



ICRC

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BULLETIN

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



A Somali woman and her child wait for food distribution in Warankara, Mandera

Alleviating Human Suffering

Welcome to the Nairobi Bulletin's second edition this year. In this edition, we look back over the first half of 2005 and take stock of the Regional Delegation's activities. Over this period, we see a hive of activity, dealing with what we see as our permanent tasks, but also working increasingly operationally.

The ICRC chose Nairobi as our hub for operations in the region and, back in the 70's, established a Regional Delegation. A choice that has allowed us ever since to react to the needs of civilian populations, victims of ongoing and emerging situations of armed violence and conflict, enjoying the stability of Kenya in a troubled area of the world.

Beyond purely operational terms, our presence in Kenya means employment for more than 800 Kenyans and purchases from local companies in excess of 1.2 Million US\$ per month for relief items alone. With the exception of our Geneva Headquarters, there is no location where the ICRC interacts with local producers, traders and companies more intensely than here in Kenya.

Kenya hosts the ICRC's largest Logistics Centre, providing material and other assistance to victims in countries not only in the region but as far a field as Indonesia during the Tsunami disaster. In order to allow our partners to understand the breadth of activities the Centre undertakes, the Delegation organises familiarisation tours of the facility, and as you will see in this edition of the Bulletin, we have had many interested groups visiting the Centre, from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Ministry

of Roads & Public Works, from the Immigration Department to Kenya Airways.

The Delegation enjoys excellent access to and relationship with the Kenyan Government. Recently, I was able to meet with the Vice President, His Excellency Hon. (Dr) Moody Awori E.B.S.E.G.H, MP, to discuss the Kenyan Government's involvement in and support for what turned out to be a highly successful Commonwealth Meeting of National Governmental Committees on the implementation of International Humanitarian Law (IHL), but also some of the activities that the Delegation is undertaking in Kenya.

The Kenyan National Committee on International Humanitarian Law (NACOI) is working hard at getting Kenya to fulfil its obligations under international IHL instruments and has been invaluable in assisting with the organisation of the Commonwealth meeting.

The start of 2005 brought with it the end of the long war in southern Sudan and in May, the Regional Delegation said goodbye to the Sudan office it had hosted for many years. Currently, the ICRC's Sudan sub-delegation in Lokichokkio, North-Western Kenya which runs Lopiding Hospital is transitioning to Southern Sudan and in this issue we reflect on some of the programmes it has carried out to help the local Turkana population.

Unfortunately, remote areas of Kenya to the North, especially the Mandera and Marsabit Districts, have recently seen episodes of armed violence. The ICRC has been involved, along

with the national Kenya Red Cross Society, in alleviating the suffering of some of the victims of these events by providing food and other assistance to affected populations and surgical supplies to local hospitals and medical centres.

We have also opened an office in Zanzibar and have been involved with those affected by pre-election violence that has taken place in parts of the islands there. Still in Zanzibar, the Delegation has organised a seminar for war surgeons.

Elsewhere in Tanzania, in Arusha, a course for NGOs about the law governing their work in conflict zones has been organised.

With this wide range of activities, the ICRC Regional Delegation has contact with many parts of Kenyan society in many parts of the country. With a busy last half of the year there is still a lot to accomplish before year's end and we shall report on some of these activities in our next issue.

Pascal Cuttat
Head of Regional Delegation

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Training Leaders of Tomorrow

The ICRC works closely with institutions of higher learning in many countries of the world with the aim to sensitise students about Humanitarian Law because from these institutions often come the future leaders and opinion makers of society. Communication Coordinator Leonard Blazeby talks about ICRC's cooperation with universities in Eastern Africa.



IHL academics pose for a group photo during the round table

In the Nairobi Regional Delegation, we have developed many activities with universities to create an understanding of International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and to have students understand the humanitarian work that the ICRC does.

One of the aims of the ICRC regional delegation is the creation of a "community" of IHL teachers and to that end an annual round table of IHL academics is held in Nairobi, Kenya.

This year, the roundtable of IHL academics from Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda was held in Nairobi in June. Such a forum allows lecturers to exchange information and experiences and to standardise to some degree the teaching of IHL in the region.

Another activity that we hope will become an annual event is an essay competition for students learning IHL. The competition allows students to write on a topic of humanitarian concern, often with a legal aspect, with the aim of encouraging students to apply the knowledge gained through research to improve their understanding of armed conflict and its consequences.

This year's essay competition attracted over 50 entries from students from a wide range of faculties including law, arts, international relations, education, social sciences and the school of journalism. The students were asked to write on the topic, "To what extent should humanitarian workers and the military cooperate in the protection and assistance of victims in armed conflict and natural disasters?"

Four students received monetary prizes for their work, which went towards their school fees. The prizes and certificates

were presented by His Excellency, the Honourable Vice President Moody Awori, at a ceremony to celebrate World Red Cross Day, held at a Nairobi hotel on 5 May 2005.

For the last four years, university students from the region have been involved in the Annual International Moot Court Competition on IHL. Student teams from universities from Kenya and Tanzania are joined by those from Ethiopia, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa and Uganda, for a competition on IHL. This year for the first time teams from Sierra Leone and Zimbabwe are expected. The event is run in conjunction with the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) and student teams compete against each other in role play scenarios, with the final held in the ICTR. In 2005 - the fifth anniversary of the competition, there will be 12 teams from 9 African countries competing.

The enthusiasm of the universities in the region and the talent of the teachers enables the ICRC to develop an excellent IHL programme.



Linus Wang'ombe, a student at the University of Nairobi receives the top award from Vice President Moody Awori

Aid for victims of clashes in North Eastern Kenya

Since the beginning of 2005, the North Eastern region of Kenya which borders Somalia and Ethiopia has been the scene of inter-clan clashes on several occasions. The need for medical supplies and shelter of the internally displaced people (IDPs) from the clashes has been immense. Jessica Musila, the Media Officer reports about the concerted response of the ICRC and Kenya Red Cross Society (KRCS).

To date, close to 20,000 persons who fled their homes between last December and April this year due to inter-clan clashes between the Murule and the Garre remain entirely dependent on the solidarity of residents of Mandera district and humanitarian aid. The addition of 10,000 refugees from Somalia to their numbers in April aggravated the situation," says Pascal Cuttat, the ICRC Head of Delegation.

In July and August, two ICRC convoys took humanitarian aid items to the displaced persons and refugees.

"The ICRC with the support of KRCS volunteers distributed a food ration of maize, beans and oil to 1470 families (8820 persons) in Borehole 11 and El wak in July. In addition, 1650 families (10,000 persons) received blankets, kitchen sets, tarpaulins, mats, buckets, jerry cans, kangas and soap," explains Nancy Beaudouin, the ICRC delegate overseeing the operation.



A Kenya Red Cross volunteer calls out a list of names before a distribution

A total of 11,500 persons in Lafey, Fino, Hareri, Sala, Warankara, Wargadud and Mandera received household materials during a second distribution done in late August. However, during this trip only 1500 people received food. While the distributions were done on the Kenyan side, the ICRC delegation for Somalia carried out a similar operation across the border.

"There were reports that the distributions apparently triggered mass weddings in Elwak and as the ICRC off-loaded items in Fino and Lafey people referred to the kitchen sets as 'wedding sets'," adds Beaudouin.

"While the Red Cross would naturally care for the IDPs, agencies mandated to care for refugees were not in a position to respond to their needs. ICRC thus agreed with the concerned agencies to do a one-off food distribution to the vulnerable people. A Red Cross assessment team that visited Mandera in early June had found the IDPs and refugees living in a precarious situation," explains Cuttat.

Inter-clan clashes from Somalia have on occasion

spilled over to Kenya and their war-wounded often seek relief at Kenyan hospitals. The Mandera and Elwak hospitals in Mandera district as well as four health centres have on several occasions received ICRC donations of medical supplies.

When fresh clashes were reported between rival clans in the Somali border-town of Bura hache in late July, the ICRC airlifted surgical materials for 50 war-wounded cases to Mandera and Elwak hospitals as well as dressing materials to cater for 200 war-wounded cases. The medical supplies were aimed at reinforcing their capacity to cope with a possible influx of casualties from within Kenya and neighbouring Somalia.

Between February and August, the ICRC with the support of the KRCS assisted 3,860 IDP and refugee families (approximately 23,000 persons) with essential household items and 1,720 IDP and refugee families (10,320 persons) with a one-month food ration.

Marsabit and Sololo hospitals received a donation of surgical materials for 60 war-wounded cases from the ICRC, following inter-ethnic clashes that saw the death of close to 90 persons in mid July. The Regional War Surgeon based in Nairobi also visited Marsabit hospital to assess if it needed his technical support or additional materials.

ICRC provides assistance to victims of internal disturbances without discrimination and in proportion to their needs.



Two women struggle to fit a kitchen set box into their bag

Promoting Respect for IHL

In mid July 2005, Kenya hosted a Commonwealth countries meeting of National International Humanitarian Law (IHL) Implementation Committees to review the progress they had made in meeting their obligations in regard to various treaties. The Communication Coordinator



ICRC / Jessica Musila

Commonwealth meeting participants

"The greatest challenge we face today in the implementation of IHL is securing respect and compliance among States and other actors involved in armed conflict. Faced with this prevailing situation the international community must make every effort to ensure the widest possible understanding, respect for, observance and implementation of IHL by both States and non-state actors," Kenya's Attorney General Amos Wako, told the Commonwealth Meeting for National IHL Committees.

The three-day Commonwealth National IHL Committees meeting in Nairobi marked the halfway point to the 29th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent which brings together 181 countries and all components of the Red Cross Movement.

Thirty Commonwealth countries participated in the meeting and were able to share information concerning actions undertaken by their National Committees to implement their IHL obligations. During the 28th International Conference held in Geneva in 2003, States had committed themselves to meet their obligations under various IHL instruments.



ICRC / Jessica Musila

Swiss Ambassador Pierre Combernous, ICRC Vice President Anne Petitpierre and Kenya Army Chief Legal Advisor Brigadier Githiora and Solicitor General Wanjuki Muchemi share a light moment

Around 65 representatives of National IHL Committees from Commonwealth States participated in the Nairobi meeting to which representatives of States interested in starting similar committees were also invited.

Betty Mould Iddrisu, the Director of the Legal and Constitutional Affairs division of the Commonwealth Secretariat encouraged States that had not established National IHL Committees to consider doing so.

The ICRC's Vice President Anne Petitpierre attended the Meeting. She reminded participants there was need to direct more energy to ensuring greater respect of existing IHL rules.

"Teaching and disseminating the law to all concerned parties and to the public in general, as well as adopting national measures of implementation are very important to ensure better respect of the law. Only States which have adopted comprehensive legislation and regulation to that purpose are in a position to correctly apply the law," Petitpierre told the meeting.

"Kenya officially launched its National IHL Committee in October 2001 which has members drawn from both the private and public sectors who have a vast knowledge

IHL in the Commonwealth



ICRC Head of Delegation Pascal Cuttat briefs Kenya's Vice President Moody Awori about the Commonwealth Conference as Communications Coordinator Leonard Blazey looks on.

of IHL," Wako reported to the forum. Wanjuki Muchemi, the Solicitor General in the Attorney General's chamber chairs Kenya's National Committee.

Over the three days the participants' working groups discussed the structure and financing of committees, their working procedures and substance as well as the challenges and obstacles and work plans for 2005 - 2006.

Participants' also reviewed various IHL treaties and their governments' obligations. IHL issues such child soldiers, women and war, small arms, the International Criminal Court and the Customary IHL study recently launched by the International Committee of the Red Cross were also considered.

"Teaching and disseminating the law to all concerned parties and to the public in general, as well as adopting national measures of implementation are very important to ensure better respect of the law."

ICRC Vice President Anne Petitpierre

account for some 175 IHL treaty accessions though only approximately 30 laws have been adopted in about the same period. To date, 19 Commonwealth countries have established inter-ministerial committees.

The ICRC continues to provide the necessary advice as countries move forward with ratifying and implementing IHL treaties. National committees are provided with both technical and material support such as model legislation that would assist in the domestication of treaties. The ultimate beneficiaries of the ratification and domestication of IHL treaties are the victims and vulnerable groups whose lives are disrupted by conflict and ravaged even further where there is little respect for humanitarian law principles.

The thirty Commonwealth States represented at the meeting committed themselves to give a higher priority in their policy and programmes to publicise, apply and promote respect for IHL; accede to treaties to which they are not yet party to and implement treaties they have already ratified.

Since 2000, the 53 States of the Commonwealth

Role of National Committees on IHL

The International Committee of the Red Cross works closely with governments towards the establishment of National Committees on International Humanitarian Law (IHL). National Committees are bodies offering advisory services to the authorities with the aim of facilitating the implementation of IHL at national level.

The evolution of conflicts has presented IHL with certain challenges with regard to its implementation and repression. In view of this, national committees are vested with the enormous responsibility of advising governments in their commitment to upholding humanitarian law and further, updating the government on the current developments in the law.

Governments are encouraged not only to sign and ratify IHL treaties but also to proceed to incorporate the content of these treaties as part of their domestic law.

National Committees also have the important function of disseminating the provisions of IHL during peacetime so as to ensure respect for humanitarian law principles and compliance in times of armed conflict.

The importance of the work of national committees in regions riddled with conflict and post conflict societies cannot be overemphasised. Many parts of Africa have been volatile for a number of decades and the need for the observance of IHL remains critical.



Martin Eaton addresses the conference as the Director of the Legal Division of the Commonwealth Betty Mould Idriddu, Attorney General Amos Wako and the ICRC Vice President Anne Petitpierre listen.

Boosting livelihoods in Lokichokkio

Although for 18 years Lopiding hospital in Kenya has been the hub of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) medical services for the war-wounded from southern Sudan, the ICRC has also worked on projects aimed at improving lives of the host community.

As the ICRC prepares to withdraw from Lokichokkio in June 2006, the Media Officer Jessica Musila talked with the local Turkana people about the impact it has made in their lives



Turkana women struggle to fetch water from the deep in Lorus during the dry season

Though originally established to treat war-wounded from southern Sudan, the hospital has been treating Kenyans living in Lokichokkio who require emergency surgery. Between January and June 2005, the hospital has treated 37 patients with gun-shot wounds from cattle raids, highway banditry attacks and domestic violence. Cattle raids are a common phenomenon in Turkana district and the nearest hospital is in Lodwar 200km away.

"Our most recent patient with gunshot wounds was the District Officer (DO) Lokichokkio Michael Kibet who was shot while travelling to Lokichokkio from Lodwar. His right flank was hit by a bullet but fortunately no organs were affected. He was immediately rushed to Lopiding hospital where he was operated on by the Geneva based ICRC Head of Surgical Unit Chris Gianou who was visiting," says the Head of the Sub-delegation, Rob Drouen.

In 1999, the ICRC joined forces with Kenya's Ministry of Health and opened a 22-bed medical ward in Lopiding to assist the population of Turkana district. It serves as a referral ward for patients with obstructed labours and malaria. "In 2004, 742 Kenyan patients were admitted in the medical ward having being referred from the AMREF and AIC health centres in Lokichokkio," adds Drouen. Cooperation with the two health centres dates back to 1986 when the war in southern Sudan intensified and the ICRC started evacuating patients into Kenya.

At first, the ICRC attended to patients at the AIC and AMREF compounds until its own structures were set up. "Since ICRC donated to us a Land Cruiser ambulance the health centre's referral system has eased," says the AIC Rural Health Supervisor Bethwel Lochor.



Entrance to Lopiding hospital

Targeting livelihoods

Driven by a desire to assist communities living around the hospital, the ICRC has since 2003 worked closely with the community in projects aimed at improving the water supply. The most recent project

has been a solar cum wind powered water pump installed in Lopiding village.

"The pump has boosted the amount of water available. Even though there used to be a hand pump at the site, the water was but a mere trickle and women had to push and jostle for water. Nowadays, we can also send children to fetch it," comments Frida Akatorot, a local community member in-charge of the Water Association for this project.

Though the Turkana are traditionally pastoralists, Lopiding village residents could easily become small scale horticulture farmers. The solar cum windmill powered water pump has had a spill over effect and the community has started a vegetable garden using the drip irrigation system. They have planted tomatoes, kale, spinach and onions. "We hope to have enough to eat and sell to the community," says Henry Ayomo, a beneficiary.

On its own initiative, the community has also started a tree nursery on a plot next to the vegetable garden. Ayomo says the money from the water points and garden will help to maintain the pump.

In times of severe drought, ICRC also provides the people and livestock with water using its trucks. In April, the ICRC trucked water to residents of Lorus as most water points were dry.

While water remains a big problem in Turkana region which is mainly semi-desert, hygiene of the population is also of concern. In the last three years, the ICRC in cooperation with the authorities and NGO's in Lokichokkio, has mobilised the population to participate in a yearly clean up exercise. The main goal of this exercise is to create awareness and sensitise the community on health and hygiene. "Most homes do not have pit latrines and 'flying toilets' are a common phenomenon," says the Lopiding chief.

In addition, the ICRC has donated 80 garbage bins made of old oil drums to the Public Health Officer. Lokichokkio youth have formed a group that collects the garbage with a handcart for a small fee.

The Lokichokkio and Lopiding community and the ICRC have also cooperated to renovate and construct classrooms and offices in some schools. The community provides the unskilled labour and locally available materials. ICRC provides the

professional expertise and all other materials necessary. Two of the schools - Napopongo'it and Nanam were handed over to the community in July 2005.

In most of the schools, the number of pupils enrolled has risen tremendously after the renovation and construction of new classrooms was completed. The Headmaster of AIC Lopiding primary school Paul Ochuka says, "the number of pupils has risen to 351 from 219 in 2004." Currently, renovation and construction is underway in three primary schools - Songot, AIC Lopiding and St. Matthews.

Fires are common in Lokichokkio and the ICRC, in cooperation with the Kenyan Army provides fire-fighting services as they are the only ones with water cannons. On an ad-hoc basis, the organisation has also provided tarpaulins, blankets, kitchen sets and jerry cans to families whose houses and belongings were razed down by fire.

ICRC has been an elixir of life and a sign of hope for the Turkana. As the ICRC prepares to close Lopiding hospital in June 2006 and move into southern Sudan, the Turkana will feel the loss.



ICRC / Filipa Anacoreta

Lorus, an elixir of life after the rainy season



ICRC / Ahmed Hersi

Air operations course participants

Air operations staff training

In early August, a six-day training course for ICRC national staff working in Air Operations (AirOps) units in various delegations was held in Mombasa. The 17 participants were drawn from ICRC delegations in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, Jordan, Sierra Leone, Democratic Republic of Congo, Somalia, Sudan and Kenya. All these delegations operate contracted aircrafts on a full-time basis.

The aim of the course was to give participants an opportunity to update their aviation knowledge and keep abreast of new developments in terms of safety and regulation. Participants also explored new challenges arising especially in relation to security.

The ICRC Regional AirOps Manager Ahmed Hersi facilitated the training with his counterpart from Geneva.

"The context in which ICRC field operations are conducted demands progressive adaptation to new techniques and working procedures that continuously change with time and situation. In the aviation field, new challenges and developments often relate to safety, security, modernisation of equipment and changes in regulations," explains Hersi.

Last year, ICRC aircrafts carried close to 60,000 passengers. Most of the passengers ferried travelled in relation to the ICRC's traditional tasks such as reuniting families, medical/casualty evacuations and repatriation of Prisoners of War (POW). In addition, the aircraft carried ICRC staff and personnel of other humanitarian agencies working to alleviate the suffering of people affected by conflicts.

"Apart from training, the course also offered psychological relief to our ICRC colleagues who were coming from some of the hot spots in the world," adds Hersi.

ICRC uses aircrafts in its operations in cases where the distances involved are vast or when there is poor or no transportation infrastructure. Aircraft are also used in urgent operations like medical evacuations or when there are security concerns. In 2004, ICRC aeroplanes did 18,000 departures from various airports across the world.

The Regional AirOps unit is part of the ICRC Logistics Centre in Nairobi and carries out audits and safety assessment of aircrafts in delegations in Africa as well as staff training. This is the first of three Air Operation

Zanzibar office opens

On August 17, the ICRC opened an office in Zanzibar ahead of the much anticipated Tanzanian general elections in October. The office is to serve as a liaison point for contacts with national and local authorities, politicians, the police, security forces, hospitals and the media. An ICRC delegate and field officer are stationed there. The office will facilitate a faster and effective response to any medical or protection needs that may arise during the elections.

War surgery seminar for Zanzibari medics

Twenty five medics working in hospitals in Zanzibar and Pemba attended a five-day war surgery course organised by the ICRC in July. Participants were drawn from Mnazi moja, Allah Rakma, Wete, Mkoani and Chake Chake hospitals. There were also representatives from the Ministry of Health and the Tanzanian Peoples Defence Forces. The training was to reinforce their capacity to cope with the needs of the injured in case of an influx of casualties during the general elections. The Nairobi based Regional Surgeon facilitated the seminar and shared ICRC's experience in handling surgical cases of the weapon wounded and the management of

medical establishments in case of a mass influx of casualties.

Seminar to special forces

The ICRC in mid-August organised a three-day seminar for Tanzanian special forces on "Humanitarian rules in conflict situations." The aim of the seminar was to inform and remind the special forces about some basic humanitarian rules essential to their work. The 25 participants were also briefed on the ICRC and its work. All the main Zanzibar Special Forces groups like Kikosi Maalum cha Kuzuia Magendo (KMKM), Jeshi la Kujenga Uchumi (JKU), Kikosi cha Valantia Zanzibar (KVZ), the Fire and Rescue Unit and the Prison department attended the seminar.

Popular humanitarian course

The first edition of this year's International Humanitarian Law course for Humanitarian workers was held in Arusha, Tanzania in May. Twenty people from United Nations agencies, international Non Governmental Organisations, government agencies and national Red Cross societies attended the course. The course remains very popular with humanitarian organisations.

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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.



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