

BURUNDI



ICRC/AR 2011
 + ICRC delegation + ICRC-supported prosthetic/orthotic centre

EXPENDITURE (IN KCHF)

Protection	1,529
Assistance	2,342
Prevention	339
Cooperation with National Societies	782
General	-

► **4,993**

of which: Overheads 305

IMPLEMENTATION RATE

Expenditure/yearly budget	91%
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PERSONNEL

Expatriates	14
National staff (daily workers not included)	52

KEY POINTS

In 2011, the ICRC:

- supported the authorities in reviewing the case files of several hundred detainees, leading to the release of some and thus contributing to a reduction in prison overcrowding
- worked with the authorities to improve the living conditions of over 11,400 detainees in 34 places of detention
- supported the efforts of the technical committee established to advise on the mandate and modalities of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission by organizing a three-day seminar on issues related to missing persons
- handed over to the authorities all projects to rehabilitate water supply systems, while supporting the National Society in implementing rehabilitation projects and an emergency assistance operation for flood victims
- provided training, financing, materials and expertise to help the Burundi Red Cross extend its RCM network to all 17 provinces
- built a new dormitory for the Saint Kizito physical rehabilitation centre, in addition to refurbishing its prosthetic/orthotic workshop and therapy facilities

The ICRC has been present in Burundi since 1962, opening its delegation there in 1999 to help people overcome the worst consequences of armed conflict. Owing to the progress in the peace process, ICRC assistance activities have been scaled down and now focus mainly on working with the prison authorities to ensure that detainees are treated according to internationally recognized standards. The ICRC also reinforces physical rehabilitation services, supports the Burundi Red Cross, notably in restoring links between separated family members, and supports the armed forces' efforts to train their members in IHL.

CONTEXT

Tensions and sporadic violence continued throughout the year. In September, a particularly bloody attack in a bar close to the capital reportedly resulted in around 40 fatalities and, following other incidents in the eastern part of the country, mass arrests were made. Some opposition leaders remained in exile, while opposition groups, civil society actors and sections of the media complained of extrajudicial killings, arbitrary arrests and intimidation. Many key issues remained to be resolved, including the reintegration of weapon bearers who had not been incorporated into the armed and security forces.

The Burundian government implemented several important measures. These included the decision to establish a Truth and Reconciliation Commission on the basis of a UN-supported national consultation process completed in December 2010 and the formation of an independent national human rights commission.

Burundi remained highly reliant on international support and continued to suffer from poverty, corruption and underdevelopment, a situation exacerbated by the rising price of essential commodities. Rapid population growth, driven not only by high birth rates but also by the return of former refugees from neighbouring countries, fuelled disputes over access to land.

ICRC ACTION AND RESULTS

In 2011, the ICRC continued to concentrate its efforts on assisting people affected by past conflict and on helping the authorities improve the conditions of detainees.

In 34 places of permanent and temporary detention, ICRC delegates visited over 11,400 detainees to monitor their treatment and living conditions, sharing their findings and recommendations confidentially with the authorities concerned through written reports and face-to-face discussions. This dialogue led to the review by the authorities of the case files of several hundred detainees, speeding up the judicial process after the correction of certain irregularities. Subsequently, a number of detainees were released, thereby easing overcrowding to a limited extent in some places of temporary detention. At the same time, the ICRC intervened in a more general way across the detention system, providing financial, material and technical assistance to improve inmates' living conditions, for example by enhancing sanitation facilities or covering the costs of most basic medicines for prison dispensaries.

To support the country's fledgling transitional justice process, the ICRC organized a seminar on issues relating to missing persons,

Main figures and indicators	PROTECTION	Total		
CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)				
Red Cross messages (RCMs)				
RCMs collected		2,115	UAMs/SCs*	10
RCMs distributed		1,738		16
Reunifications, transfers and repatriations				
People reunited with their families		10		
	<i>including people registered by another delegation</i>	6		
Tracing requests, including cases of missing persons				
People for whom a tracing request was newly registered		57	Women	11
People located (tracing cases closed positively)		37		13
	<i>including people for whom tracing requests were registered by another delegation</i>	1		
Tracing cases still being handled at 31 December 2011 (people)		48	13	9
UAMs/SCs*, including unaccompanied demobilized child soldiers				
UAMs/SCs newly registered by the ICRC/National Society		7	Girls	3
UAMs/SCs reunited with their families by the ICRC/National Society		7		1
	<i>including UAMs/SCs registered by another delegation</i>	5		
UAM/SC cases still being handled by the ICRC/National Society at 31 December 2011		5	1	
Documents				
People to whom travel documents were issued		2		
Official documents relayed between family members across borders/front lines		1		
PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)				
ICRC visits				
Detainees visited		11,408	Women	
Detainees visited and monitored individually		793	20	30
Detainees newly registered		585	16	28
Number of visits carried out		148		
Number of places of detention visited		34		
Restoring family links				
RCMs collected		241		
RCMs distributed		351		
People to whom a detention attestation was issued		24		

* Unaccompanied minors/separated children

Main figures and indicators	ASSISTANCE	Total	Women	Children
CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)				
Economic security, water and habitat				
Water and habitat activities	Beneficiaries	117,625	28%	45%
	<i>of whom IDPs</i>	2,100		
PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)				
Economic security, water and habitat				
Essential household items	Beneficiaries	13,466		
Water and habitat activities	Beneficiaries	10,478		
WOUNDED AND SICK				
Water and habitat				
Water and habitat activities	Number of beds	200		
Physical rehabilitation				
Centres supported	Structures	1		
Patients receiving services	Patients	2,493	79	2,323
New patients fitted with prostheses	Patients	2		2
Prostheses delivered	Units	2		2
New patients fitted with orthoses	Patients	81	3	77
Orthoses delivered	Units	123	4	118
Crutches delivered	Units	20		
Wheelchairs delivered	Units	4		

which was attended by high-level representatives of the authorities, including the judiciary, and by representatives of family associations and other civil society stakeholders. Recommendations originating from the event, for example those relating to the management of human remains, were included in the final report of the technical committee charged with making recommendations for the creation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

With ICRC support, the Burundi Red Cross established its own water and sanitation department and took responsibility for the

management of two projects to enhance the lives of impoverished communities. Other such projects implemented by the ICRC in partnership with local communities were handed over to the water authorities after their staff received training in maintaining the new infrastructure. Following further progress, the National Society also achieved its objective of assuming full responsibility for the collection and distribution of RCMs in all 17 of the country's provinces, compared with 9 in 2010. The National Society further strengthened its capacities in the fields of emergency preparedness, first aid and communication. Dozens of emergency

brigades were formed during the year, some of them contributing to the humanitarian response aimed at assisting several hundred people affected by flooding.

The Saint Kizito physical rehabilitation centre and the ICRC continued to work together to reinforce services for those requiring them, with the construction of a new wing that included a dormitory, allowing the centre to accommodate patients living further away. Work also progressed on improving facilities such as the prosthetic/orthotic workshop and ensuring the long-term financial sustainability of the centre.

As part of its efforts to reinforce understanding of and respect for basic humanitarian principles and the Movement's mandate, the ICRC pursued dialogue with national and local authorities, international organizations, NGOs and other members of civil society. Similarly, it provided technical advice and training support to the government and the armed forces in their efforts to integrate IHL into national legislation and military training and doctrine respectively.

CIVILIANS

Civilians gain access to reliable water supplies

Some 110,000 people living in areas where water facilities had been destroyed or damaged during past conflict, or had become dilapidated after years of neglect, accessed safer and more plentiful supplies after the ICRC, in partnership with local water boards or the users themselves, finished work to extend and repair water infrastructure. Local water boards in rural and urban areas took over responsibility for maintenance of the completed projects during ceremonies attended by local authority representatives. Both urban and rural water board members continued to reinforce their maintenance skills at ICRC training sessions.

Some 5,500 civilians also benefited from rehabilitation projects designed and implemented by the National Society's newly established water and sanitation department, set up with ICRC support in the form of training, materials and technical guidance.

Separated relatives restore contact

Family members dispersed while fleeing past fighting in Burundi or neighbouring countries, including Burundian refugees in or returning from the United Republic of Tanzania, Burundian nationals detained in the United Republic of Tanzania and Congolese and Rwandan refugees in Burundi, restored contact through the tracing and RCM services run by the ICRC and the Burundi Red Cross. For the first time, civilians could use National Society services across the country, as staff and volunteers collected and distributed RCMs autonomously in all of the country's 17 provinces (see *Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement*). According to their expressed wishes, seven unaccompanied children were reunited with their families, three in Burundi itself and four in neighbouring countries. The children were given essential items to ease their reintegration into the family unit.

Families of missing persons benefit from ICRC expertise

In the framework of the country's transitional justice process, representatives of the Presidency, the Supreme Court, the technical committee newly appointed to advise on the establishment of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the diplomatic community and international organizations, as well as civil society actors, including NGOs and family associations, attended a three-day seminar organized by the ICRC to discuss issues relating to

missing persons. Recommendations arising from the event, for example on human remains management, were included in the final report by the national technical committee aiming to pave the way for the formation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM

Over 11,400 detainees in 34 places of permanent and temporary detention received visits, conducted in accordance with the ICRC's standard working procedures, enabling delegates to monitor their treatment and living conditions and ensure they complied with internationally recognized standards. Around 800 security detainees were followed up individually, and particular attention was paid to the situation of vulnerable inmates, such as women, children and foreigners. Many of these inmates restored and maintained contact with relatives in Burundi and abroad through the RCM service.

Detainees obtain improved living conditions

Based on these visits, the authorities received confidential feedback and written reports from the delegation, including, as necessary, recommendations for improvements. After receiving such reports and engaging in ongoing dialogue with the ICRC, the Ministries of Justice and of Public Security agreed as a priority to improve judicial processes, as well as living conditions, in five places of detention under their jurisdiction. This resulted in the authorities reviewing the files of several hundred detainees, correcting numerous irregularities, speeding up the judicial process, enabling the release of a number of detainees and thus contributing to a limited reduction in overcrowding. The authorities also acted on other ICRC recommendations, providing separate accommodation for dozens of minors and extra beds for elderly inmates.

In addition, the authorities received general reminders of the need to increase the budgets for the administration of places of temporary detention and for the prison service. They also received direct ICRC support in improving detainees' health and hygiene across the penitentiary system. Inmates gained improved access to quality health care through prison dispensaries, where the delegation covered 80% of the costs of basic medicines. Similarly, people held in temporary lock-ups received medical attention in nearby public health centres that received extra stocks for this purpose from the ICRC. Detainees accessed treatment or support services relating to malaria, TB and HIV/AIDS thanks to ongoing technical, material and financial support to the prison health authorities and NGOs providing specific services, such as voluntary screening or counselling or training for peer educators using ICRC-provided materials. Meanwhile, more than 13,000 inmates in 20 places of permanent and temporary detention enjoyed a healthier and cleaner environment following improvements to water, sanitation and kitchen facilities and the distribution of soap for inmates' personal use. Detainees also benefited from disinfection and hygiene-promotion campaigns conducted by prison sanitation teams and the ICRC, which helped contain outbreaks of dysentery and cholera.

WOUNDED AND SICK

Patients of the Saint Kizito physical rehabilitation centre in Bujumbura enjoyed increased access to better-quality services following measures implemented with ICRC support in the framework of a three-year plan of action agreed by the two organizations in 2010. In the course of 2011, the prosthetic/orthotic workshop and physio/electrotherapy facilities were both rehabilitated and

furnished with new equipment, while staff worked on drafting and then implementing treatment protocols and technical guidelines. People will be able to travel to the centre for treatment from a wider geographical area thanks to the construction of a new wing housing a dormitory offering accommodation and sanitation facilities to patients, as well as a dining area, a consultation room and offices to provide greater privacy and a more professional working environment. During the year, 2,493 patients benefited from physical rehabilitation services at the centre.

To ensure the long-term independence and financial sustainability of the centre, several steps were taken to maximize its efficiency. These included providing personnel with training, including abroad, and equipment to produce more reliable and affordable devices on-site using the ICRC's polypropylene technology, contacting suppliers to explore the use of less expensive materials and importing them at lower cost from abroad.

Although a National Society campaign to promote the centre was postponed, potential patients, potential donors, government representatives and NGOs in similar fields were able to better acquaint themselves with what Saint Kizito had to offer during an open day held on the International Day of Persons with Disabilities (3 December).

AUTHORITIES

The relevant national authorities received further advice on ratifying IHL treaties and on incorporating their provisions into domestic law. For example, at a workshop on Additional Protocol III, they examined the benefits and technical aspects of ratifying the instrument. The authorities also received a copy of the African Union (AU) Convention on IDPs to enable them to study the instrument in depth. Following receipt of a model law on the Convention on Cluster Munitions in 2010, they were encouraged to press ahead with implementing the treaty at national level. Some 40 female parliamentarians reinforced their understanding of the ICRC's services in relation to IHL implementation during a one-day training course.

National and local authorities countrywide attended meetings and presentations organized with the aim of fostering respect for basic humanitarian principles and boosting support for the ICRC and the Burundi Red Cross. Representatives of regional and international organizations and the ICRC met regularly to exchange information on their respective activities.

ARMED FORCES AND OTHER BEARERS OF WEAPONS

Following the signing in 2010 of an agreement to implement a joint plan of action, the Ministry of Defence and the ICRC stepped up efforts to integrate IHL into all aspects of Burundi's military training and operations. As an important part of the process, some 20 high-ranking officers from all five military regions, including the chief of the general staff, participated in an intensive, three-week course certifying them as IHL instructors. As well as enabling the officers to teach IHL to their counterparts, the course better positioned them to help integrate IHL into Burundi's military doctrine, which was another aspect of the joint action plan. One of the officers trained went on to attend an advanced military IHL course in South Africa (see *International law and cooperation*). In addition, the head of Burundi's military academy and the ICRC held a working session focusing on the incorporation of IHL into all military exercises held by the academy.

Three of the officers who had attended the three-week ICRC course subsequently acted as instructors in training sessions for Burundian contingents participating in the AU Mission in Somalia. During these ICRC-led briefings, a total of 45 officers, 160 commissioned officers and 645 soldiers strengthened their understanding of IHL prior to their deployment in Somalia.

CIVIL SOCIETY

Influential representatives of civil society, including journalists and religious and traditional leaders received information about humanitarian issues, better placing them to raise public awareness and support for the Movement's work. During an interactive briefing, members of national and international NGOs learnt more about the status of and protection afforded to children, highlighting in particular the rights of minors in detention, while members of two local human rights organizations received a general briefing on IHL, the Movement and relevant humanitarian issues.

Students from public and private universities continued to conduct research on IHL at the delegation's library, which regularly took delivery of up-to-date resource materials. One university received a standard IHL library of its own. The organization of local IHL conferences for students and lecturers and sponsorship of their participation in conferences abroad did not take place owing to stakeholders' lack of availability.

RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

With significant financial, material and technical support from the ICRC, the Burundi Red Cross continued to reinforce its capacities in the fields of restoring family links, emergency preparedness and promotion of IHL.

Building on progress made in recent years and in the framework of the Restoring Family Links Strategy for the Movement, the National Society collected and distributed RCMs in all 17 of the country's provinces, compared with 9 in 2010. To help achieve this goal, eight National Society branches received equipment from the ICRC to support information management, while volunteers received appropriate training.

National Society personnel also attended a train-the-trainer course in disaster management and first aid, where they learnt how to integrate the ICRC's Safer Access approach into operational procedures. This facilitated the creation of 66 emergency brigades in six provinces enabling the National Society to respond to the needs of hundreds of flood victims. Also instrumental in the relief effort was the National Society's newly established water and sanitation department set up with ICRC support (see *Civilians*).

Communication staff received training in integrating first-aid instruction into campaigns promoting humanitarian principles in order to raise awareness of life-saving techniques in rural areas. Volunteers working with children affected by armed conflict and other situations of violence shared their experiences with and learnt from representatives of other National Societies at an international conference on the subject held in Geneva, Switzerland. The Burundi Red Cross reported on all these activities via strengthened communication channels, including a new website launched in May.

Movement partners met regularly to coordinate their activities and help strengthen the National Society's structures.