

We need humanitarian workers in this difficult situation. Gaza has been exposed to three wars in 6 years. Life here is a constant emergency. Working with PRCS to help the sick and injured, you feel at least that you are able to improve things in some small way.



Imad is 34 years old and has been volunteering as a first responder with the Palestinian Red Crescent Society (PRCS) since 2006. He is a refugee who grew up in Deir al-Balah in the Middle Area of the Gaza Strip. Imad volunteered with PRCS to help those injured in demonstrations, until he was injured on 9 April while working as a member of a PRCS team east of al Bureij refugee camp.

“Just after 5 o'clock there was suddenly shooting from the barrier and I was hit in my right leg. We got out of the ambulance straight away and went to hide behind it [on the opposite side from the Gaza barrier]. At this point, the paramedics who were with me put a bandage on my leg to stop the bleeding and moved me to an ambulance and to take me to Al Aqsa Hospital in Deir Al-Balah. I was in Al Aqsa Hospital for about 30 minutes to receive first aid before they moved me to Al-Quds Hospital in Gaza City. From there they transferred me to Shifa Hospital. In Shifa I had surgery. Doctors told me that if I hadn't been able to have this surgery I would have lost my leg.”

Imad reports that during his 10 years working with PRCS, the teams he has worked with have often been targeted and he himself previously sustained some minor injuries.

After initial surgery, Imad had further operations to remove the bullet and to receive a skin graft. He had to rest for 50 days after his surgery, which he found frustrating:

“It’s difficult to be limited in your movement when you are used to being active. I miss my work and volunteering, and I miss playing football.”

Imad has been receiving physiotherapy rehabilitation from Médecins Sans Frontières in Gaza. Now, despite some improvements, he still faces difficulties.

“My leg is better but I still suffer from pain and numbness and I can’t walk more than 500 metres. Worse is the fear. I’m afraid to go back in an ambulance and I’m afraid to go back to work in the field. As long as I’m unable to return to the field I’ll continue my work as a trainer in first aid and international humanitarian law for first responders. But I want to get better and go back to working with the ambulances. For me, it’s a duty that I feel to our patients and to Gaza.”

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