

# GEORGIA



The ICRC has been present in Georgia since 1992. It supports the families of missing persons and works to protect and assist displaced people and other vulnerable groups in conflict-affected regions. It visits detainees throughout Georgia, including in South Ossetia, and provides expertise on health-related issues in places of detention. It promotes the national implementation of IHL and its integration into armed and security forces' doctrine, training and sanctions and into academic curricula. The ICRC helps strengthen the capacities of the Red Cross Society of Georgia.

## KEY RESULTS/CONSTRAINTS

### In 2013:

- ▶ people crossed Abkhaz and South Ossetian administrative boundary lines to obtain urgent medical attention or reunite with family members, with the ICRC acting as a neutral intermediary to facilitate their safe passage
- ▶ through the bipartite coordination mechanisms for persons missing in relation to the Georgia-Abkhaz conflict, 64 sets of human remains were exhumed in Abkhazia, with 7 sets of remains being identified
- ▶ detainees in Georgia proper and South Ossetia benefited from ICRC visits to monitor their conditions, as well as family visits and, in Georgia proper, a primary health care programme extended to 4 additional places of detention
- ▶ without acceptance by the *de facto* Abkhaz authorities of the ICRC's standard procedures, visits to people held in Abkhazia remained suspended, with some family-links services for detainees continuing
- ▶ vulnerable people throughout Georgia, including Abkhazia and South Ossetia, received assistance to meet their immediate needs and to rebuild economic self-sufficiency, as appropriate
- ▶ Georgian armed forces continued to review their doctrine and redraft military manuals in line with IHL and other applicable norms, with technical support from the ICRC

EXPENDITURE (in KCHF)	
Protection	2,865
Assistance	5,453
Prevention	1,408
Cooperation with National Societies	575
General	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,301</b>

of which: Overheads 629

IMPLEMENTATION RATE	
Expenditure/yearly budget	104%

PERSONNEL	
Mobile staff	18
Resident staff (daily workers not included)	182

## YEARLY RESULT

Level of achievement of ICRC yearly objectives/plans of action **MEDIUM**

PROTECTION	Total
<b>CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)</b>	
<b>Red Cross messages (RCMs)</b>	
RCMs collected	260
RCMs distributed	185
People located (tracing cases closed positively)	46
People reunited with their families	25
<b>PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)</b>	
<b>ICRC visits</b>	
Detainees visited	12,562
Detainees visited and monitored individually	125
Number of visits carried out	109
Number of places of detention visited	17
<b>Restoring family links</b>	
RCMs collected	112
RCMs distributed	95

ASSISTANCE	Targets	Achieved
<b>CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)</b>		
<b>Economic security, water and habitat (in some cases provided within a protection or cooperation programme)</b>		
Food commodities	Beneficiaries 440	536
Essential household items	Beneficiaries 1,000	532
Productive inputs	Beneficiaries 1,440	1,100
Cash	Beneficiaries 1,975	2,635
Work, services and training	Beneficiaries 2,270	
Water and habitat activities	Beneficiaries 970	9,309
<b>WOUNDED AND SICK</b>		
<b>Water and habitat</b>		
Water and habitat activities	Number of beds	540

## CONTEXT

Civilians continued to feel the effects of past conflicts, which were exacerbated by socio-economic uncertainty. The demarcation and reinforcement of the Abkhaz and South Ossetian administrative boundary lines continued, impeding the free movement of people. Persons attempting to cross the boundaries were still being arrested, and family links and livelihoods remained disrupted. Over 2,000 families were still without news of relatives unaccounted for in connection with past conflicts.

Peace negotiations (the “Geneva Talks”) continued among representatives of Georgia, the Russian Federation, Abkhazia and South Ossetia, mediated by the European Union (EU), the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe and the UN. Monthly meetings of the Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism and the EU Monitoring Mission helped maintain open lines of communication between the parties, including on humanitarian issues related to the administrative boundaries. The Georgian government appointed a special envoy to the Russian Federation.

Presidential elections took place peacefully in October. After the change of government in 2012, reforms to the justice and penitentiary system resulted in a large-scale amnesty programme and the release of more than half the detainees in Georgian prisons. The government initiated improvements in the prison system for the remaining prisoners.

Despite economic measures taken by the government, Georgia still faced widespread poverty and high unemployment. It continued to work towards integration in the EU, with which it initialed an association agreement in November, as well as towards membership in NATO.

Abkhazia and South Ossetia continued to look primarily to the Russian Federation for aid and development support.

## ICRC ACTION AND RESULTS

Acting as a neutral intermediary, the ICRC facilitated life-saving medical evacuations, reunification of separated family members, the return of human remains to their families and transfers of official documents across the administrative boundaries. The ICRC remained the only international organization conducting humanitarian activities in South Ossetia.

In a similar intermediary capacity, the ICRC chaired the meetings of the two coordination mechanisms working on the issue of persons who had gone missing in relation to past conflicts. Within the framework of these mechanisms, 64 sets of human remains were exhumed in Abkhazia, of which 7 were identified. Two sets exhumed in 2012 were handed over to the families. Five sets of human remains exhumed in Tskhinvali/Tskhinval, along the South Ossetian administrative border, were subjected to a comprehensive forensic examination. Under the accompaniment project, the families of the missing received psychological/legal/economic assistance. The collection of ante-mortem data and biological reference samples from the families of the missing continued.

The ICRC continued visiting detainees in Georgia proper and South Ossetia, but visits to detainees in Abkhazia remained suspended. Following visits, the authorities and *de facto* authorities received feedback on detainees’ treatment and conditions. RCMs and parcel deliveries kept detainees, including those in Abkhazia,

in touch with their families; detainees in Georgia proper and South Ossetia benefited from family visits facilitated by the ICRC.

The ICRC continued to pursue dialogue with the new penitentiary authorities in Georgia on health in detention. Supporting their commitment to provide health care to detainees, the ICRC backed the roll-out of the primary health care programme to four additional places of detention.

Vulnerable people – households from which someone had gone missing, people affected by the demarcation process, victims of mines or explosive remnants of war (ERW), and IDPs – received cash grants and business training to start or expand income-generating activities, facilitating their self-sufficiency. The ICRC, with the Red Cross Society of Georgia, helped vulnerable residents in Georgia proper to make at least one room in their dwellings warm and dry; help was provided for repairing centres housing displaced families. The ICRC provided technical/material assistance for several dozen villages to repair or maintain their water supply systems, improving access for those in the vicinity. Particularly vulnerable individuals in South Ossetia received food and hygiene items to meet their immediate needs.

In Georgia proper, the ICRC referred patients in need of assistive devices, including people injured by mines/ERW, to partner institutions and paid for their treatment and related costs. Some people in Abkhazia and South Ossetia received mobility devices. The National Society, with ICRC support, collected data on the needs of mine/ERW victims and their families, aimed at developing an effective response to their needs.

The ICRC gave the Georgian armed forces guidance in reviewing their doctrine, training manuals and decision-making processes in line with IHL; it also provided support for the national IHL committee to resume its activities. It sponsored students’ participation in IHL competitions domestically and abroad and facilitated further training for instructors. Contact with the media contributed to accurate coverage of humanitarian issues and ICRC activities. A mine-awareness campaign and events marking the International Day of the Disappeared helped raise public awareness.

The ICRC, with other Movement partners, maintained its technical/financial support for the Georgian Red Cross to enhance its ability to carry out humanitarian activities.

## CIVILIANS

### More people obtain medical attention and reunite with their families across boundary lines

The ICRC continued dialogue with the authorities and *de facto* authorities on the concerns of people living along the administrative boundary lines, particularly regarding the humanitarian impact of movement restrictions, and the maintenance of family links.

People crossed Abkhaz and South Ossetian administrative boundary lines to obtain medical attention or reunite with family members, their passage facilitated by the ICRC in its role as a neutral intermediary. In coordination with the authorities, 150 medical evacuations for 139 people, of which 99 were urgent, were conducted; 25 people were reunited with family members; 5 sets of human remains were returned to their families by the ICRC; the organization also facilitated the return of 12 other sets of remains to their relatives. Most of these activities took place across the

Georgian–South Ossetian administrative boundary. Family members on different sides of the boundaries exchanged RCMs, and 44 persons had official documents relayed across boundary lines.

Boosting the availability of health care in South Ossetia, three doctors upgraded their skills at an emergency room trauma course in the Russian Federation.

### **Families find some closure by learning the fate of their relatives**

Georgian and Abkhaz representatives to the bipartite coordination mechanism working on the issue of persons missing in relation to the 1992–93 conflict met under ICRC auspices. In Sokhumi/Sukhum, 64 sets of human remains were exhumed from the Park Slavy site and analysed with support from a team of Argentine forensic anthropologists; 7 sets were identified and prepared for return to their families. Two sets of human remains from the first Abkhaz exhumation in 2012 were returned to their families (see above). Abkhaz experts took part in all aspects of the Park Slavy exhumations and continued to build up their forensic capacities.

To aid future identification efforts, biological reference samples were collected from relatives of missing persons in Georgia proper and Abkhazia. The coordination mechanism reached an agreement on exhumation sites for 2014.

Georgian, Russian and South Ossetian participants in the tripartite coordination mechanism dealing with the 2008 and earlier conflicts discussed the resolution of cases of missing persons. Efforts to identify previously exhumed remains continued: five sets of human remains exhumed in March in Tskhinvali/Tskhinval were subjected to a comprehensive forensic examination, to obtain biological profiles for matching with ante-mortem data.

Both the bipartite and the tripartite coordination mechanisms benefited from the technical expertise of Croatian partner institutions. A preliminary meeting on creating a national coordination body in Georgia for missing persons took place in June, with the aim of streamlining efforts and increasing efficiency.

After receiving ICRC training, Georgian Red Cross volunteers collected ante-mortem data from the families of missing persons in Georgia proper. ICRC-trained representatives of the Abkhaz commission on the missing did the same in Abkhazia.

### **Families of the missing receive psychosocial support**

Under the accompaniment project, the families of missing persons continued to receive psychosocial support and legal assistance from the ICRC and partner NGOs; 226 additional families joined the project, bringing the total number of beneficiaries to 860 families since the start of the project in 2010. In South Ossetia, the families of the missing participated in two commemorative events organized by a partner NGO. Some 210 families attended information sessions on the collection of ante-mortem data and biological reference samples, co-organized by partner NGOs and the National Society, whose capacities the ICRC had helped strengthen.

Public events marking the International Day of the Disappeared, some of which were attended by relatives of the missing, helped the families commemorate their relatives and lean on each other for support.

### **Vulnerable households meet their basic needs and regain self-sufficiency**

In South Ossetia and in the remote Kodori Gorge in Abkhazia, vulnerable people met their immediate needs after receiving basic items. Others worked towards economic independence using agricultural supplies/equipment, cash grants and basic business training from the National Society/ICRC. Beneficiaries' responses during periodic monitoring visits enabled the ICRC to adapt its assistance approach to address their specific needs.

In the Kodori Gorge, 27 persons (16 households) met their basic needs with food assistance from the ICRC; there were fewer beneficiaries than expected, as some had received income support in 2012. In South Ossetia, 532 persons (295 households) improved their living conditions through the provision of hygiene and/or other essential household items such as clothing, bedding and heaters, as well as monthly food rations in most cases. Thirteen lonely, elderly individuals received assistance during home visits.

In Georgia proper and Abkhazia, 523 households (1,899 persons) – families who had been displaced or whose breadwinners had gone missing, persons affected by the boundary demarcation process, and economically vulnerable mine/ERW victims – established, by means of ICRC cash grants, more sustainable livelihoods with activities such as livestock rearing or beekeeping. In preparation for setting up their own micro-enterprises, 468 of those who had received income support learnt the basics of running a business. In South Ossetia, 340 households (1,098 persons) in both rural and urban areas received tools and/or other agricultural supplies. For instance, following a 2012 hailstorm that destroyed their harvest, 258 households (750 persons) restored food production with donated seed. In Tbet village, 18 households increased food production after receiving irrigation equipment.

A study was carried out for the benefit of apple farmers in South Ossetia; its recommendations were to be discussed with key stakeholders. However, a planned veterinary training course did not take place owing to lack of authorization from the *de facto* Ministry of Agriculture in South Ossetia.

### **Residents and IDPs have better access to water and improved housing**

In Didi Mejvriskhevi, along the South Ossetian administrative boundary, some 2,500 persons had better access to water after a pumping station was rehabilitated and material provided for its upkeep. In South Ossetia, people in 4 administrative regions improved their access to water through ICRC-donated supplies that helped them repair or maintain existing networks; among them were some 650 people from 8 villages that also benefited from rehabilitation projects. The national water board received submersible pumps to help them maintain the water lines in 56 villages (4,800 people) along the administrative boundary. Likewise, authorities responsible for the maintenance of the Tskhinvali/Tskhinval hospital received support in doing so.

Some 410 vulnerable people (150 households) in Georgia proper stayed warm during the winter after repairing at least one room in each of their dwellings with funds from a National Society/ICRC shelter-improvement project. In South Ossetia, 10 families improved their living conditions through renovations that provided them with one dry room. At 2 collective centres in

Imereti, 48 displaced families (150 persons) benefited from repairs to roofs and replacement of windows. Technical assessments were in progress at other centres.

### Mine/ERW victims receive treatment and assistance

Mine/ERW victims in need of prostheses/orthoses and wheelchairs were referred to the Georgian Foundation for Prosthetic Orthopaedic Rehabilitation. Some 90 individuals in Georgia proper, Abkhazia and South Ossetia improved their mobility through assistive devices and/or ICRC coverage of their treatment costs, including transportation, food and housing.

With ICRC support, National Society staff continued to collect mine/ERW-related data in Georgia proper, facilitating assessment of the needs of victims and formulation of an appropriate response; such data was also collected in Abkhazia by the ICRC. A National Society staff member trained in entering information in the mine-action database.

A representative of South Ossetia's *de facto* Ministry of Emergency Situations attended a conference on humanitarian demining in the Russian Federation (see *Moscow*).

To mark the International Day of Disability, a football match for amputees, including mine/ERW victims, was organized in Sokhumi/Sukhum. Local TV channels covered the match. In South Ossetia, Mine Awareness Day events were organized in cooperation with the *de facto* Ministry of Emergency Situations.

### PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM

Security detainees in Georgia proper and in South Ossetia, including people held in connection with past armed conflicts, for crossing administrative boundary lines, or on charges of spying, conducting "terrorist" activities or forming armed groups, some of whom were foreigners, received ICRC visits conducted in accordance with the organization's standard procedures. Visits to detainees in Abkhazia, however, remained suspended, pending an agreement with the *de facto* authorities on the ICRC's standard procedures for such visits. Following visits, the authorities and *de facto* authorities continued to receive confidential feedback and recommendations on detainees' treatment and living conditions; moreover, the Georgian authorities received a comprehensive report on conditions of detention, covering 2011 and 2012, containing the ICRC's feedback.

In view of administrative changes at the penitentiary department in Georgia proper, the ICRC kept in close touch with the detaining authorities to maintain access to detainees and secure acceptance for its working procedures and approach to helping address detention-related issues. Such contact, including with the head of the penitentiary department, resulted in the ICRC's first meeting with all the directors and head doctors of Georgian prisons. Prison management and health in detention were discussed.

Detainees throughout Georgia, including foreigners and/or those held in Abkhazia and South Ossetia, stayed in touch with their relatives through RCMs and/or parcels. Moreover, detainees in Georgia proper and South Ossetia benefited from family visits, some lasting 24 hours; their relatives traveled across administrative boundary lines, with the ICRC acting as a neutral intermediary to facilitate their safe passage. One Abkhaz family's transport costs to visit a detained relative were covered by the ICRC.

One person formerly held at the US internment facility at Guantanamo Bay Naval Station in Cuba, who had resettled in Georgia, had his health monitored and was visited by his brother with the ICRC's help; by mid-year, he was repatriated to Libya at his request.

### Detainees benefit from improvements in health care

Owing to the extension of the primary health care programme in detention facilities in Georgia proper, detainees in four additional places of detention had access to better care, bringing the overall number of sites covered to 11. With ICRC-provided technical/training support, regular supervision and donations of medical supplies/equipment, detainees in 15 places of detention, including the 11 mentioned above, had improved access to health care. Over 20 prison doctors and 36 nurses received training, including in mental health care.

At one facility in Tskhinvali/Tskhinval, detainees benefited from repairs to hygiene facilities. Detainees under the responsibility of South Ossetia's *de facto* Interior and Justice Ministries received bedding, hygiene kits and recreational items; one foreign detainee without family support received seasonal clothing.

PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM	GEORGIA	ABKHAZIA	SOUTH OSSETIA
<b>ICRC visits</b>			
Detainees visited	12,481		81
	<i>of whom women</i>	655	1
	<i>of whom minors</i>	63	
Detainees visited and monitored individually	104		21
	<i>of whom women</i>	8	1
Detainees newly registered	53		13
	<i>of whom women</i>	1	
Number of visits carried out	86		23
Number of places of detention visited	14		3
<b>Restoring family links</b>			
RCMs collected	91	2	19
RCMs distributed	67	5	23
Detainees visited by their relatives with ICRC/National Society support	18		4
People to whom a detention attestation was issued	17		

## **AUTHORITIES, ARMED FORCES AND OTHER BEARERS OF WEAPONS, AND CIVIL SOCIETY**

Discussions with the authorities and the *de facto* authorities focused on their responsibilities under IHL and other applicable norms and on the ICRC's role as a neutral intermediary. In particular, such dialogue covered the issue of missing persons and the need to find sustainable solutions to the difficulties faced by conflict-affected populations, including IDPs. The ICRC received the *de facto* authorities' approval to conduct humanitarian activities in South Ossetia until May 2014.

Village administrations, police/security officers along the administrative boundary lines, and international actors in the area attended dissemination sessions where they improved their understanding of the ICRC's humanitarian activities and their neutral, impartial and independent nature, helping secure support for these efforts.

Following the change of government in 2012 and the pause in the national IHL committee's work, the Justice Ministry established a list of new members of the committee and prepared a draft action plan for 2014–15, having discussed related matters with the ICRC.

### **Media raises awareness of missing persons and mine risks**

The public increased their awareness of humanitarian issues, including the issues of mine risks and of missing persons and the ongoing efforts in these domains, through media round-tables, radio broadcasts and interviews. Coverage of the issue of missing persons in particular – facilitated by the ICRC – drew attention to the plight of the people affected and the importance of addressing their needs.

### **Armed forces advance the incorporation of IHL in training**

Cooperation with the Georgian Defence Ministry helped incorporate IHL in military doctrine, training and operations. With ICRC technical support, the Georgian armed forces continued to review their doctrine and to redraft military manuals in line with IHL and other internationally recognized standards.

With ICRC sponsorship, a senior military officer participated in the Senior Workshop on International Rules Governing Military Operations in Cartagena, Colombia (see *International law and cooperation*); a senior official from the Ministry of Defence learnt more about legal sanctions at a workshop in Geneva, Switzerland. Further promoting IHL integration into military decision-making processes, armed forces personnel attended in-house training sessions; for instance, some 20 officers enhanced their understanding of the basics of IHL at a five-day course.

The *de facto* authorities in Abkhazia facilitated an ICRC-supported IHL workshop in Sokhumi/Sukhum for instructors from the military training school. The ICRC's request to conduct dissemination sessions for South Ossetian armed/security forces was not approved.

### **Learning on IHL continues**

With ICRC support, IHL instruction at Georgian universities continued to evolve; students participated in international moot-court competitions, and two university lecturers attended an advanced course in Geneva. IHL instructors met to improve coordination in the teaching of the subject. University students participated in a training course and an IHL competition in Sokhumi/Sukhum. While the *de facto* authorities in South Ossetia did not respond to an offer of support for university professors, the *de facto* Ministry of Education conducted the second IHL Summer School for schoolchildren from Tskhinvali/Tskhinval and rural areas.

### **RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT**

The Georgian Red Cross, having signed a Movement coordination agreement in 2011, continued to work with Movement partners to strengthen its ability to deliver humanitarian services.

To enhance its emergency preparedness and response capacities, the National Society established a volunteer-management system at four branches; participated in training courses, including in first aid; and applied for European certification of its first-aid programme. As part of its role in national emergency response, the National Society initiated field simulation exercises with State emergency responders in four places. National Society staff received training in projects providing psychological support for vulnerable people. With the ICRC's help, the National Society worked to improve its ability to deliver family-links services, particularly in non-conflict-related tracing cases. It also established an action plan for activities in sensitive areas.

MAIN FIGURES AND INDICATORS: PROTECTION		Total		
<b>CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)</b>				
<b>Red Cross messages (RCMs)</b>			UAMs/SCs*	
RCMs collected		260		
RCMs distributed		185		
<b>Reunifications, transfers and repatriations</b>				
People reunited with their families		25		
People transferred/repatriated		544		
Human remains transferred/repatriated		5		
<b>Tracing requests, including cases of missing persons</b>			Women	Minors
People for whom a tracing request was newly registered		2,123	327	55
People located (tracing cases closed positively)		46		
Tracing cases still being handled at the end of the reporting period (people)		2,113	328	56
<b>Documents</b>				
Official documents relayed between family members across border/front lines		49		
<b>PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)</b>				
<b>ICRC visits</b>			Women	Minors
Detainees visited		12,562	656	63
Detainees visited and monitored individually		125	9	
Detainees newly registered		66	1	
Number of visits carried out		109		
Number of places of detention visited		17		
<b>Restoring family links</b>				
RCMs collected		112		
RCMs distributed		95		
Detainees visited by their relatives with ICRC/National Society support		22		
People to whom a detention attestation was issued		17		

\* Unaccompanied minors/separated children

MAIN FIGURES AND INDICATORS: ASSISTANCE		Total	Women	Children
<b>CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)</b>				
<b>Economic security, water and habitat (in some cases provided within a protection or cooperation programme)</b>				
Food commodities	Beneficiaries	536	47%	25%
	<i>of whom IDPs</i>	8		
Essential household items	Beneficiaries	532	47%	26%
	<i>of whom IDPs</i>	9		
Productive inputs	Beneficiaries	1,100	39%	26%
Cash	Beneficiaries	2,635	42%	25%
	<i>of whom IDPs</i>	808		
Water and habitat activities	Beneficiaries	9,309	37%	20%
	<i>of whom IDPs</i>	2,463		
<b>PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)</b>				
<b>Economic security, water and habitat (in some cases provided within a protection programme)</b>				
Essential household items	Beneficiaries	10		
Water and habitat activities	Beneficiaries	55		
<b>Health</b>				
Number of visits carried out by health staff		4		
Number of places of detention visited by health staff		15		
<b>WOUNDED AND SICK</b>				
<b>Water and habitat</b>				
Water and habitat activities	Number of beds	540		