

Communication and Fundraising Package

ILOT

1-year commemoration

Use of ICRC content for public communication and fundraising on ILOT

- For fundraising-specific questions, please liaise with your ICRC Resource Mobilization focal point.
- For communications-specific questions regarding ICRC's activities in ILOT, please liaise with your ICRC Communications focal point in country or with Movement communication advisor in NAME, Megha Sandhu.

ICRC will: endeavor to provide timely, relevant support and two-way communication, appreciating that speed of response matters.

Please feel free to use all the content in the content pack in your communication and fundraising efforts keeping donor intent in mind – please credit the work of the ICRC accordingly.

To note, this document is an internal document explaining the humanitarian situation and ICRC response in ILOT. It is designed as background and a source of information; however, the whole document should not be shared outside ICRC, IFRC and National Societies.

Information in this document is subject to change. Final official data on ICRC operations is published in the ICRC's Annual Report.



BACKGROUND & SITUATION

October 7th, 2024, marks one year since the onset of high intensity hostilities, including the Hamas attacks in Israel and taking of hostages, and the subsequent sustained military campaign and associated humanitarian consequences in Gaza. October 7th comes at a period of sustained intensity in the context. Hostilities in Gaza continue with no clear end in sight.

In the wake of these attacks, entire communities were torn apart, homes were destroyed, and the level of human suffering surged. 101 hostages remain held in Gaza with no information about their fate.

What followed was a prolonged period of heavy fighting and destruction in Gaza, with civilians bearing the brunt of the violence daily. The ongoing conflict in Gaza continues to bring immense suffering to civilians. Tens of thousands have been killed and many more have been injured. Families remain separated, homes have been reduced to rubble entire neighborhoods destroyed, and hospitals are no longer functioning. The destruction of vital infrastructure, the collapse of essential services, and the trauma of relentless violence have left communities struggling to survive. The suffering of civilians in Gaza a year into the crisis is extremely dire. With winter approaching, conditions will deteriorate, and needs will increase.

In Gaza, the destruction is overwhelming, and the need for all parties to respect international humanitarian law (IHL) has never been more critical. Civilians should not have to live in fear of attack. Hospitals, ambulances, and humanitarian workers must be protected. These are not merely guiding principles—they are lifelines for those enduring unimaginable hardships. The safety of civilians, the release of those taken hostage, and safe and unhindered access to humanitarian aid are basic requirements that must be facilitated. Parties to the conflict bear a legal and moral obligation to facilitate this. Without the agreement and facilitation of parties to the conflict, humanitarian actors can't do their work and civilians will continue to suffer.

In the West Bank a higher tempo of Israeli Security Forces (ISF) operations in northern West Bank is causing casualties, infrastructure damage, and restricting access to medical care. Displaced civilians need temporary shelter under safe conditions and require the protection of healthcare services.

In northern Israel and the occupied Golan Heights, ongoing daily rocket and missile strikes from Lebanon, as well as armed groups in Yemen and Iraq, continue to cause widespread displacement and uncertainty, with tens of thousands unable to safely return home for months, leading to economic and social challenges. Widespread airstrikes in southern Lebanon civilians have caused hundreds of deaths, displacement, and destruction. Health facilities in Lebanon are overwhelmed, and families are being separated while fleeing the fighting. In collaboration with the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, the ICRC addresses urgent needs, focusing on displaced populations and strained healthcare systems. The ICRC remains committed to providing aid, including medical supplies and essential items, to those affected throughout the region.

Every effort must be made to ensure that civilians are protected, and that humanitarian assistance reaches those who need it most. Upholding IHL offers a way out of this cycle of violence, and it is in the interest of all parties to a conflict—and all of humanity—to ensure these laws are respected. Respect for IHL preserves the basic principles of humanity now and into the future.

KEY MESSAGES

Hostages

Acting as a neutral intermediary, the ICRC has facilitated the release of more than one hundred hostages, including during the seven-day agreement in late November, when 105 hostages were released (prior to the ceasefire +4 were released). We regularly publicly call for the release of all hostages, for their humane treatment, for access to medical care, and for them to be able to communicate with their families. We continue to call for ICRC to be allowed access to visit them, consistent with ICRC's mandate. We also reiterate our demand to be given access to the hostages in our bilateral and confidential dialogue with Hamas.

Families of the hostages are enduring unimaginable suffering, as they wait for news from their loved ones. We acknowledge their agony and expectations for us to help. However, we cannot force the parties to the conflict to allow the ICRC access to visit them. The agreement of the concerned parties is an essential precondition for the ICRC to carry out its work.

Families are in anguish not knowing the fate of their loved ones being taken hostage. The taking of hostages is strictly prohibited under international humanitarian law, and anyone held must be immediately and unconditionally released. Nothing can justify the horrific attacks that Israel suffered

Destruction of critical infrastructure and essential services

A year of hostilities in Gaza has left essential infrastructure devastated. Electricity, water systems, and healthcare services have been severely impacted, leaving civilians without access to crucial resources such as power, clean drinking water, sanitation, and medical care. Many displaced communities are living in makeshift shelters with poor hygiene conditions, increasing the risk of diseases such as Polio and others.

The ICRC continues to scale up its support in provision of health services, and to electricity and water services, but safe conditions must be in place to allow effective humanitarian work. All parties to the conflict must ensure civilians have access to essential supplies and humanitarian organizations must be granted safe and unhindered access to provide assistance.

Healthcare

Gaza's healthcare system has been decimated. Hospitals are overwhelmed, prioritizing weapon-wounded patients, while those with chronic illnesses and infectious diseases like Hepatitis A and chickenpox struggle to receive care. The risk of a large-scale outbreak is growing due to poor sanitation and the lack of clean water.

Medical staff are working under extreme conditions with limited supplies, and many facilities have been forced to close due to ongoing hostilities. Without reinforcement and additional supplies, the health situation will worsen.

Search for the missing

Since October 7th last year, almost ten thousand requests have been made to the ICRC by families searching for missing loved ones in Gaza. While more than 2,200 cases have been resolved, thousands of families are still waiting for news, enduring the agony of not knowing whether their relatives are alive or dead.

The ongoing hostilities make it nearly impossible for ICRC teams to conduct search activities on the ground. Families remain separated, often unable to reach one another, and are living in fear as they hear explosions and violence near their homes.

Displacement

The level of displacement across Gaza is catastrophic. Over 90% of the population has been forced to flee their homes over the past year.¹ Entire families are living under tarpaulin or amidst rubble, having been displaced multiple times—often seven, eight, or nine times.

With nowhere to return to and no time to think about rebuilding, people are focused on getting through each hour, seeking safety and necessities such as food and water for their families.

Families have been forced to flee their homes repeatedly, often in the dead of night, carrying only what they can. Nowhere in Gaza feels safe. Civilians are constantly on the move, searching for some semblance of security.

The stress, anxiety, and fear of what the next day may bring is debilitating. Many are in a weakened state due to malnutrition, lack of medical care, and constant displacement, putting them at an increased risk of death from infections and diseases.

This disruption will have long-term consequences for an entire generation of children growing up amidst war, unable to access learning or a sense of normalcy.

Respect for the dead

Families have the right to receive news of their loved ones and bury them according to their traditions. Under IHL, the dead must be treated with dignity, properly managed, and efforts must be made to search for, collect, and document them to prevent people from going missing. The ICRC stands ready to act as a neutral intermediary for facilitating the dignified management and transfer of dead bodies, subject to agreement among all parties and in consultation with the ICRC, and consistent with ICRC standards.

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Hostilities and Humanitarian Consequences

Families are enduring relentless explosions, with their lives under constant threat. Many are living in makeshift shelters or under tarpaulin, with no privacy, limited access to basic services, and no certainty about their future. The emotional and physical toll of displacement and fear is overwhelming.

The unsanitary conditions, waste, and lack of clean water are making infectious diseases more common, and the overall health of Gaza's population is deteriorating rapidly.

Respect for International Humanitarian Law (IHL)

International humanitarian law exists to protect civilians during war and ensure that, even in conflict, basic humanity is preserved. The ICRC urges all parties to respect these laws, protect

¹ [UN figures](#)

civilians, and allow humanitarian workers to provide aid safely. Ignoring these laws only worsens the suffering and makes a resolution to the ongoing hostilities more difficult.

The long-term consequences of this conflict will affect millions of people. Civilians are paying the highest price, and urgent efforts are needed to end the violence and address the humanitarian crisis.

International humanitarian law (IHL) was created to move beyond division and violence, serving as a vital path to peace. It offers a framework that can protect human dignity and reduce suffering in conflict, while ensuring that the principles of humanity prevail even in war. IHL is not just a set of rules but a crucial tool for limiting the impact of conflict on civilians and creating conditions that allow peace to be built. By adhering to IHL, warring parties can pave the way for reconciliation, reduce human suffering, and foster a more stable and peaceful future.

Crisis in Education and Daily Life

Children in Gaza have been out of school since October last year. The education sector has collapsed, leaving no functioning schools or educational resources. What should have been a summer break has turned into nearly a year without formal education.

Access to education must be protected: While international humanitarian law (IHL) does not explicitly guarantee a right to education, many rules ensure that education can continue during armed conflict and protect students, teachers, and schools from hostilities. Education is essential for helping people rebuild their lives with dignity and is often one of the first things communities request when access is disrupted. In prolonged conflicts, humanitarian efforts focus on survival and rebuilding lives, addressing more than immediate physical needs. Education supports the Fundamental Principle of humanity by respecting individuals' dignity, acknowledging their fears and hopes, and helping them shape their future.

Physical rehabilitation

Many civilians caught in the fighting have become disabled or lost limbs, leaving them highly vulnerable both now and in the future. Losing a limb has devastating physical, mental, and social consequences. Physical rehabilitation is crucial for helping them regain independence, build resilience, and improve their quality of life.

Regional escalation

The recent surge in attacks across Israel, the Occupied Territories, Lebanon, and Yemen, combined with ongoing hostilities in Gaza, is causing immense suffering and raising fears of a wider regional conflict with the potential for devastating humanitarian consequences. The ICRC urgently calls for de-escalation and the immediate protection of civilian lives.

The ICRC expresses grave concern over the growing threat of broader conflict in the region. Concrete measures must be taken to limit the impact of hostilities on civilians, and the ICRC calls on the international community to act swiftly to prevent the situation from spiraling into a full-scale regional war.

ICRC RESPONSE

In Gaza

Basic Needs:

- Provided cash assistance to over 64,000 vulnerable individuals, mainly internally displaced persons (IDPs), to cover basic needs.
- Distributed essential household items (blankets, hygiene parcels, tarpaulins) to 1.3 million+ IDPs sheltering in non-UN shelters.
- Supplied high-nutritional food bars to 199,500 individuals, including children, pregnant women, and displaced people.

Essential Services

- Helped 95,000 IDPs access clean water by supporting repairs to a seawater desalination plant, doubling its production capacity.
- Helped over 1,300,000 people in and around Gaza City, Deir Al-Balah, Beit Lahia, Khan Younis, and Rafah regain access to clean water by supporting local service providers to operate, fuel, and repair critical water and wastewater facilities and networks and carry out water trucking across the Gaza Strip.
- Built 3935 latrines in southern Gaza, improving sanitation for 17,700 IDPs.

Health

- Red Cross Field Hospital (Rafah): Deployed two surgical teams specializing in treating weapon-wounded patients, providing over 29,000 consultations, admitting 865 patients, and performing 1400+ surgical procedures. We also help manufacture crutches and repair wheelchairs using recycled materials.
- Support to European Gaza Hospital: From November 2023 to October 2024, helped absorb an influx of severely wounded patients, conducting more than 3,500 surgeries and 1,500 emotional support sessions for patients and caregivers.
- Delivered essential medical supplies (antibiotics, surgical instruments, mobility aids, etc.) to 19 local health facilities.

Polio vaccination campaign

The International Committee of the Red Cross has been expressing concerns for months regarding the health, living, and sanitation conditions in the Gaza strip. It is urgent that people have access to adequate care, including vaccinations, as well as adequate food, water, and sanitation.

After the first confirmed case (in more than [20 years](#)) as well as reports of other suspected cases emerging in Gaza, the ICRC welcomes the vaccination campaign to ensure that the population of Gaza is protected against Polio.



“People in Gaza have been facing appalling living conditions for months. They need far better access to health care more broadly, as well as food, clean water, and sanitation facilities. It’s the only way to reduce the risk of communicable infections and diseases.”

Sandy Inglis, Senior Medical Officer at the Red Cross Field Hospital.

The ICRC is supporting this effort by using its outpatient department (OPD) at the Red Cross Field Hospital in Rafah as a vaccination point for the local health authorities and WHO & UNICEF from 5-8 September 2024.

While this is a welcome measure, the public health and sanitation situation in Gaza remains dire, and civilians are still at risk of multiple infectious diseases.

Restoring Family Links

- Received 9,565 requests from family members seeking to clarify the fate and whereabouts of their loved ones through existing channels and additional emergency hotlines in Arabic, Hebrew, and English. So far, 2,812 cases have been closed as family contact has been re-established.
- Answered 68,000+ calls from civilians seeking help regarding lost contact with loved ones, evacuation of injured people, or assistance with food, water, and electricity.

Weapons Contamination Awareness

- Partnered with the **Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRCS)** to raise awareness on the risks of weapons contamination, reaching 800,000 people via SMS and organizing safety sessions for impacted communities.

Dignified Treatment of Human Remains in Gaza

- Distributed 45,000+ forensic items (face shields, body bags) to support the dignified management and identification of human remains.

Colleague's diary

Our colleague Hisham went on a trip to the north of Gaza:

"Traveling along Gaza's coastal road, we were surrounded by nothing but rubble—no signs of life, not even animals. As we approached Gaza City, a few people appeared, but our colleagues who had stayed in the north looked visibly older, drained by months of hardship.

In three hospitals—Al-Ahli, Indonesian, and Al-Awda—the devastation was overwhelming. They were severely overstretched, running low on supplies, and surrounded by destroyed neighborhoods. Doctors told us about the immense challenges they face, relying on volunteers and scraping by on a day-to-day basis. Distant explosions were constant, a grim reminder that the violence hadn't stopped.

The scene felt post-apocalyptic. Streets were filled with stagnant water and sewage, and the people we passed moved like shadows, without expression, resigned to their harsh reality. Makeshift graveyards appeared in unexpected places, with simple pieces of cardboard or plastic marking the graves.

As we left, the sounds of explosions intensified. Roads were impassable, with giant craters filled with sewage. Entire areas, like Jabalia refugee camp, had been reduced to nothing but rubble, a haunting symbol of the destruction that had consumed Gaza."

In Israel

Hostage release operation

- Acting as a neutral intermediary, the ICRC helped facilitate the release of two hostages on 20 October and another two on 24 October. In late November, during the seven-day agreement, the ICRC facilitated the release of a further 105 hostages.

Health

- Provided technical and financial support to the Israeli Trauma Coalition to deliver stress management training for frontline health workers.
- Organized mental health and psychosocial support training for the Association of Rape Crisis Centres, focused on victims of sexual violence in armed conflict.

Dignified Treatment of Human Remains in Israel

- Distributed 1,200 forensic items and collaborated with Israel's National Centre of Forensic Medicine and IDF Mortuary Affairs to strengthen their capacity for managing missing and deceased cases in armed conflict.

MEDIA / ASSETS

Updated content ahead of the 1-year mark can be found on our WeTransfer portals

- [From October until July](#)
- [From July onwards](#)

LINKS

- [The ICRC urgently calls on all parties to protect civilians](#)
- [Protection of civilians urgently needed as violence escalates](#)

Update Accounts

- [ICRC on X](#)
- [ICRC in ILOT on X](#)
- [Eloi Fillion, ICRC Regional Director for NAME on X](#)

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