

# SOUTH-EAST ASIA AND THE FAR EAST MYANMAR

## MYANMAR

### PROTECTION

2,793,701

### ASSISTANCE

1,873,599

### PREVENTIVE ACTION

323,259

### COOPERATION WITH NATIONAL SOCIETIES

13,925

### OVERHEADS

326,920

### GENERAL

212,618

**TOTAL EXPENDITURE Sfr 5,544,022**

Sporadic armed clashes along Myanmar's eastern border, political tensions and the soaring cost of essential goods continued to beset the country in 2000. Health care and other social services remained sadly inadequate to meet the needs of all the population, especially people living in remote border areas.

In June 2000, the International Labour Organization voted to adopt measures against Myanmar if the government did not meet its obligation to eliminate the use of forced labour. The resolution entered into force in November.

Also during the year, the United Nations Secretary-General appointed a new Special Representative for Myanmar, who met government and opposition leaders in Yangon to encourage a process of reconciliation. The UN called on the international community to support this move.

The ICRC resumed its activities in Myanmar in 1998 after a three-year absence. It subsequently increased its field presence, focusing on visits to detainees, prosthetic/orthotic services,



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and primary health care and sanitation projects along the Thai border.

### Help for detainees

The ICRC continued its visits to detainees in prisons, labour camps and "guest houses" according to its standard procedures, which include private interviews with detainees of its choice. Delegates assessed the treatment of detainees and their material and psychological conditions of detention, thereafter engaging in a constructive dialogue with the authorities on any measures to be taken. Between May 1999, when the programme began, and the end of 2000, a total of 36 places of detention holding an estimated 36,000 inmates were visited.

Basic drugs and small items of medical equipment were given to prison medical services and to referral hospitals outside the prisons. This assistance was intended primarily for detainees unable to receive support from their families. Books and games were also distributed. For security detainees, monthly family visits were financed by the ICRC.

To enable detainees throughout the country to communicate with their families, the ICRC, in cooperation with the Myanmar Red Cross Society, further extended its Red Cross message network. The training programme set up to that effect reached National Society staff and volunteers from more than 100 townships.

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## Assistance for internally displaced people and vulnerable groups

In Kayin state, displaced families received agricultural tools, vegetable seed and other material assistance. Work was carried out to give some villages along the Thai border improved access to safe drinking water.

In Shan state, a pilot health promotion project implemented with the Danish Red Cross since 1999 continued. The emphasis was on community-based primary health care, mainly preventive measures and immunization programmes, and on providing access to safe water. Community health workers and auxiliary midwives were also trained.

Amputees from border areas were transferred to the prosthetic/orthotic workshops in Mandalay and Yangon, where they were housed and fitted with artificial limbs and other appliances. The workshops are run by the Ministry of Health with ICRC support. Most of the beneficiaries were mine casualties, but leprosy patients were also fitted. In addition, the ICRC ran training courses for prosthetic and orthotic technicians.

## Spreading awareness of humanitarian law

The ICRC gave presentations to a number of state and township branches of the National Society in order to increase awareness of international humanitarian law. Audiences usually comprised representatives of most ministries as well as Red Cross volunteers.

Dissemination material on Red Cross principles and activities and the rules of behaviour in combat were produced in five national languages.

## Working with the Myanmar Red Cross Society

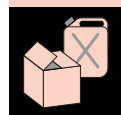
In addition to its tracing and prosthetic activities carried out jointly with the Myanmar Red Cross, the ICRC worked to

support the Society's institutional development. Activities in this area were conducted together with the International Federation.

## IN 2000 THE ICRC:



- visited on one or more occasions approximately 36,000 persons held in various places of detention, registering 1,295 security detainees;
- distributed recreational and educational items and, as needed, basic medicines to supplement the stocks of prison medical services and referral hospitals;
- arranged for the exchange of 7,941 Red Cross messages to help detainees restore contact with their families;
- financed transport for 3,847 people making family visits to detainees;



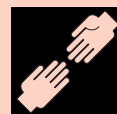
- provided vegetable seed, agricultural tools and other assistance for 200 internally displaced families along the Thai border in Kayin state;



- extended its health promotion project in Shan state, helping 500 families to build latrines, setting up systems to provide some 7,000 people with access to safe water, giving support for visiting midwives, building 2 health posts, developing an immunization programme, and organizing health education sessions in 7 villages in the east of the state;
- conducted surveys and prepared the ground for health promotion projects in Kayin and Mon states, and began water and sanitation work in Kayin state;



- provided equipment, supplies and financial and technical support for prosthetic/orthotic centres in Yangon and Mandalay producing prostheses for civilian amputees;
- contributed to creating a pool of trained prosthetic/orthotic technicians in Myanmar;
- in a joint programme with the Ministry of Health and the Myanmar Red Cross, identified amputees in border areas, organizing their transfer to centres where they could be fitted with artificial limbs and providing accommodation and food during the treatment period;



- provided training for staff and volunteers of the Myanmar Red Cross Society in 110 townships with a view to establishing a sustainable network for the exchange of Red Cross messages between detainees and their families;



- gave a presentation on Red Cross principles and activities to all directors of prisons and labour camps in Myanmar, and gave several similar presentations to State Peace and Development Council representatives and the police force in Kayin and Mon states, and to Myanmar Red Cross staff and volunteers in Shan and Kayin states;
- funded the National Society's production of dissemination material.



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