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**The Humanitarian Response
of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement
to Improve the Health of Migrants**

*Presentation by Patrick Huser
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*On the occasion of the World Refugees Day,
at the Tehran University of Medical Sciences and
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Policy on Migration

17th General Assembly

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Nairobi, 2009

*Working with and for vulnerable migrants is one of the **long-standing traditions of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement**. It is rooted in its **Fundamental Principles and universal character as well as in its volunteer and community basis**. However, patterns and issues associated with migration change over time. We should, therefore, continually **examine our ways of working with and for migrants** to ensure that our action remains **strong, coherent, and mindful of crosscutting issues**.*



Red Cross Red Crescent activities on migration and displacement in Middle East and North Africa

SNAPSHOT 2021



Fundamental Principles

of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

- ✓ **Humanity**
- ✓ **Impartiality**
- ✓ **Neutrality**
- ✓ **Independence**
- ✓ **Voluntary service**
- ✓ **Unity**
- ✓ **Universality**



Migrants

- ... become **victims of conflict dynamics**
- ... **lose contact** and are **separated from their families**
- ... go **missing** or **die**
- ... fall injured due to **weapon contamination**
- ... are exposed to **forced recruitment** or other **abuses**
- ... are **exploited** and endure **gender-based violence**

The Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

... reiterated on many occasions the **increasing scale of humanitarian needs related to migration**

... works to respond to the needs of migrants, including the **access to basic health services**

... uses its **operational presence along migration routes**

... provides **medical and forensic assistance**

... supports **authorities**

... improves the **access to water, hygiene and food** in emergencies.



The ICRC and Migration

The ICRC responds to the needs of vulnerable migrants in a variety of ways, including by

... conducting **visits** in immigration **detention facilities**

... **protecting family links**

... clarifying the fate and whereabouts of **missing people** and supporting their families

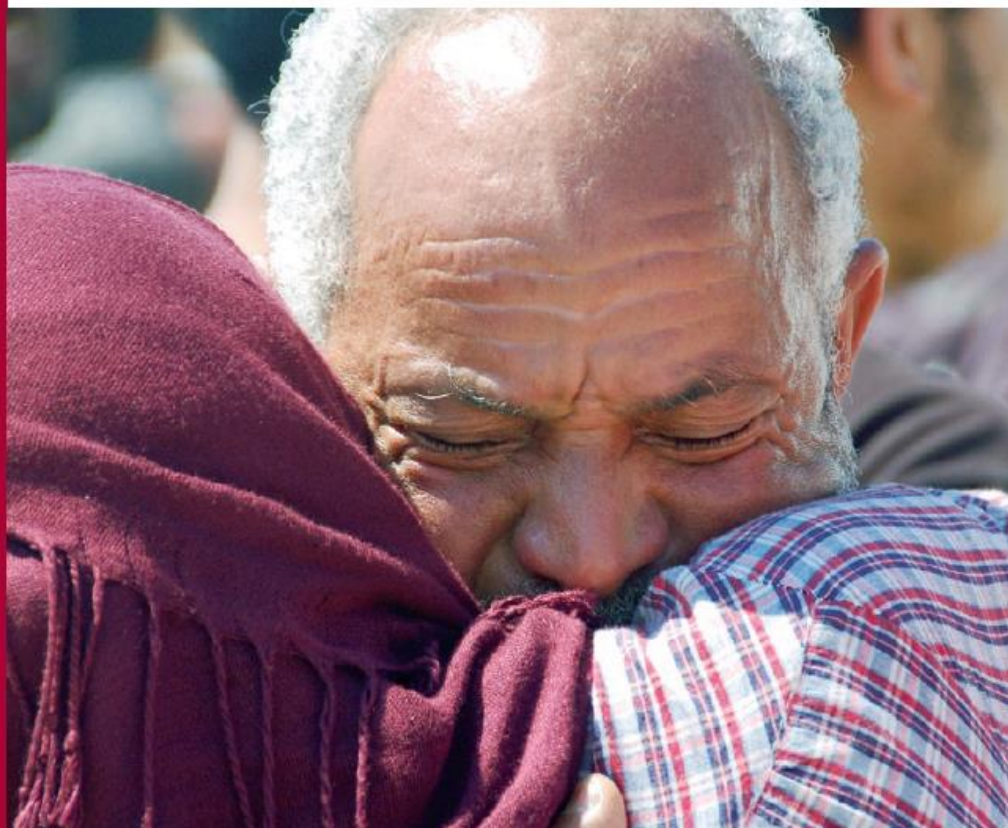
... ensuring proper and dignified **handling of human remains** and other forensic services



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MISSING MIGRANTS AND THEIR FAMILIES

THE ICRC'S RECOMMENDATIONS TO POLICY-MAKERS



The ICRC in Iran

The ICRC works with and for **migrants in Mashhad since 2013**.

Collaboration with the **IRCS** and the **Society for Recovery Support (SRS)**.

Provides **essential services** to vulnerable residents in **Golshahr district** and the outskirts of Mashhad. Most of are **undocumented Afghan migrants**.

Services include **primary health care, mental health care, harm reduction (addiction), physical rehabilitation** and the **protection of family links**.



Humanitarian Response and Contingency Plan

In 2022, the IRCS, the ICRC and the IFRC put in place a **contingency plan** to respond to the **immediate humanitarian needs** of new Afghan migrants.

This included a **Covid-19 vaccination campaign** for migrants and enhancing the **capacities of the IRCS to protect family links**.

Also, **other national societies** from countries across the migratory routes were approached to **prevent that migrants went missing or families separated**.



Regional Humanitarian Response – Examples

On regional level, the Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies have also scaled up their efforts to **facilitate the access to basic services** and **humanitarian assistance** to migrants, irrespective of legal status.

In in 2021, the ICRC in partnership with the **Jordanian Red Crescent Society** supported the national Covid-19 vaccination campaign of the Jordanian Ministry of Health. This included the **deployment of 30 mobile vaccination teams**.

Conclusion

The **specific vulnerability** of migrants must be factored into **national public health plans**.

Outreach strategies must ensure that migrants have **access to information**, are included in **prevention measures** and have **equal access to health-care services**.

Barriers that prevent migrants from being **included in humanitarian responses** and from accessing essential services need to be **addressed with the appropriate authorities**.



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The Red Cross and Red Crescent movement hence stands ready to **support state authorities** and **develop inclusive public health programs** and to **adapt the health systems** to the specific health needs of vulnerable migrants.