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BULLETIN

REGIONAL DELEGATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS IN NAIROBI



An ICRC truck passes by IDP's tents as children drink from ICRC installed tap stand at the Eldoret showground camp

Rising to the Challenge of Post Electoral Violence

The violence following the elections in Kenya provided many challenges for the ICRC, both on a personal level and as an institution. The manner in which we were able to respond from the very start of the crisis is indicative of the dedication of our staff, both Kenyan and international as well as the support we received from our Headquarters in Geneva.

In discussions with the Kenya Red Cross prior to the elections, we had looked at a number of possible scenarios, but the suddenness of the violence and the extent of the humanitarian consequences demanded a very rapid response.

In the first few days, national and international staff had to cut short holidays and deal with the problems posed by the security situation and lack of transportation to return to work. We also had to overcome issues such as concerns about the safety of family members or personal feelings about the situation to ensure we lived up to our role as a neutral independent humanitarian organization.

Within hours of the outbreak of violence, discussions began with ICRC headquarters in Geneva about the needs in the country and the most appropriate ICRC response. By January 3, the ICRC

had launched an international appeal for 15 million Swiss Francs to provide assistance to the displaced and others affected by the violence.

Within a few days, Geneva had dispatched an additional 15 expatriates to support the Nairobi delegation, including, administrators, field coordinators, logisticians, a Flying Surgical team and even forensic experts. This was the first deployment of the ICRC's newly created Rapid Response Team and our experience will provide valuable lessons for other operations worldwide.

The other major challenge we faced along with the Kenya Red Cross, was the rapid evolution of the situation and the ensuing changes in humanitarian needs. As the Kenyan public and other international organizations responded with donations of food and other material, we adapted our assistance. As the displaced moved from one area into another and concentrated in larger camps, we adapted particularly in terms of water and sanitation needs. As emergency assistance reached those displaced we were able to extend our help to others affected by the violence. We will continue adapting to these changing situations for some time to

come, to ensure the most appropriate response to the real needs of those who need our assistance.

The events following the elections have caused great suffering in Kenya. Our response to this suffering has allowed us to strengthen our relationship with the Kenya Red Cross, to demonstrate tangibly our operational capacity, and to provide real assistance, in the form of medical supplies and services, food and essential household items, water and sanitation, protection and tracing services to those Kenyans who needed help from the Red Cross.

Pascal Cuttat

Head of Regional Delegation

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Views from the field: ICRC partners with GSU in training cadets on IHL

by Anne Mucheke

Over 690 cadets from the Kenya Army's General Service Unit (GSU) attended a one day training facilitated by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) at the GSU training school. The annual exercise is held to sensitise the military on International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and ensure that it is respected in case of war. The training was held in conjunction with the Kenya Red Cross (KRC).

Cadets were briefed about the operations of the ICRC and KRC. Participants expressed their sentiments on the training which ranged from excitement, surprise at the elements required of them under IHL to practise, to appreciation over the knowledge received.

There were practical sessions demonstrating how to conduct a search on humanitarian vehicles at a roadblock as well as treatment of casualties in a war situation.

Eileen Chepkosgei

"I did not have prior knowledge about the ICRC but now I know what the organisation is about and how the different components of the movement work. Of particular interest to me was the session on handling wounded casualties and how the ICRC works to assist those wounded at war."

Njoroge from Thika

"Most of what we are doing here (in ref-

erence to the mock practical sessions) seems a little simplified. I am sure in a real combat situation; things are different due to the serious nature of war. However, I am glad you reinforced the issue that women and children should be handled differently and given protection during combat."

There was also information given on the Red Cross emblem, its use and application and why the emblem should be protected at all times.

Sylvester Otinga summed up this session thus; "I have learned how to identify the Red Cross through the emblem and to treat their personnel differently from civilians in the case of war. However, it is important to verify their identification to ensure they really are from the Red Cross. Though difficult, I will have to implement what we have learned on the treatment of wounded and sick."

The real test of this training is in the field - when the cadets graduate and go on to serve their country. Although things are quite different in the field as one constable at the training school told **The Bulletin**, the prior training is important.

"Nine years ago as a cadet, I was part of the demonstration teams at the ICRC dissemination session held here. Having graduated and worked in the field, you realise you need this training beforehand when you go out there. For instance when it comes to protection of women and chil-

dren, we have to distinguish between those who are sometimes conduits carrying arms for war and those who are innocent. There are different ways of treating civilians and combatants which must be applied."

In the field, we identify the ICRC as those who give first aid although I know they do much more than this. I know of many places where you are working in although I have never encountered the Red Cross directly in action in the field."

Its popularity over the years has seen the annual exercise integrated into the training curriculum of the cadets with more opportunities opening up for the ICRC to offer the sessions.

In Kenya, the ICRC works with the police and security forces to develop a culture of respect and compliance with universal humanitarian principles and human rights law in policing. At the end of the exercise, **Constable Mwakio** concluded; "The training is invaluable to us for various reasons. First, it will help the cadets identify the ICRC, perhaps not now but in future when they are officers and out there in the field. Secondly, it is important to know the rules that govern war and how to handle casualties as some of their own men can be caught up in the process."

We are very grateful to the ICRC for their continued cooperation in conducting this noble exercise."



Senior communications officer Anne Kilimo at a dissemination session with GSU cadets

Kenyan Orthoprothesists receive ongoing support from ICRC affiliated special fund for the disabled

by Bernard Barret

"People arrive here in wheelchairs and we make them walk again," says 26 year Bonface Omondi, an Orthoprothesist at the Kikuyu Orthopaedic Rehabilitation Centre on the outskirts of Nairobi. "I feel happy making people walk, its like a miracle."

Some of the patients at the Kikuyu centre have undergone amputations because of accidents, others are afflicted by congenital diseases or polio. "Sometimes it is difficult to convince the patient to accept their situation," says Omondi, "this is often the case with adults who have undergone amputation. The children are more resilient."

The Special Fund for the Disabled, affiliated with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has been providing assistance to the Kikuyu Centre in the form of material, artificial joints, specialized equipment and training.

Omondi is one of two Orthopaedic technologists from the Kikuyu Centre who have received specialized training at the Special Fund's African regional base in Addis Ababa. He attended a one month course on lower limb prostheses and hopes to be able to take part in the other four modules offered by the Special Fund in Addis. With Special Fund assistance, a third technologist is completing the equivalent of a university degree in Tanzania. The Kikuyu Centre is one of two rehabilitation centres in Kenya which receive support from the Fund.

The Special Fund for the Disabled (SFD) was created in 1983 to ensure the continuity of ICRC programmes on behalf of people disabled by conflicts and to support physical rehabilitation centres in developing countries. From its base in Addis, it provides support to physical rehabilitation centres in 17 African countries.

Although it is an independent organization with its own budget, the SFD receives logistical and administrative support from the ICRC. The SFD operates similar regional centres in Latin America and Asia.

In addition to the one month courses, the SFD in Addis has five ortho-prothesists to provide two week follow-up train-



Jacques Forget of the ICRC affiliated Special Fund for the Disabled and Bonface Omondi examine a prosthesis being prepared at the Kikuyu Orthopaedic Rehabilitation Centre Near Nairobi.

ing sessions twice a year at each centre. An SFD physiotherapist also travels to the centres to provide specialized training in physiotherapy for amputees.

Jacques Forget is the SFD ortho-prothesist responsible for Morocco, Tanzania, Somalia, and Kenya. He has been visiting the Kikuyu centre for two years. "I can see a big difference in the quality of the work. The orthoses and prostheses are much more resistant and they are better conceived."

"Patients will never feel totally comfortable with an artificial limb, it's not natural," he explains, "our job is to ensure they are the least uncomfortable as possible. It's a mixture of art and science. For example, we are working on evaluating and casting. The patient's measurements must be taken correctly, but then those measurements have to be transferred into the limb or brace."

Forget says his role as a trainer allows him to help a greater number of people. "Of course there are times when you are frustrated and you feel like jumping in and doing it yourself. You also miss the instant reward of working directly with

patients. But, if you take the time and keep insisting, it does pay off. It can make a huge difference in the lives of many people."

Bonface Omondi is completing the second of his two week follow-up training sessions with Jacques Forget at the Kikuyu Centre. "Jacques' visits have helped me improve my skills, particularly in casting and cast modification," he says.

Although he is a graduate of the Kenya Medical Training Centre, Omondi says the SFD training has made a big difference. "Because of its huge international experience," he explains, "the ICRC specialists can show us several approaches to different kinds of problems."

Karbururi residents curb soil erosion problem through a cash for work project

by Anne Mucheke



Community members in Moyale dig trenches which are then filled to prevent soil erosion during the cash for work project

Together, 205 households took part in the project for five weeks, an average of 100 people working on a daily basis. Each worker earned approximately 2200 KES, most of which was used to pay debts and purchase food items.

On 28th July 2007, the ICRC together with the community celebrated the accomplishment and officially handed over the tools to the village committee. The ceremony was attended by government representatives, civic leaders and NGO actors from the region.

The committee will follow up with the residents to ensure that trenches are regularly maintained, using the knowledge gained to continue curbing soil erosion.

The success of the project was evident when the Ministry of Agriculture replicated the idea and announced the start of a project on soil conservation with other NGOs showing an interest in carrying out similar projects in the area.

Additionally, morale is high among the residents, some of whom are preparing the land for the next planting season and are putting previously unused manure from their livestock to good use.

The ICRC has been operating in Moyale town since May 2007 in response to challenges of border conflicts between the residents of Moyale and neighbouring Ethiopia. Other projects intended to maintain the livelihood of residents in the region are currently under consideration.

A soil erosion control project should bring relief to residents of Karbururi village in drought and conflict-prone Moyale district.

The cash for work project initiated last July by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) provided a means of income to the population and rehabilitated farmland degraded due to clashes and drought.

Annual rains in Moyale fall between October and December (short rains) and April to May (long rains) and often bring destruction in the form of soil erosion. Karbururi village, once known for its high crop production, suffered low yields as a result of soil erosion, thus threatening the economic livelihood of the inhabitants.

The area also suffers threats of cross-border conflicts with the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) fighters as well as increased tension with the Gabra community in Marsabit, all in close range of the village. It is for these reasons that the ICRC identified the region as one in need of more stable food production and moved in to provide a long-term solution to the perennial problem of soil erosion.

"Having worked with the people of Karbururi on various projects to ease community tensions we realized that soil erosion is a major issue especially since the landscape is largely mountainous," says ICRC delegate Christa Utiger.

"Although there are other villages, we

choose Karbururi as it is the highest peak in the Sololo area. Erosion control has to begin at the top of the mountain. We felt this was a worthy cause and decided to involve the community in a project that would help ease soil erosion in the region", she adds.

An initial assessment was carried out and results recommended digging of terraces and construction of small dams in gullies using locally available materials. The ICRC held discussions with community leaders who proposed a rotating employment system to ensure that all households benefited from the project.

A government agricultural officer who had worked on similar projects was brought in as a consultant. A committee was established to take care of logistics. The members received training in soil conservation which they would use to train the rest of the community.

"The village committee ensured there was equal selection of manpower in terms of gender balance and guaranteed that those most in need participated in the project. Each household could only enrol one person. Sometimes other family members would help to complete the work faster as payment was done on a weekly basis," says Christa. Where tools were lacking for all the workers, the villagers used their own to complement those available.

ICRC Launches special initiative in response to Mount Elgon violence

by Bernard Barret

It is not up to us to judge the reasons behind the tension in the Mount Elgon District," says Caroline Rouvroy, the ICRC's Protection coordinator for Kenya. "The ICRC's only concern is the humanitarian consequences on the local population of the widespread violence."

"Many people are facing destitution, families have been separated, people have been wounded, some killed and others are missing," she says. "Displaced families lack food, shelter, money and clothes in a cold mountainous area. Without any means of generating income, people find themselves totally dependant on outside relief to survive."

The Kenya Red Cross Society has been present in the region throughout the recent troubles providing assistance to the displaced and tracing services for separated families. In May of 2007, through the KRCS, the ICRC provided emergency household items to 1,000 families.

When the number of displaced increased dramatically in late November, the ICRC dispatched a full time team to the area and provided one month's food rations in December through the KRCS to 6,700 households representing over 40,000 people.

At the same time, the ICRC's Headquarters in Geneva approved a special budget to respond to the situation in

2008. "Even if people are able to return in the near future, they will have ongoing needs," explains Rouvroy. "Many have lost their houses and all their possessions. They may not be able to return to self-sufficiency until the next major harvest in several months."

Although the Mount Elgon District was a main supplier of food for the surrounding

could provide them with some assistance. The resources of the host communities have been sorely stretched, local economies have been undermined and the cost of basic goods increased significantly."

Working through the KRCS which will handle the distributions, the ICRC will be providing food for several months, as well as essential household items such as blankets, kitchen sets, jerrycans, kangas, children's clothing, mats, tarpaulins and mosquito nets. "We will also look at providing seeds and tools or other means to allow people to generate income and thereby restore a sense of their own dignity," adds Rouvroy.

The ICRC is also establishing contacts with all parties to the situation in the Mount Elgon region. In accordance with its worldwide practices, the ICRC raises with them on a confidential basis, any concerns it may have concerning the protection of the population.

In support of KRCS activities to re-establish and maintain family links, ICRC staff are providing technical assistance for tracing and the exchange of Red Cross Messages. It is dispatching four of the trucks from its Nairobi logistics centre to assist in the distributions by the KRCS. It will also assist the KRCS in the production and broadcast of radio spots in Kiswahili promoting humanitarian principles and the Red Cross Movement.



Displaced families gather for a food distribution in the Mount Elgon District in late November.

regions, the security situation prevented farmers from planting in some areas, while in others, crops were left to rot in the fields as people were forced to flee.

"Some people have been displaced for many months and have depleted whatever reserves they may have had," she notes. "Those recently displaced have been forced to move further and further away, and many are no longer able to stay with relatives who

Tracing antenna opens in Eastleigh

Fatuma Olat fled from her homeland in Kismayo, Somalia in 1991 leaving behind her family and relations. 15 years later she was finally reunited with family members who had settled in Daadab refugee camp located in North Eastern, Kenya, thanks to tracing services offered by the Kenya Red Cross (KRCS).

"My neighbours and other friends introduced me to the Red Cross officers who helped me track down one of my sisters-in-law living in Daadab. We exchanged Red Cross messages and when I learned where they were, I was finally able to meet part of the family in 2006," she says excitedly.

Fatuma is one of the many beneficiaries of the tracing network in Kenya run by the KRCS and supported by the ICRC. In August last year, the two components of the Red Cross move-

ment jointly opened a Tracing antenna/office in Eastleigh estate in Nairobi.

It is hoped the office will increase awareness among the local refugee population in Eastleigh regarding the free service of restoring family links.

At the ceremony ICRC head of delegation Pascal Cuttat highlighted the role of urban refugees saying there had been a radical shift from the camp-dwellers who are being replaced by refugees in large cities, but they still need to locate their loved ones.

"There are many of us refugees who want to go to Egypt and America where our families live but we have no way of getting links to them. There has been a need for a consolidated base from which we can gather information and reunite with our families," says Fatuma. "This network will also empower the youth and

through word of mouth, other refugees living in this area will know they can go to the Red Cross to help them find their relatives," she adds.

At the opening ceremony, Abbas Gullet secretary General of the KRCS said this was a significant event in the calendar of the Red Cross which has invested considerable efforts in tracing activities for the Somali refugees since 1991.

"Our role is to alleviate the suffering of refugees by providing links to their loved ones. In opening this tracing office we shall be strategically placed to provide our services to as many refugees as possible, a majority of whom live here in Eastleigh," said Abbas.

The tracing office is located in the 3rd floor of the Sunrise shopping mall complex in Eastleigh. Once a lower middle class suburb in the heart of Nairobi, Eastleigh is now a thriving



Fatuma Olat at the opening of the tracing office in Eastleigh

business region attracting an estimate 10,000 refugees. Somali refugees make up the bulk of that number. In fact the suburb is fondly known as "Small Mogadishu".

University of Zimbabwe wins seventh International Competition on IHL

by Anne Mucheke

A team of three students from the University of Zimbabwe trounced 12 other teams from across the continent to win the seventh International Competition on International Humanitarian Law (IHL) held in Arusha, Tanzania. University of Zimbabwe is one of the only two universities in Zimbabwe which teach law and in past moot courts; neither campus has made it to the finals. Haramaya University from Ethiopia came in second place.

The Competition is organised by the ICRC with the assistance of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) and ran from 24th Nov to 1st December. Its aim is to expose students to IHL and humanitarian action through training, simulation and advocacy. The competition was opened by the Minister for Justice in Tanzania, Hon Mary Nangu, and the ICRC Head of Regional Delegation Pascal Cuttat.

Dennis Byron, President of the ICTR, said the competition enabled students to obtain an insight into IHL at a practical level "empowering future leaders of the legal profession" with a knowledge of, interest in and respect for IHL.

"This competition is an eye-opener and exposes the students to practical experiences on the workings of the ICRC, INGOs and the field of IHL," said Happhas Zhou, a law lecturer at the University of Zimbabwe.

Each team of three contestants participated in five preliminary rounds followed by a final round in which the two top teams

competed. The debates were carried out before a jury panel consisting of four ICTR representatives from Defence and Chambers and five ICRC representatives for the preliminary rounds. The finals took place in a trial chamber of the ICTR where the two winning teams battled it out before three judges from the ICTR and three ICRC representatives.

Zimbabwe won the final round taking home a perpetual trophy which they hold until next year's competition. Two of their best speakers were awarded a three month sponsored internship at the ICTR.

Other teams that participated were University of Nairobi, Catholic University (Kenya), Uganda Christian University (UCU), Kampala International University (Uganda), University of Mauritius, Jos University (Nigeria), Fourah Bay University (Sierra Leone), University of Dar es Salaam (Tanzania) and National University of Rwanda. Countries like Mauritius and Lesotho were participating for the first time in the competition as were Haramaya and Catholic Universities.

The students were unanimous in stressing that the competition fostered a great interest in IHL and was very enjoyable. Some mentioned that they would like to work in the field upon completing their studies. "Clearly, it was an unforgettable experience for us all and gave us an opportunity for hands on experience about IHL.

We are really grateful to the ICRC for this opportunity," said Linda Ngesa, a participant from Catholic University,

ICRC's Communications Co-ordinator Len Blazey who also oversees the competition noted that the teams exhibited a higher standard as compared to previous years. "There was a noticeable improvement across the universities in the students' level of knowledge of IHL, which is encouraging for the teaching of the discipline in the region," he said.

The students had the added benefit of attending an ongoing ICTR symposium on the legacy of International Criminal court for tribunals for Africa which allowed them to interact with the judges and staff.

"Working in conjunction with the ICTR symposium this year added a lot for the students and has furthered the ICRC's cooperation with the tribunal in making this annual event bigger and better than in previous years," said Len.



The winning team from University of Zimbabwe after a gruelling session

Catholic and Nairobi university teams win national competition on IHL

Catholic University of Eastern Africa (CUEA) was almost time barred from submitting their application for the national competition on IHL held in Nairobi. With only a day to the deadline, the trio of Faith Odhiambo, Beryl Amonit and Linda Isabel Ngesa called the ICRC offices and requested to be given extra time to submit their application for the competition.

On the day of the contest, they wowed the panel of judges and other students and were declared one of the two best teams to represent Kenya at the international leg in Arusha, Tanzania.

"They were well coordinated, had great teamwork and had the knowledge at their

fingertips. Not only did they responded to questions upfront, but gave good legal responses. Clearly, this team knew why they came, which was to win," says Faith Cheruiyot, a communications officer with the ICRC.

This is despite the fact that the trio representing Catholic University had not taken a course in IHL. The course is taught as an elective discipline in the second semester of 4th year which they are yet to take. Additionally, the college was a first time entrant to the competition which is now in its 7th year.

University of Nairobi was the other team chosen to represent Kenya in the international competition. An all male

team comprising Hillary Kiboro, Charles Munyua and Festus Kintoti worked their way to the finals through their outstanding performance. Nairobi University has consistently sent a team to the finals since their debut performance.

Linda Ngesa from Catholic was declared best speaker of the preliminary rounds in Arusha. "This was a humbling moment for me and I believe that honour was meant for the entire team. We had a lot of team effort which got us where we were," says Linda. She adds that the competition was quite helpful in building their oratory skills preparing them for the future as lawyers...

Pastoral beekeepers acquire training on better methods of honey production

by Anne Mucheke

Pastoralists are all about meat and milk but the Turkana and Pokot communities of Northern Kenya have developed an exceptional craving for honey for various reasons. The sweet commodity is now being touted as the next big source of income in a region largely dependent on cattle for sustenance.

Honey is not a new commodity in the communities which have used it for barter trade over the years. It is also a popular ingredient for local illicit brews during various ceremonies.

Today there is a growing number of beekeepers in the region, 25% of these being women but they lack access to a ready market for the honey. Insecurity is another challenge with beehives being stolen by rival communities and wild animals which destroy the hives.

"There is a high demand for honey in Central Kenya but because of insecurity, lack of communication and transportation, the beekeepers have no way to reach this market," says Alex Knup, a delegate with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

To help improve the livelihood of the people of Turkwell, the ICRC began to assist them first to improve the quality of honey and then connect them to a local network that was already engaged in this trade.

"We identified a local Non governmental Organisation - CABESI to partner with us in this project since they were already working with some of the residents," says Alex. CABESI (short for Camels, Bees and Silk) had begun to mobilize communities in West Pokot to sell their honey to their collection centre which they then sold in Nairobi or markets abroad.

ICRC organised a training session for 75 beekeepers with CABESI to improve their honey to meet the high quality expectations of the market in Nairobi. Traditional honey harvesting procedures do not achieve the required standards for external markets.

For instance smoke is used to avoid been stings during harvesting and if the wrong kind of wood is used, the honey retains the smell and spoils the taste. Beekeepers sometimes crush the whole combs creating unwanted residue (wax and others) in the honey, practices that could be corrected through training.

Additionally, 4 members of a community based organisation (CBO) - Lobokat-based in Kainuk received extensive training in the extraction of honey, refining as



Members of LOBOKAT, Kainuk display the machine for refining honey donated by the ICRC

well as marketing. The members of Lobokat had shown interest in the honey business and they already had a structure from where they could work.

The residents worked with the traditional hives made out of old trunks and hung from trees. "Once a dynamic is created and the beekeepers realise they can make money out of the honey, it will be easier for them to switch to modern beehives which have higher productivity," says Alex.

In July 2007, the ICRC donated a modern machine for refining the honey to Lobokat enabling them to sell honey to CABESI who would market it further. The beekeepers were urged to coordinate their production and transport their honey to a collection centre together.

Through this support, the ICRC has provided residents of the two communities,

whose resources are limited due to insecurity, with alternative sources of income. Both communities are using the same collection centre in Kainuk which borders West Pokot and Turkana, an idea that was met with initial resistance. Now beekeepers can only look forward to their next harvest scheduled shortly.

"It is hoped that through this interaction the Pokot and Turkana will overcome their traditional differences and work together to build a prosperous business in the region," concludes Alex.

Displaced families find loved ones through ICRC/KRCS tracing efforts

Philip Nderitu emerges out of a room at the Eldoret showground's main building and envelops his five sons in one big hug. They are meeting for the first time since the New Year having been displaced by post-election clashes that rocked entire parts of Kenya's Rift Valley.

Nderitu's family had a home in Maiti Nne, a village four kilometres away from the Eldoret showground camp where he is now camping. At the onset of the clashes, he fled the family home and was separated from his wife, a young baby and five sons.

The family is finally being reunited thanks to the tracing efforts of the Kenya Red Cross (KRCS) working jointly with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

"They burnt our house to the ground and we fled to the forest," says Ben Karimi one of his older sons. "We were lucky that they salvaged some belongings before they burnt the house. Our neighbours later took us in and gave us food but we never left the homestead during the day."

"We are now trying to start a new life and are renting a house in Kambi moto where it is safer," adds Ben. "However, we desperately needed to find our father and when Sister Sebi from the Red Cross came to look for us, she gave us the good news that our father was here in the camp and he was looking for us." Their step-mother had been re-united with their father only two days earlier through the Red Cross.

Although Nderitu is a machine operator who used to get reasonable contracts in town, he is reluctant to go back home out of fear. "I have lost so many things and I am not willing to risk my life because of this situation," he says. "At least I am glad that my family is alive and well".

Two other families were reunited the same day in different areas of Rift Valley province. One of the reunifications is in Timboroa, about 30 kilometres from Eldoret town where a little girl was to be taken to her parents.

"We had two reunifications yesterday, says Mumina Abila a KRCS volunteer. "I drove a child to Kitale to meet his parents there and another reunification happened in Timboroa."

The showground's main building serves as a temporary office for the KRCS volun-



A child is photographed to help the search for missing parents

teers. On the glass windows, pictures of missing children are pasted with a sign giving information on who to contact should they be spotted within the camp. The same pictures are found in the various camps around the Rift Valley region where the children might have gone.

The KRCS has also set up a telephone hotline for tracing requests with local numbers in seven different cities and towns in other affected areas.

International Tracing Service opens archives to public

After more than 60 years the archives of the International Tracing Service have become accessible to the public. Historical researchers and other interested people can now examine archives and documents from the Second World War at the Tracing Service in Bad Arolsen, Germany. Previously such access was granted only to the victims of Nazi persecution and their next of kin. The archives contain over 50 million documents regarding the persecution, exploitation and extermination of millions of civilians by the Nazis.

"The sheer dimensions of the collection and its unique nature both enable these documents to make plain the horrors inflicted systematically and on an enormous scale by the National Socialist regime from 1933 to 1945," says Reto Meister, director of the Tracing Service. "It will now be possible to carry out detailed research on, for example, the transport of prisoners, the camp populations, and the health of forced labourers."

The Service is answerable to the 11-member International Commission for the

International Tracing Service and its work is based on the 1955 Bonn Agreements and the 2006 protocol amending those agreements which have now been ratified by all members. The Service is directed and administered by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) on behalf of the Commission.

"This is the conclusion of a long and difficult process," said Jakob Kellenberger, ICRC president. "The sensitive information stored at the International Tracing Service is now available to researchers and the broader public. This dark chapter in German history must never be forgotten."

Ten years on, mine-ban treaty marks progress but still faces major challenges

Much progress has been made in the past decade towards eradicating anti-personnel mines worldwide, but the ICRC views the 10th anniversary of the Convention on the Prohibition of Anti-personnel Mines (Ottawa Convention), on 3 December, as a time when States should pause to reflect on the major challenges that remain.

"The Ottawa Convention has in many respects been remarkably successful," says Philip Spoerri, the ICRC's director for international law. "The treaty today has 156 States Parties. Of the 50 States that at one time produced these mines, 34 are now parties to the Convention. The States bound by it have so far destroyed almost 42 million anti-personnel mines. The list of achievements goes on, and is quite impressive."

However, much remains to be done, insists Mr Spoerri. "Thirty-nine States have yet to ratify the Convention. And all those that have ratified it need to fulfill the long-term promises they made to landmine victims, including the obligation to clear mines and allocate greater resources to health-care and assistance programmes."

The ICRC, for its part, assists the victims of landmines and other explosive remnants of war by supporting emergency and long-term care and physical rehabilitation. It also promotes preventive measures such as facilitating safe access to food, water and other vital necessities.



ICRC Nairobi Regional Delegation, Denis Pritt Road, PO Box 73226, Nairobi, Kenya.
Tel: (+254) 20 272 3963. Fax: (+254) 20 271 3003. E-mail: nairobi.nai@icrc.org

ICRC Dar es Salaam Mission, PO Box 23421, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.
Tel: (+255) 222 668 552. Fax: (+255) 222 667 797. E-mail: mob.dar.nai@icrc.org

ICRC Djibouti Sub-Delegation, Rue Ras Mekonnen, Apt No 4, PO Box 2527, Djibouti.
Tel: (+253) 352 611. Fax: (+253) 352 156. E-mail: nairobi.nai@icrc.org

BULLETIN

Editors: Anne Mucheke, Bernard Barret and Anne Kilimo **Graphic Design:** Magnum Design House

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is an impartial, neutral and independent organization with an exclusively humanitarian mission to protect the lives and dignity of victims of war and internal violence and to provide them with assistance. It also endeavours to prevent suffering by promoting and strengthening humanitarian law and universal humanitarian principles. The founding of the ICRC in 1863 led to the evolution of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

For further information, visit our website at www.icrc.org



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