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MENA Zone support to the Lebanese R.C Mid- Year Report 2012

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

MAALB001

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**This report covers the
period 1 January 2012 to
30 June 2012.**

*Photo: LRC Volunteers
delivering one of the
awareness sessions to
school children*



Overview

The Federation support to the Lebanese RC aims to enhance organizational and operational capacities at HQ and branch levels.

Established in 1945, the Lebanese Red Cross (LRC) has a network of 32 branches and more than 6,000 volunteers providing a variety of humanitarian and social services. The LRC has a well-functioning Emergency Medical Service (EMS) which provides vital humanitarian/social services and contributes to the growing positive image of the Society.

However, the overall organizational capacity is in a state that does not adequately ensure effective leadership and management based on up to date systems and procedures. The Federation's support to LRC in 2012 focuses on:

- Improvement of governance/leadership
- Reinforcement of management skills including PMER skills at Headquarters and branches
- Enhancing of youth and volunteers' contribution based on more unified approaches, and in Line with the S2020
- Strengthening resource mobilization with a focus on mobilization from domestic sources
- Facilitation of the development of financial management capacities at HQ and branch level

Working in partnership

The Federation support to the LRC is planned and implemented in close consultation and coordination with other Movement partners including the ICRC and the participating NSs present in Lebanon including the NSs of Belgium, Norway and the Netherlands

Progress towards outcomes

Several activities were implemented contributing to the overall capacity building efforts of the LRC which can be summarised under the relevant business lines of Strategy 2020. .

Business line 1: Raising humanitarian standards

The LRC and the Lebanese branch of the Palestinian R.C (LPRC) have participated, through four staff members, (two each from the LPRC and PRC) and successfully completed a Training of Trainers organized by the MENA Zone team, focusing on Gender and Development. The three day course, conducted at the end of May 2012, enabled the participants to deepen their understanding of the issues of gender and diversity as important factors in the development of strong NSs in the context of Strategy 2020.

In addition to improving their capacity to improve gender balance in organizational development and gender mainstreaming in programming (service delivery), the participants identified the specific priorities and actions pertaining to each N.S. which would lead enhancing gender awareness and mainstreaming in 2012/13

Moreover, both the LRC and LPRC staff and volunteers are currently being supported to enhance their role including the key aspects of youth as agents of behavioural change. The Belgian RC contributes to this effort

Business lines 2: Growing the services for the most vulnerable

The Community-Based Disaster Risk Reduction (CBDRR) Programme, implemented by the LRC between 2009 and 2011, was evaluated in May/June 2012. The CBDRR programme was supported by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) with funding from the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery, American Red Cross, Swedish Red Cross, Norwegian Red Cross

The evaluation report concludes that the CBDRR programme has been a valuable experience, as it has managed to train community volunteers in fire-fighting; these volunteers have demonstrated their effectiveness when they brought a wildfire to a halt in May 2012, preventing much more substantial destruction and damage. The report also highlights some of the organizational challenges the LRC faces due to its ineffective organizational structure and culture including the skill gaps in PMER, volunteer management and fundraising

The report further explores the potential: If the will and the courage can be mobilized within the organization to reform and to fill the gaps, and if support from its partners can be secured, chances are high that the LRC may experience a quantum leap in its effectiveness and coverage of communities across Lebanon.

Business line 3: To strengthen the specific Red Cross Red Crescent contribution to development

Despite the difficulties encountered to ensure well- functioning governance with required statutory changes based on periodic elections and rotations, the LRC General Assembly held in June 2012 endorsed the proposed amendments to allow the volunteers from the EMS to stand for elections. This represents an important step to enable the active youth volunteers to be elected and influence the governance systems of the Society at all levels including HQ and branches

Business line 4: Heightening the RC/RC influence and support

The Society enjoys a high level of acceptance among the general public in recognition of the good work it has been conducting since the days of the civil war (between 1975 -1990). The positive image of the Society consolidates the foundation on which the LRC can build its efforts in resource mobilization based on sustainable approaches

Business line 5: Deepening the tradition of working together

The LRC maintains cordial relations with the authorities leveraging the good image it has developed over the years. It also works with different partners including RC/RC Movement partners: IFRC, ICRC, the NSs of Belgium, Norway, the Netherlands..

Challenges

Most of the activities were not implemented according to plan due to a variety of reasons including the following:

- The physical move of the MENA Zone Office from Amman to Beirut coincided with the first half of 2012 as a result of which it was not readily possible for the Zone Office to ensure provision of focused support to the LRC
- The apparent lack of political commitment, including the direct and indirect resistance of NS governance regarding the need for organizational improvement and change, has contributed to the delay of implementation of the planned activities
- In some cases, the delay in implementation was due to external factors including the difficulty of ensuring timely mobilization of capacities to be deployed to ensure timely implementation of priorities to be supported by the Federation. Although repeated efforts have been made to employ a qualified, local fundraising coordinator to work with the EMS of the Society, the process has not been concluded in time due to the difficulty faced in attracting professionals with the required degree of expertise in fundraising

Lessons learned and looking ahead

In overall terms, the LRC represents a two-speed outfit:

- The EMS, representing the operational side, actively continues the provision of humanitarian and social services including ambulance and first aid. This is based on a fast moving dynamics and instituting additional measures for improvement tends to be relatively easier.
- On the other hand, the dynamics of the overall institutional side of the NS continues to be slow and requires a lot of capacity building and organizational change to improve the overall process of governance and management at HQ and branch level. But the challenge of doing this often proves to be daunting
- The success in achieving results working with the EMS is bound to generate opportunities to replicate the efforts in the rest of the LRC organization overcoming the challenges through persistent and evidence-based approaches. The support being provided to the LRC in terms of capacity building in resource mobilization is based on this approach.

Financial situation

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

How we work

All IFRC 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 the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

The IFRC's vision is to 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.



The IFRC's work is guided by Strategy 2020 which puts forward three strategic aims:

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 nonviolence and peace.

Find out more on www.ifrc.org

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