	<p>POWER GENERATORS in the Capital District and surrounding areas received emergency support through the donation and installation of electricity backup systems. In total, 9 power generators with a capacity of 125 kVA to 1,200 kVA will be provided.</p>	<p>HOSPITALS and 4 Health Centers have initiated maintenance and improved their access to water, sanitation and electricity.</p>

In Caracas, the ICRC delivered a 500 kVA electric generator to the Dr. Jesús Yerena hospital, allowing emergency, maternity and X-ray services to operate.



R. Quintero/ICRC

RESTORING FAMILY LINKS

Restoring Family Links (RFL) is a Movement global programme carried out in many countries in Latin America. It aims to help people separated from their families (by migration, violence or other reasons), enabling them to report on their whereabouts and restore contact with their loved ones.

VRC volunteers provide connectivity services to people in the move at 15 locations throughout Venezuela, one of them located at Caracas bus terminal.



A. van Schembeek/ICRC

- The ICRC supports the VRC to provide RFL services to relatives who had been separated, with a focus on unaccompanied minors.
- Tracing services, through the setting of 15 new connectivity points, orientation and contacts were provided to travelers in bus terminals and other strategic points along the migration route in the country. A total of 3,374 services were provided to migrants; 1,110 calls were made, 2,129 batteries recharged and 135 Wi-Fi connections used.
- 2,074 services provided during periods of power shortages included 159 calls, 1,374 batteries recharged and 69 Wi-Fi/SMS connections used. In addition, self-care information was provided to 127 travelers; access to water was facilitated for 272 people; first aid was provided to 17 individuals; 12 people used the resting area; and 41 travelers received medical help.
- In sum, almost 4,000 people benefited from RFL services provided by the VRC and the ICRC in 2019.
- The ICRC managed to trace the families of two people who had been separated from their relatives, thus re-establishing lost contacts. The search for the families of 28 people is ongoing.

 15

STRATEGIC POINTS

Orientation and contacts, in bus terminals and other strategic points along the migration route in the country.

 5,448

SERVICES were provided in 15 connectivity points.

 4,000

PEOPLE BENEFITED

from ICRC-Venezuelan Red Cross family-link services.

RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

To allow the Red Cross Movement greater impact in addressing growing humanitarian needs, VRC, ICRC and IFRC work in close collaboration to promote synergies and complementarity of its actions, as well as to optimize the use of its capacities and available resources. IFRC and ICRC are supporting VRC branches and headquarters through relevant training, developing protocols specifically geared to security and protection, equipping volunteers with institutional visibility, and defining additional capacities in VRC human resources to coordinate aspects related to security.

- 23 volunteers from 10 VRC branches were trained to manage the operational risks and advise on security and perception issues.
- 3 generators were donated to the VRC in order to support first aid and emergency-response services
- Satelital internet connection was installed in 10 branches of the VRC across the country.
- 19 drivers of the VRC national response team participated in a safe driving training, focusing on health services delivered by the motorbike first aid teams.
- Emergency food and water supplies were positioned in eight VRC branches to enable first-aid teams to respond during demonstrations and situations of emergency.
- 8 motorbikes were donated to the VRC. Also, two ambulances and two emergency vehicles were repaired and are being maintained.
- Identification material was distributed to VRC volunteers.

FORENSICS

The ICRC supports the authorities in mitigating the effects of high rates of violence and the lack of maintenance, material, training and staff on the forensic system. In so doing it helps to ensure the appropriate and dignified management of the dead, the search for and identification of missing persons and communication with the families affected.

- Judicial and hospital morgues were provided with 200 body bags as well as protective clothing, such as surgical masks, gowns and gloves.
- The Puerto Ordaz morgue refrigeration unit was repaired after damage caused by a power outage.

PROMOTION OF INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW AND INTERNATIONAL RULES

ON THE USE OF FORCE BY ARMED AND SECURITY FORCES, AND COMMUNICATION ABOUT THE ICRC'S WORK IN VENEZUELA

The ICRC supports dialogue with arms carriers to ensure that they know and apply international human rights law and international humanitarian law in their operations and that they facilitate emergency responses.

- A workshop on integrating international standards on the use of force into the curricula of military educational centres took place at the Bolivarian Military University of Venezuela. A total of 72 military officers were trained.
- Over 40 officers of the armed forces took part in a train of trainers course in the use of force in law enforcement operations.
- 1,176 officers of the Armed Forces were sensitized on the International Standards on the use of force during order enforcement operations and reminded of IHL principles. ICRC is working alongside the Vice Ministry for Education of the Ministry of Defense in the integration of said trainings as part of the academic curricula for its officials.
- Two information sessions were held for more than 60 officers of the Bolivarian National Police of the Diplomatic Security Service.
- A workshop on international standards on the use of force was offered to 59 Officers at the Strategic Level and 100 Tactical Officers of the State Police of Miranda.
- A series of communication sessions and meetings were held with community leaders, local interlocutors and NGOs to promote acceptance of the ICRC's work and facilitate ICRC access to the people affected by the violence.
- Three information sessions were held for an estimated 350 inhabitants and local leaders of Caracas barrios.
- 76 teachers, administrative staff and NGOs personnel working and living in popular areas were trained in safe behavior course given by ICRC.
- During an event organized by the UN in Caracas, participants from 50 NGOs attended a session on "Humanitarian principles and the characterization of humanitarian work".
- Numerous bilateral and group meetings were organized with local and international social, development and humanitarian organizations to provide information on the ICRC's principles, work and mandate.



1,176

OFFICERS OF THE ARMED FORCES

were given greater awareness about international standards for the progressive use of force during law enforcement operations, and about the principles of IHL (international humanitarian law).



DIALOGUE with arms carriers to ensure knowledge of IHRL (international human rights law), IHL and integration of international standards on the use of force in their operations.

ICRC PRESENCE IN VENEZUELA, TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO, ARUBA, BONAIRE, AND CURAÇAO

January–June 2019



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|--|---------------------|--|----------------------|
| | Regional Delegation | | IHL & IHRL Promotion |
| | Sub-Delegation | | RFL |
| | Health | | Detention |
| | WATHAB | | Priority areas |
| | Forensics | | |



DETENTION

The ICRC aims to secure dignified treatment and adequate conditions of detention for detainees, and supports the authorities' efforts to improve general conditions of detention in line with international standards. In Venezuela, it has begun visiting penitentiaries to ensure that people deprived of their liberty are treated with dignity.

In coordination with prison authorities, the ICRC has started to visit places of detention in Venezuela in 2019.



- The ICRC visited 7 penitentiaries since the organization started this activity in March 2019; 6,593 detainees were visited and 110 cases were followed individually.
- Medical support was provided to 3 penitentiaries, to strengthen the preventive and curative care of almost 3,000 people, jointly with the authorities.
- In the penitentiaries, 116 Red Cross Messages were collected that contain brief family news and are being distributed to the families of detainees.
- The ICRC provided travel assistance to 41 families of detainees so that they could visit their detained relatives.



6,593

DETAINEES

7 places of detention .



3,000

PEOPLE in 3 detention centers, received medical assistance to allow their preventive and curative care.

THE CARIBBEAN (THE ISLANDS TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO, ARUBA, BONAIRE, AND CURAÇAO)

The ICRC works in the region in partnership with the National Societies of each of the islands, to strengthen their capacity to respond to current challenges, particularly through RFL training and programs to support migrants. The ICRC maintains dialogue with the authorities on issues related to migration, international law and the protection mechanisms applicable to vulnerable groups. These efforts include visits to persons deprived of freedom in detention centers in Aruba, Curaçao and Trinidad and Tobago, to ensure that their conditions and treatment are proper and their rights respected.

- The ICRC interviewed more than 230 people in immigration detention in three detention centers in Trinidad and Tobago, Curaçao and Aruba.
- A confidential dialogue was held with the authorities regarding detention conditions, treatment and procedural safeguards, as well as follow-up of individual cases.
- As regards RFL services for migrants, the search of 37 missing persons is ongoing after their relatives contacted the ICRC.
- In addition, 17 messages were exchanged between separated family members; 30 phone calls were facilitated between foreigners in detention and their relatives abroad; and almost 50 pre-paid telephone lines were offered to detained migrants so they could contact their relatives abroad.
- Nine families whose relatives had disappeared at sea due to shipwrecks were cared for.



230

DETAINEES

visited by the ICRC in 3 detention centers on the islands of Aruba, Curaçao and Trinidad and Tobago.






RFL SERVICE

The search was begun for 37 people who had lost contact with their families, once the latter contacted the ICRC.



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