



Jyoti Prakash/ICRC

NEWSLETTER

ICRC NEW DELHI MAY-AUGUST 2015

FOREWORD



The final quarter of 2015 marks many firsts for us at the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). In the month of September our colleagues in Bangladesh supported a five-nation International Cricket Tournament for people with physical disabilities. The team from India competed alongside teams from Afghanistan, Pakistan, England and the host nation, Bangladesh. The carnival-like atmosphere and enthusiastic all round support to the event in Dhaka is a reminder of the importance of using sporting initiatives and events to work on issues of inclusion for people with disabilities. Back home in the southern Indian city of Chennai, Jess Markt, ICRC's basketball wheelchair coach from Afghanistan conducted a packed ten days of wheelchair basketball clinics for classifiers, coaches, and referees, as well as camps for both beginners and more experienced players. These were the first technical classes for any adaptive sport ever conducted in India. The Wheelchair Basketball Federation of India (WBFI) and the ICRC have been partnering in a grassroots campaign to build awareness and participation in wheelchair basketball in India since last year.

New challenges constantly arise demanding new responses, including in humanitarian action. Most organizations

including the Red Cross movement need to develop their capacity to innovate and adapt. Thus, another very exciting initiative, also a first for the ICRC globally, is the upcoming Enable Makeathon, organized under the Innovation Initiative of the ICRC. The Innovation Initiative aims to encourage pioneering solutions to humanitarian challenges by harnessing the creative capacity of ICRC partners to respond to the needs of vulnerable persons in emergency situations. The Enable Makeathon aims at forming partnerships with the disability sector – people with disabilities and service providers - corporate sector, not-for-profit organisations, academic and public policy institutions, students and the government, to help create devices that will specifically address for the needs of rural people with disabilities worldwide.

Globally, the ICRC is committed to working with and enhancing the capacities of those implementing programmes related to disability. It has been sponsoring candidates from different countries for specialized courses in Indian institutes. This edition of the newsletter, features stories of some ICRC-sponsored students who are currently undergoing training at Mobility India in Bangalore. The ICRC sees tremendous opportunity in Indian institutions and centres of excellence and continues in its efforts to benefit from their experiences and best practices on disability issues.

The regional delegation is organizing the Health Emergencies in Large Populations (H.E.L.P.) Course in November. This two-week training seeks to enhance the capacity of humanitarian workers in public health, relief in disasters and complex crises. Since 1986 approximately 3,400 professionals have attended the H.E.L.P. course at different venues around the world, conducted in partnership with the World Health Organisation, research institutions and universities. The H.E.L.P course is being organised in India for the very first time this year and will cater to the South Asia region.

In a first of hopefully many similar collaborations, the New Delhi delegation took its decade-long relationship with the Centre for United Nations' Peacekeeping (CUNPK), India a step further by co-hosting a regional seminar on "Contemporary Challenges in International Humanitarian Law (IHL) Related to UN Peacekeeping Operations". Serving military and police officers participated from India – including Generals of the Indian Army who have variously served as UN Force Commanders - and from eight Asian countries, their vast experiences from diverse peacekeeping missions enriching

... continued on back page



ICRC

A DECADE OF TRAINING JOURNALISTS ON THE ETHICS OF REPORTING EMERGENCIES

For Aditi Gyanesh who works for a leading national daily in Ludhiana in Punjab, attending a recently organized ICRC workshop for young journalists was a stimulating experience. "Sessions with experienced journalists who have witnessed conflicts and its reality has opened up new perspectives to see things while reporting. It was very important to know how far we can report on the basis of personal experiences during such conflicts." Aditi is one of the many journalists to have benefited from the ICRC's media workshops aimed at highlighting how to report emergencies.

Across the globe, the ICRC organizes workshops for media practitioners to raise

experiences of working in some of the most difficult contexts in the world and indeed, it's been an enriching experience," says Adebayo Olowo Ake, Communications Coordinator of the ICRC delegation in India. These recent interactions are designed to primarily sensitize the participating journalists on the basics of International Humanitarian Law (IHL), the ethics of reporting conflict and natural disasters, safe practices and the management of dangerous assignments.

"It's been observed that sometimes the lack of knowledge of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights Laws prevents reporters from drawing all necessary elements of analysis required

of the subject in the reporters mind," says Surinder Oberoi, a former journalist who is now Communication and Political Advisor to ICRC in New Delhi.

Capturing highlights of one of such ICRC workshops in Hyderabad in 2008, Nava Thakuria of Assam Times had this to say. "Apart from the lack of awareness, the other important reason to carry out the task of educating journalists is to ensure their safety during conflicts." Highlighting the same, Oberoi adds, "For the last 10 years, in each of these sessions, I have always reiterated that the golden rule of reporting from conflict and other emergency situation is – Be careful of your own safety and don't become a news item yourself!"



Murali Krishnan, Radio Broadcaster for Deutsche Welle, addressing the journalists at a recently held two day Workshop on Ethics of Reporting in Emergencies, New Delhi.



A workshop for journalists on "Ethics of reporting in situations of emergencies" jointly organised by the ICRC and Women's Feature Service (WFS) in 2014

awareness on the important role of the media during emergencies. Over the last 10 years, more than 25 such workshops have been organized by the ICRC in different Indian cities. "We have been organizing workshops in collaboration with the Indian Red Cross Society and other partner organizations here in India where we share

to adequately report on conflict or violent situations. Having reported from conflict zones for several years before joining the ICRC, I have felt this void in my journalism career several times and hence when we interact with media professionals in these fora, the idea is to pass on some basics of IHL and increase the awareness

Over the last one decade, about 1000 journalists have attended these training sessions in India alone. The ICRC regional delegation in New Delhi has also facilitated similar workshops in Bhutan, Bangladesh and Maldives in the last few years.

ICRC HOTLINE FOR JOURNALISTS

Media professionals are often exposed to serious danger when reporting from war zones or other areas associated with armed violence. The ICRC operates a hotline enabling journalists, their families and the media organizations they work for to request assistance if they are wounded, detained or missing.

**ASSISTANCE FOR JOURNALISTS
ON DANGEROUS ASSIGNMENTS**
please get in touch with your nearest
ICRC delegation /office or use the
following contact information:

+41 79 2017 32 85
24 hours/day - HOTLINE



DID I GO TOO FAR THIS TIME?

In my 11 years of being with the ICRC, the most exciting moment dawned as I was offered a chance to undertake a short mission to Yemen. Going to a war engulfed country comes with its own challenges and risks but for the aid worker in me, this was an opportunity to get an on-ground experience about how it feels to work in a conflict zone. But making a decision to step out of my comfort zone and board a plane to Yemen was easier said than done. I still remember the stern expression on my father's face in total rejection of me going to a war torn place. But I had made up my mind and I wanted to do it.

I arrived in Djibouti on 29th April, 2015. While disembarking the commercial plane, my eyes caught the sight of the ICRC plane that would take me to Sana'a in Yemen. Due to the extremely volatile security situation, we had to await a window of opportunity to fly into Yemen's capital. It was therefore only a few days later that I along with a group of 13 staff members could actually get into the country. It was very encouraging to see how committed and dedicated people are to work for a humanitarian cause despite knowing the difficulties and the risks involved. The first glimpse of the Sana'a Airport shall stay etched in my memory for a very long time. A deserted airport, a damaged runway and a couple of burned down planes with a handful of our colleagues was all we could see.

Even while travelling from the airport to the office, empty streets and closed markets greeted us. After spending the first few hours acquainting myself with

my new colleagues at the office, I left for my assigned residence and settled down in a room which was supposed to be my home for the next three weeks. Just as I was settling down, a huge explosion rattled the neighborhood and knocked me down. By evening, the explosions grew louder and more intense. Being a light sleeper, you can imagine how I felt hearing heavy gunfire and explosions in the background. It kept me awake for the whole night. Lying awake on my bed for hours, all I could think of was, did I go too far this time?

Humanitarian work in a war zone is stressful and challenging. Living conditions can be really difficult at times. I was lucky to live in an apartment with a generator and regular, albeit limited, fuel supply. We did, unlike a large number of Sana'a population have power- at least for a handful of hours every day, otherwise the electrical supply was almost non-existent. A big challenge was strict security rules which massively restricted our movement. Besides official and work related movements, we were only allowed to move from our residence to the office and back.

The most personally striking experience of my stay in Yemen was the level of acceptance and respect that the ICRC as an organization and the Red Cross emblem had among all the Yemeni people, the authorities and the key societal figures. There were frequent explosions and clashes but for all staff members working in this difficult situation, the positive perception of the Red Cross emblem gave us nevertheless a sense of security.

Although the needs in Yemen are immense, we are still able to bring much needed assistance to people affected. The emotional satisfaction that I was part of this humanitarian effort overshadowed the risks of working in a war zone.

The rhythm of the work kept me mentally occupied that after a few days, I became more accustomed to the situation around.

Before I could realize, my three weeks had been over.

Bearing in mind the instability in the country and the potential closures of roads and airports at any time, I was worried that I would be able to return to India on time and that I might miss my sister's wedding. I was however fortunate enough that I could complete my mission and board the flight back home on time. Yet for many Yemenis stuck inside or outside Yemen, leaving the country or entering it remains far more complex than it was in my case.

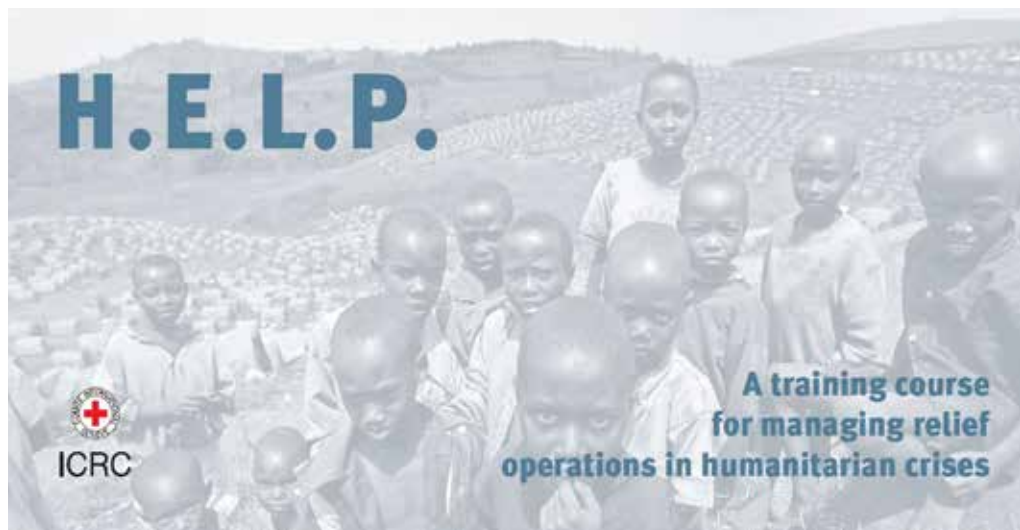
This mission for me was a very good learning and challenging experience. Irrespective of all the risks involved and having left behind my family in my home country, I realized it was an assignment that was worth doing. Sometimes you have to go that far to feel the satisfaction of having touched lives.

Arshid Amin Khan, Communication Officer for ICRC in India, who returned from a one month mission in Yemen.

HEALTH EMERGENCIES IN LARGE POPULATIONS

Health Emergencies in Large Populations (H.E.L.P.), a two-week training course for humanitarian workers on public health and relief in disasters and complex crises, will be conducted in India for the first time from 29 October- 08 November 2015. Started in 1986 by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), in partnership with the World Health Organization (WHO) and the University of Geneva, to professionalise the provision of humanitarian assistance during emergencies, the course has been delivered in more than 10 countries including China, Japan, Kenya, Iran, USA.

The course provides a multidisciplinary learning experience of humanitarian relief in disasters and emergencies through a public health approach taking into account emerging issues globally. Participants in the H.E.L.P. Course will include public health professionals such as medical doctors, nurses, nutritionists, environmental engineers, epidemiologists and public health practitioners, as well as operational managers in humanitarian action. Those



with experience in humanitarian response in disasters and entrusted with the responsibilities of the management of humanitarian assistance or emergency programmes are encouraged to apply.

This regional H.E.L.P. Course in India is being organized by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), in partnership with

the Public Health Foundation of India, and in collaboration with WHO, South East Asia Regional Office (SEARO). For more information:

<http://blogs.icrc.org/new-delhi/2015/08/27/h-e-l-p-specialised-course-disaster-response-relief/>

INNOVATION

Formed over a year ago in Geneva, the Innovation Initiative aims to foster innovation as an institutionally embedded process within the ICRC. Currently, the initiative has spearheaded several pilot programmes in many delegations around the world. Such pilots range from redesigned body bags to telemedicine

solutions, quick beneficiary registration tools, to virtual reality tools for training. The focus is on providing better and more efficient services to beneficiaries.

In India, we are primarily channeling our energies towards organising and implementing a 'Makeathon Event' to be

held in Bangalore at the end of this year. This event aims at forming an ecosystem of partnerships with corporates (especially technology and medical companies), impact investment firms, social enterprises, non-for-profits, academic and public policy institutions, students as well as with Indian authorities and various State Governments to prototype devices that will address locomotor disabilities in rural India.

The Makeathon has been envisioned as the launching pad for the creation of the latest generation of devices that can be deployed globally by the ICRC to address the needs and issues of beneficiaries affected by locomotor disabilities, while making these same instruments affordable for the 'bottom-of-the-pyramid' demographic worldwide.

To know more -

www.redinnovation.org
www.enablemakeathon.org

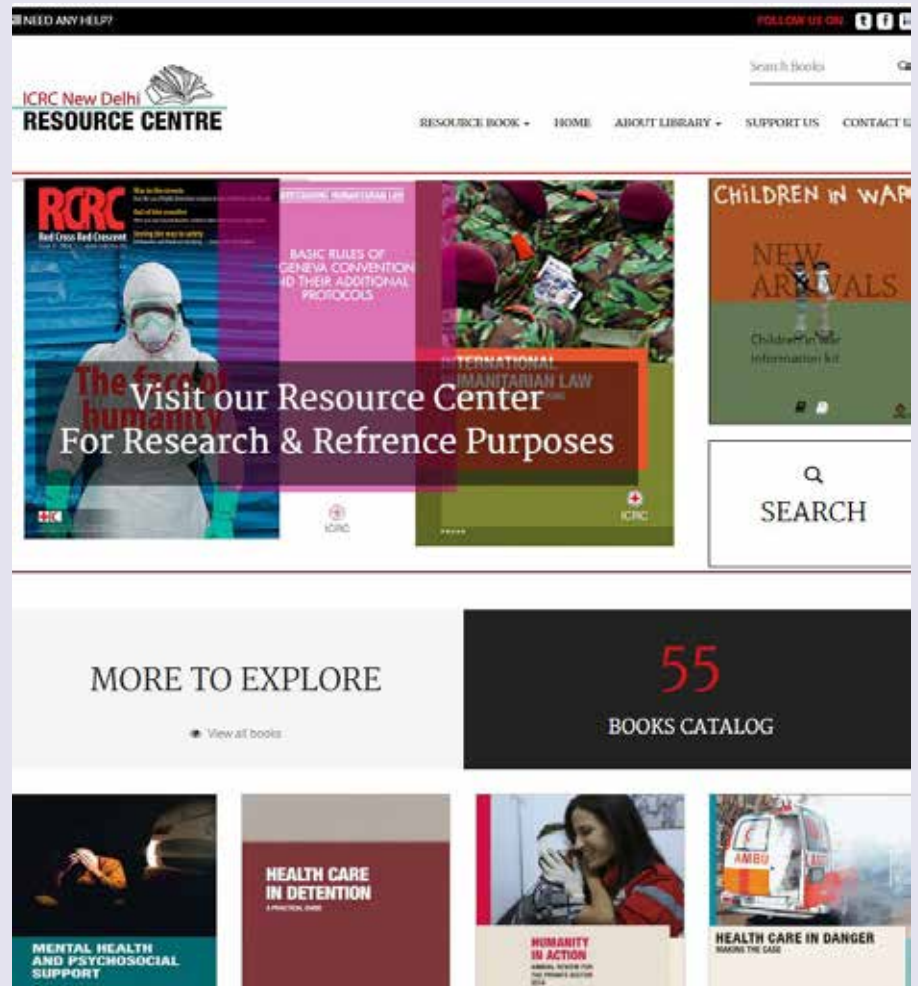


ICRC DOCUMENTATION CENTRE GOES ONLINE

The ICRC Resource Centre is a facility with approximately 1,850 publications on International Humanitarian Law (IHL), International Human Rights Law (IHRL), International Affairs and several other related subjects. It has a flexible user-friendly system and is one of the specialised libraries for conducting research in the field of international law.

It has been acknowledged widely by the academic community and by researchers in India. The ICRC Resource Centre is designed to facilitate research into IHL, IHRL, International Affairs and other related subjects through a Subject Classification System, which is very simple and flexible. The users find the publications/documents of their interest in the shortest possible time.

For more visit – <http://icrcndresourcecenter.org/>



ICRC NEW DELHI BLOG GOES HINDI



Since the launch of the ICRC New Delhi Blog in 2014, the interaction of our readers with this platform has been tremendous and growing by the day.

It has been particularly heartening to know that many on the ICRC New Delhi Blog community are keen to read our blogposts in Hindi and other South Asian languages

as well. In the wake of the recent Nepal earthquake, the ICRC New Delhi blog was providing earthquake-related updates in Nepali, along with English.

On 1st July, this blog launched its Hindi page and we are pleased to inform our readers that we are posting key blogposts on a diverse range of issues of humanitarian concern in Hindi too.

For more about Hindi Blog, visit – <http://blogs.icrc.org/new-delhi/hi/>

To know more on how to engage with us through our blog:

For more visit :

<http://blogs.icrc.org/new-delhi/wp-content/uploads/sites/93/2015/05/BlogLT-hp-final.pdf>

“THE CONTENTMENT THAT YOU GET BY HELPING SOMEONE WALK AGAIN IS BEYOND MONETARY REWARD...”



Several ICRC sponsored candidates from foreign countries are currently being trained as P&O professionals at Mobility India, Bangalore

“Just at the time when I was about to sit for my final exams for Diploma in Prosthetics and Orthotics (DPO), I got the news that my family in Aden, Yemen had to flee from our home. Our country was engulfed in war and our city – completely ruined and devastated,” says Mansoor Ali Ahmed Thabit who is finishing his DPO at Mobility India (MI) in Bangalore. In the last few months, Mansoor has been able to speak to his family only sporadically and is desperately looking forward to return to his home country and help his fellow citizens.

“I don’t know how to thank ICRC because now having completed this course, I am better trained in prosthetics and orthotics (P&O). The only solace is that when I go back, I will be better skilled to help people whom war might have left injured and with some form of disability in my country,” adds Mansoor. He is one of several ICRC sponsored candidates from foreign countries who are currently being trained as P&O professionals at MI Bangalore, the the only training institution in India recognized by the International Society for Prosthetics and Orthotics (ISPO).

Mohammed Abdalla Mohammed Musa who hails from Khartoum, Sudan, and recently finished his three year ISPO Cat 2 training is equally looking forward to return to his country. He says, “Once I am back. I will be the first one to be professionally trained to deal with cases of upper limb prosthetics in my country and it means a

lot to me. The contentment that you get by helping someone walk again is beyond money and job security.”

While for Mansoor and Musa, the three year course at Mobility India has been a journey of learning new skills, for Amal Mohammed Hamood Mohammed coming from Taiz city in the Yemen, it’s been a life changing experience. She says, “It took me two long years to convince my family to allow me to travel overseas and study this course. Having never stepped out of my city, coming all the way to Bangalore in India and catching up with my English speaking skills along with the regular studies and technical work in workshop, it was a tough but a very rewarding experience.” Till date 27 Men have been trained in Yemen and most of them have limitations in providing rehabilitation services to women with disabilities because of cultural barriers. “It was a long dream of MI, Bangalore and ICRC to train the women professionals from Yemen which was achieved in this academic year. Three women have been trained and are ready to serve their country and 5 women are getting trained. It has been enriching experience for us.” says Ritu Ghosh, Deputy Director Training of MI, Bangalore

Talking about ICRC’s engagement in the scholarships, Robertangelo Ciccone, Physical Rehabilitation Project Manager of ICRC in India says, “ICRC globally has provided scholarships enabling a number

of candidates to be trained in P&O or physiotherapy at recognized schools in different countries. One of such recognized centres for training is Mobility India, one of its kind in India. We have been working closely with MI, Bangalore for the provision of rehabilitation services for more than 10 years now. The students who come to get trained here get adequate training on theoretical knowledge and clinical practice and we hope that when they return to their home country, they go back as better practitioners, to fulfil the huge disability needs in their country of origin.”

Over the years, support from the ICRC, either through scholarships or through formal training programmes, has led to more than 450 people becoming P&O professionals and more than 70 becoming physiotherapy professionals.

The physical rehabilitation projects of ICRC projects are designed and implemented to strengthen the overall physical rehabilitation services in a given country. Efforts are constantly made to increase the number of qualified local professionals by providing and sponsoring training in prosthetics, orthotics and physiotherapy and by conducting short-term courses to update and refresh the skills and knowledge of those already working in those fields. Presence of trained professionals enhances access to services and increases the chances of rehabilitation facilities continuing to function in the long term.



Students receive theoretical knowledge as well as clinical practice during their training at MI, Bangalore

FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATIONS AND RELIGIOUS LEADERS: ESSENTIAL PARTNERS IN HUMANITARIAN ACTION

Should the ICRC be talking to religious circles and, if so, how can the organization do it without compromising its neutral humanitarian mission? From Iraq to the Vatican, from Mexico to Jerusalem, from the Central African Republic to Bangladesh, the ICRC is engaging with religious leaders and faith-based organizations.

Know more - <https://www.icrc.org/en/document/faith-based-organizations-and-religious-leaders-essential-partners-humanitarian-action>



MYANMAR: FUEL HELPS DISPLACED PEOPLE IN RAKHINE TO COOK THEIR FOOD

More than 100,000 people displaced in 2012 by intercommunal violence in Rakhine State Myanmar are still living in camps. Their movements outside the camps are restricted. They have limited access to resources, something even as basic as fuel for cooking. Since June 2014, the ICRC has been providing fuel sticks made from local rice husk to families in camps in the townships of Pauktaw and Myebon, close to the State capital of Sitwe.

Know more - <https://www.icrc.org/en/document/myanmar-fuel-displaced-people-rakhine-cook-their-food>

MALI: WOMEN WEAVE WIRE FENCING IN TIMBUKTU

The ICRC is helping women's associations and collectives in Timbuktu set up livelihood projects. One such group is this association of 10 women, mainly widows, left destitute by the conflict in Mali. With ICRC support, they have started a cottage industry making wire fencing – an item much sought-after by both arable and livestock farmers.

Know more - <https://www.icrc.org/en/document/mali-women-weave-wire-fencing-timbuktu>



HELPING MOTHERS IMPROVE CHILD NUTRITION IN SOMALIA

Somalia has been ravaged by decades of armed conflict which has disrupted livelihoods and thrown the social fabric into disarray. Malnutrition is a widespread problem among children in Somalia. ICRC committed to support Kismayo Hospital's inpatient therapeutic feeding programme (Stabilization Centre) after the untimely departure of Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) from Somalia in August 2013. It began a similar programme at the Baidoa Regional Hospital in May 2015.

Know more - <https://www.icrc.org/en/document/helping-mothers-improve-child-nutrition-somalia>

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC: A SIMPLE INJECTION CHANGES LIVES

An ICRC-sponsored vaccination programme is helping to save the livelihoods of agro-pastoralist communities in the Central African Republic.

Know more - <https://www.icrc.org/en/document/central-african-republic-simple-injection-changes-lives>



PUBLICATIONS



HUMANITY IN ACTION

Humanity in action 2014 explains the ICRC's wide-ranging activities and how it spends its money, gives an overview of the impact of ICRC action during the year and introduces some of the people who benefited.

Know more - <https://www.icrc.org/eng/resources/documents/publication/p4235.htm>

NEWS RELEASE



ICRC PRESIDENT SAYS THE WORLD MUST WAKE UP TO THE SUFFERING IN YEMEN

The President of the ICRC, Peter Maurer, has said he is appalled by the suffering he has witnessed in Yemen. It is estimated that, since March, nearly four thousand people have been killed and over 19,000 injured. 1.3 million have been forced to flee their homes. The ICRC has doubled its operational budget for Yemen in the course of 2015, to 56 million Swiss francs. Know more - <https://www.icrc.org/en/document/icrc-president-says-world-must-wake-suffering-yemen>

VIDEOS



ANIMATED VIDEO OF RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT RESTORING FAMILY LINKS WEBSITE

A simple 60-second video that helps explain how the familylinks.icrc.org website and National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies can help families find a missing relative. Watch it and share it with your networks – it could help someone find a missing loved one. Know more - <http://blogs.icrc.org/gphi2/2015/05/12/animated-video-of-red-cross-and-red-crescent-restoring-family-links-website/>

PHOTO GALLERY



PHILIPPINES: REBUILDING LIVES IN ZAMBOANGA COMMUNITY

The villagers in the coastal community of Layag-Layag, in Zamboanga City, depend on seaweed farming for their income. When the fighting broke out in September 2013, they were among the first to be affected – families were displaced and livelihoods were lost. To help them start over, we supported the construction of a community solar still drier through a cash-for-work activity for the seaweed farmers. Know more - <https://www.icrc.org/en/document/philippines-rebuilding-lives-zamboanga-community>

FEEDBACK

THANK YOU FOR READING OUR NEWSLETTER

We would love to hear your thoughts and feedback.

Write to us at newdelhi@icrc.org

FOREWORD ... continued from page 1

the discussions and deliberations over the two days.

The Regional Delegation continued to support other delegations whenever and in whatever way possible as we realise that conflict zones are in a constant need of professional human resources. The

newsletter thus features an article by an Indian colleague on his experience from the field.

Mary Wertz
Head of the Regional Delegation
New Delhi

For Private Circulation only