



# fieldnotes

JUNE 2025

Middle East Humanitarian  
Crisis Appeal

## Wearing the **Red Vest** in a time of conflict

Around the world, humanitarian workers put their lives on the line every day in the name of humanity. Perhaps nowhere is this more apparent than in the occupied Palestinian Territory. Every day, members of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement—nurses, ambulance workers, dispatchers—put on the red vest knowing that they may not return home to their loved ones. Humanitarian workers are no longer being guaranteed the protection they should receive under International Humanitarian Law, but they continue providing vital support every day, despite the risks. **And it's important for us to bring their stories from the field to you.**



**17,000+**  
volunteers & staff

are working for the PRCS in West Bank and Gaza in areas such as ambulance services, hospital care and disaster response.



WEST BANK

## Being there for children in need

Inside the tent, a five-month-old in a fuzzy pink onesie gets a checkup from **Dr. Odeh**, one of the dedicated doctors at the Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRCS) medical post in Tammoun, West Bank. If it were not for this health clinic—the only one available in the area—little Tabarak Basharat would not have the medical attention they need at this vulnerable age. Dr. Odeh and the rest of the PRCS team must be able to provide a wide range of health services to help all ages who come to the clinic, from treating injuries and providing maternal and newborn care, to visiting older adults and leading community health information campaigns.



*Dr. Omri Bani Odeh*

Angela Hill/Canadian Red Cross



Angela Hill/Canadian Red Cross



*Ibtisam Qundos*

Angela Hill/Canadian Red Cross

Working with children with disabilities requires a high level of care and resources in the best of times. For children in West Bank, who have so much uncertainty and fear in their daily lives, it's even more important for them to have care, stability and routine. In the PRCS branch building in Tubas City, staff and volunteers like **Ibtisam** work with children with disabilities to ensure they are not left behind. Along with education in math, arts and other school courses, the team provides support for these students to learn life skills that could allow them to lead full and independent lives.

# • Delivering care to communities

Living in the West Bank, **Yasmeen** witnessed many people in her community who were injured but could not access the medical care they desperately needed. Instead of losing hope, she realized the importance of learning first aid, and courageously stepped up to join the PRCS as a volunteer. Now, one year later, she is a first responder at a medical post in Al-Fara'a refugee camp, helping to deliver healthcare, including home visits to older adults, people with chronic disease, pregnant women and new mothers.

*“When our people need us, we leave everything to be able to help... I love humanitarian work.”*



Angela Hill/Canadian Red Cross

*Yasmeen Qasem*

Dedicated members of the PRCS are a lifeline to people in all kinds of need. **Samar** is both a nurse and the PRCS Community Work Coordinator in the Tubas district. Samar and her team are engaged in delivering healthcare and community engagement including home visits with the older adults, pregnant women and new mothers, and those with chronic disease. During these times of increased hostilities and danger, they deliver food parcels and other emergency supplies to people trapped in their homes.

*“I was drawn to working with the Red Crescent because it was the first organization operating in Tubas...I feel very happy when I provide services to people and when these services are delivered in the right way.”*



Angela Hill/Canadian Red Cross

*Samar Sawafata*



*Ahmad Harashe*



**Ahmad** has helped a woman’s family deliver her baby...over the phone—just another example of the adaptability needed to be a dispatcher in the PRCS Emergency Call Centre in Ramallah. “We must be creative at all times. This job makes you creative,” he explains. He must often provide medical advice over the phone as it can be extremely difficult to get ambulances and medical care where they need to be. “At this time there are a lot of checkpoints,” he laments.

*“Sometimes we cannot send the ambulance to the city or the town or the village. If we can’t send the ambulance we try to manage and treat the case on the phone... if you do a good thing, if you can help people—it’s something great.”*



Ahmad’s  
team  
dispatches  
**emergency  
services** to  
both West  
Bank and  
Gaza



GAZA

## • Providing lifesaving services

**Terry** is a Canadian physiotherapist from Ontario who answered the call for help in Gaza. Working at the Red Cross Field Hospital in Rafah, she has helped people who have become disabled due to the conflict to walk once more, one step at a time working alongside Palestinian hospital staff.

She recalls one patient, a man who hid in a closet for nine days with his injuries, scared to venture out to seek treatment. When he eventually made it to the field hospital, he was suffering mentally, emotionally, and physically. Over the course of four weeks, Terry worked with him, and through encouragement and reassurance, his mobility improved. “Today we had him up on one crutch and he was able to walk a couple of times along the physio tent and he smiled, and he was very happy, and it was just a joyful moment,” she recounts.



*Terry Wilson*

*“As physiotherapists, we support the needs of people who have experienced trauma or any other patients that have arrived at our hospital for care.”*



*Hamid El Courdy*

Every time **Hamid** steps into his ambulance and pulls out of the station, he knows it may be his last. Having had 30 members of the PRCS killed in the line of duty since hostilities escalated in October 2023, it takes great courage and sacrifice to leave his loved ones to go help others—and there is no shortage of people in dire need.

*“Never in twenty years have I seen anything like this. I keep going for humanity. I will not stop helping people. There is no other choice.”*

**Anastazia** promises one of her young patients that she will find him some chocolate; a small reprieve from the child's reality at the Red Cross Field Hospital. "The psychological trauma is quite palpable. Many of these children have seen the devastation of their homes and the suffering and loss of loved ones."

Her strongly held conviction that healthcare is a fundamental human right drives her to be there for her patients' physical needs, mental needs, and to treat them with care and humanity. That's why the Canadian emergency nurse has deployed to Gaza not once, but twice.

She worked alongside local staff to not only help patients recover from their acute injuries, infections and illnesses, but also helped them manage chronic diseases.

*"Despite dealing with such dire circumstances, our team works tirelessly to provide the medical care and emotional support needed in this location."*



*Anastazia Rybak*

ICRC

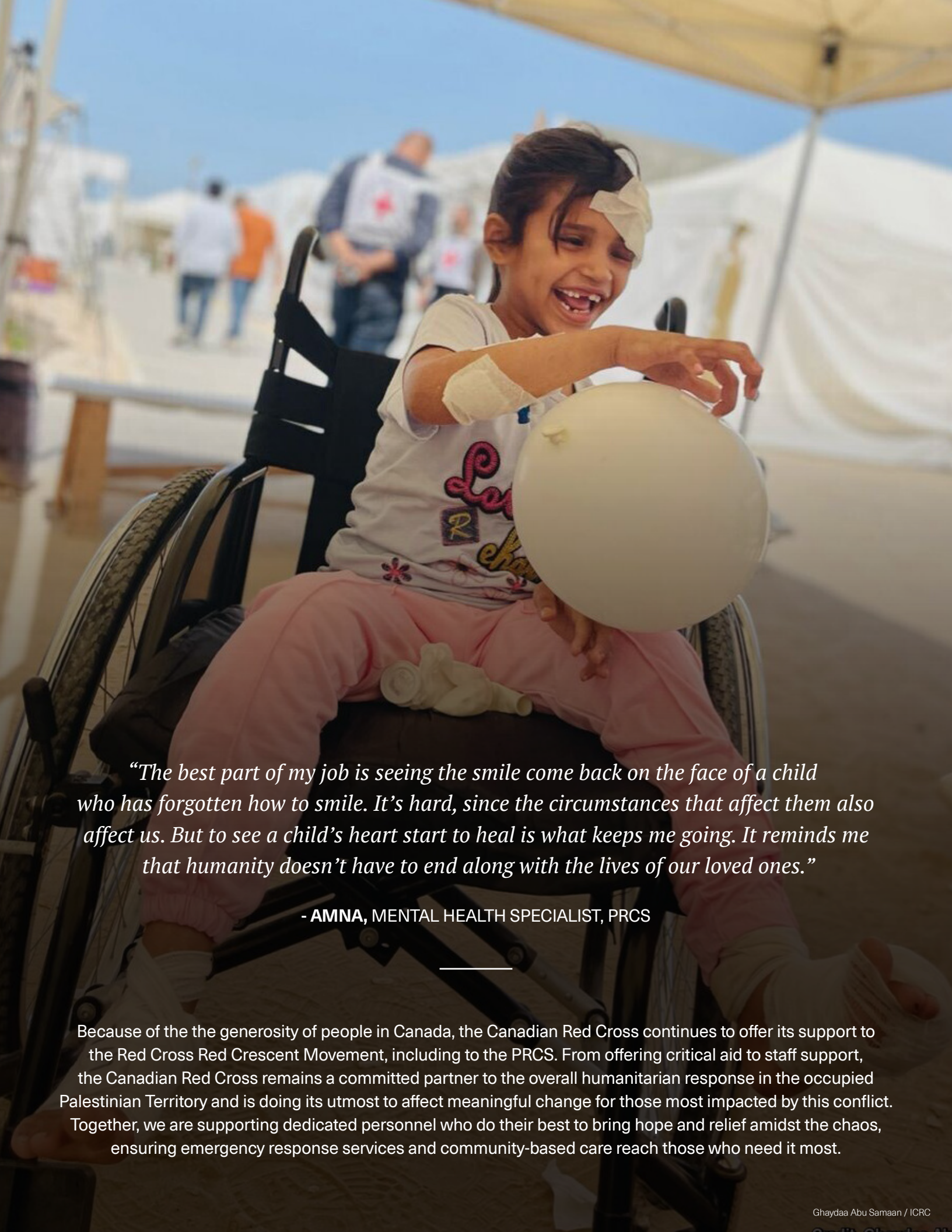


Olav A. Saltnes / Norwegian Red Cross



**3,823**  
surgical  
procedures  
and  
**80,241**  
patient  
consultations

provided at the Red Cross  
Field Hospital between May  
9, 2024, and May 19, 2025.



*“The best part of my job is seeing the smile come back on the face of a child who has forgotten how to smile. It’s hard, since the circumstances that affect them also affect us. But to see a child’s heart start to heal is what keeps me going. It reminds me that humanity doesn’t have to end along with the lives of our loved ones.”*

**- AMNA, MENTAL HEALTH SPECIALIST, PRCS**

Because of the the generosity of people in Canada, the Canadian Red Cross continues to offer its support to the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement, including to the PRCS. From offering critical aid to staff support, the Canadian Red Cross remains a committed partner to the overall humanitarian response in the occupied Palestinian Territory and is doing its utmost to affect meaningful change for those most impacted by this conflict. Together, we are supporting dedicated personnel who do their best to bring hope and relief amidst the chaos, ensuring emergency response services and community-based care reach those who need it most.



**These stories from the front lines of humanitarian response are made possible because of people like you—our supporters—who share our values and ensure the Canadian Red Cross contributes where and when it can towards providing vital humanitarian aid.**