



ICRC

July - December 2007

BULLETIN

ICRC REGIONAL DELEGATION FOR SOUTHERN AFRICA

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Mabel Sithole/ICRC

Editorial

I would like to begin by wishing you all a happy and prosperous new year. This publication is an opportunity for us to share with you our activities in 2007 as we begin the new year.

There were several highlights during the second half of 2007.

The ICRC was able to participate in the National Immunization Days, organized by the Ministry of Health throughout Zimbabwe (see photo above). Health teams across the country reached thousands of infants in need of vaccinations. The Delegation provided some of these teams in Makoni, Chivi and Tsholotsho with transportation to facilitate this important initiative.

An additional step was taken by the ICRC to assist not only rural communities, but urban areas as well with water and sanitation. After signing a memorandum of understanding with the Zimbabwe National Water Authority (ZINWA), the ICRC will embark on a program to improve water supply and quality to the residents of Zimbabwe's capital city, Harare and its surrounding areas.

In the course of 2007, the Delegation continued visiting detainees in Namibia, Botswana and Zambia. In Namibia and Botswana, the ICRC has organized and financially supported family visits for more than a hundred inmates, with the help of the National Red Cross Societies in both countries.

In 2007, within the framework of its worldwide efforts to restore links between family members separated as a result of conflict, the ICRC in the region reunified 21 unaccompanied children with their families, in cooperation with the concerned National Red Cross Societies.

Our Delegation was also able to support the Zimbabwean Red Cross National Society during the floods that affected the north-eastern part of the country, by providing several thousand blankets and hundreds of plastic sheeting.

In the promotion of International Humanitarian Law (IHL) in academic circles, the University of Zimbabwe won the National IHL Moot Court, and went on to emerge as winners of the Pan-African IHL Moot Court Competition held in Arusha, Tanzania.

More broadly, the ICRC, through its President, launched an appeal to ban the use of cluster ammunitions that continue to maim and kill long after conflict has ended. The support of the SADC countries, as a "conflict free" region is therefore of utmost importance in order to continue to promote the principle that not everything is allowed in time of war.

Although the situation in Zimbabwe does not typically fall within ICRC mandate, our Delegation in Harare remains concerned about the challenges prevailing today in the country in these difficult times that are affecting its population. The delegation wishes to continue supporting the Ministry of Health and ZINWA in order to assist the people of Zimbabwe in these times of hardship.

We look forward to a better 2008, as we carry out our humanitarian activities and wish you all the best in 2008!

Zoran Jovanovic
Head of Regional Delegation
Southern Africa

Namibian Prisons Officers Attend Workshop



Participants of the Human Rights and Humanitarian Law workshop.

Twenty-five officers in charge of several penitentiary institutions around Namibia, representatives from the Prison Headquarters and senior instructors from the Namibian Prison Training College (NPTC) were brought together during a workshop on Human Rights and Humanitarian Principles organized by the ICRC.

The four-day workshop looked at Human Rights Law and theory in relation to the penitentiary environment and to prison management (administration of justice, inmate's physical and mental health, prisoners' rights, use of force, punishment and discipline), taking into account the particular situation in the Namibian context.

Role of the National Red Cross

The Namibian Red Cross Society which works closely in cooperation with the ICRC to organize family visits presented its role and humanitarian activities in the country on the opening day. ■

Visiting Detained Persons in the Region

In Namibia, 127 persons detained in connection with the Caprivi uprising in 1999 have been visited three times in 2007 by the ICRC. In Botswana, the ICRC regularly visited 16 Namibian detainees at the Francistown Centre for Illegal Immigrants until their release in December 2007. In the course of the year, the institution also visited six security detainees in Zambia.

ICRC prison visits are conducted worldwide according to a standard

procedure to assess the living conditions and treatment of detainees with a view to making recommendations to the responsible authorities, in a strictly confidential manner. The institution provides detainees with assistance (i.e. toiletries) and organizes family visits on a regular basis. The ICRC has been visiting persons detained in relation to armed conflict and internal disturbances since 1915 during World War I. ■



An ICRC delegate visits a detainee.

Families Visit Loved Ones

As a result of the uprising in the Caprivi strip of Namibia in 1999, many of the people who were involved have been detained by the authorities. Many high treason detainees were first held at Grootfontein Prison, north of Windhoek, Namibia's capital, and later transferred to Windhoek Central Prison some 1300 kilometres from their home villages. Consequently, their families have faced great challenges travelling the long distance to visit them.



A family member registering to visit a detained loved one in Namibia.

The problems experienced by families whose loved ones were detained far away from home came to the ICRC's attention, and in 2003 the institution in cooperation with the Namibia Red Cross Society (NRCS) began facilitating family visits. For many detainees these ICRC-sponsored visits represent a unique occasion to rejoin their wives, children and closest relations, even if only briefly, and receive news from home. As they confirmed during the visits,

without the assistance of the Red Cross, most family members could not afford to embark on the long expensive journey.

Esther's * (not her real name) husband is detained in Windhoek Central Prison. She explained to the Red Cross team that the privilege to see her husband and enjoy his company, even only for an hour a day, brought her great comfort and renewed hope. Prior to joining the family visit program, Esther visited her

husband at Grootfontein using her own funds. When he was moved to Windhoek prison she was unable to see him for many years since she could not raise the money to travel the long distance. Esther's family and some 240 others from the Caprivi strip visit 120 of their loved ones detained at the prison in Windhoek. They appreciate the three-day visits and allowances for transport, accommodation and food provided by the ICRC and NRCS. ■

Maria Leaves Mayukwayukwa Refugee Camp

Maria* (not her real name), an 18-year old girl, was thrilled, anxious and expectant when told that she and her three younger sisters were going to be reunited with their father's sister in Angola. She told the story of how her mother died in Angola during the war,

and later, the death of her father after a long illness at the Mayukwayukwa refugee camp in Zambia. The camp had become her family's home although it carried sad memories.

On 19 November, an ICRC vehicle picked up the three sisters for the long five-hour drive to Lusaka. Their excitement was dampened by the fact that one of their sisters decided to stay behind with her fiancé. They wondered if they would ever see her again.

The girls had always wanted to experience the bright city lights of Lusaka. Now, they had the opportunity to visit the city. Their day began with shopping. Later they went to a clinic to receive yellow fever vaccinations before leaving Zambia. Four days later, their flight from Lusaka touched down in Luanda. Maria and her sisters were received at the airport by their aunt whose happiness and relief was shown by her tears of joy and the hugs they received.

Maria was one of the 21 unaccompanied children reunified by ICRC in the region in 2007. Along with her, ten Angolan and ten Congolese children plus one Namibian child were reunified with their respective families.



Family reunited by the ICRC in Liberia.

Supporting the National Immunization Campaign



A baby receives Vitamin A during the immunization campaign in Makoni District.

Vaccination at birth or soon thereafter is vital to protecting every child from life threatening diseases. To ensure children all around Zimbabwe have access to this important immunization, the country's Ministry of Health participates in the bi-annual National Immunization Days organized in many African countries. Last November, the Ministry sent out medical teams in many parts of the country to reach children in areas that have little or no access to these vaccinations.

In November 2007, the ICRC, after being approached by the Ministry of Health, supported the Ministry by providing transportation for medical teams. The institution gave its assistance in Tsholotsho, Chivi and Makoni districts where it works (see side bar). The campaign reached thousands of children aged five years and below with immunization against polio and other vaccinations according to the child's immunization status, plus it enabled vitamin A to be administered.

At Batanai, Sherenje and Pfumoiguru Primary Schools in Makoni district mothers waiting anxiously were excited to see the ICRC drive through the school gates with a medical team.

Hundreds of mothers some of whom walked long distances turned out at each point for the opportunity to have their children immunized.

Others were more fortunate as the teams came near their communities. *"Without this immunization point, I*

would have to walk seven or eight kilometres for my baby to be immunized," remarked Theresa Mandizvidza* (a young mother) who lives far away from the nearest clinic in their area. Mama Theresa's other two children were immunized through similar campaigns.

The importance of the immunization campaign is well understood by many local communities. Mbuya Gertrude Manyanga* commended the district health and ICRC team saying, *"My children and grandchildren come for immunization no matter what. Prevention of child killer diseases is important and it is a great help to us that medical people come to us".* According to one district nurse who participated, *"This exercise was beneficial because we managed to catch all the children who missed other immunization opportunities. We managed to reach groups such as apostolic followers who normally do not have their children immunized".*

Every year the ICRC participates in the National Immunization Days in several countries around the world supporting authorities to immunize children whose lives would otherwise be threatened by preventable diseases. ■

Rural Communities Benefit from ICRC Donations

"The road seemed not to end and a shortcut was out of the question! After two kilometres in a wagon pulled by my cattle, I arrived just in time to deliver my baby at the clinic. Thanks to my sister and brother-in-law I could reach the nearest clinic that is supported by the ICRC", recounted Vimbai* (not her real name), a young woman from Makoni as she reminisced about the birth of a baby daughter.

The ICRC is working closely with the district health authorities to support health centres in the most remote rural areas of Makoni, Tsholotsho and Chivi districts by regularly providing much needed pharmaceutical drugs and medical

supplies to health structures, and delivering important training to empower health workers. ■



A mother and her immunized baby.

Every Drop Counts: Providing Water for Rural Communities



Children playing at a well rehabilitated by the ICRC in rural Liberia.

Safe water is an indispensable human need. It quenches thirst, cleans, circumvents disease, and in so doing improves overall health. Even so, a large percentage of the world's population lacks access to it. In this respect, some rural communities in Zimbabwe's remote countryside are adversely affected. As a result, the ICRC conducted an assessment in June 2006 to determine the extent of the problem with the aim of assisting these communities.

The institution's assessment identified the most needy communities living in three areas namely, Makoni, Chivi and Tsholotsho districts. Through an integrated program between the water and sanitation and the health departments, the organization developed an initiative to assist those communities, and support clinics that provide them with health services in order to reach some 100'000 people. This two-pronged approach would involve rehabilitating already existing water and sanitation infrastructure

while at the same time constructing new structures.

An integrated approach

According to Christophe Grange, the ICRC's water and sanitation engineer, "The first approach was to assist communities with spare parts to repair hand-pumps that had broken down. The institution also gave technical support to the District Development Fund (DDF) workshop to improve maintenance and repair of existing water points." During 2007, more than 300 hand-pumps were repaired with materials donated by the ICRC to the DDF thus providing safe water for an estimated 100,000 residents of communities living in the three districts.

In the second approach, the ICRC sets up independent water supply systems, and the improvement of sanitation facilities for 15 rural healthcare clinics (five in each district). Improvement of sanitation

facilities in the clinics were undertaken with the construction of nine latrines, nine temporary incinerator tanks, permanent brick incinerator and two disposal pits.

The water supply improvement program also included drilling boreholes and fitting them with pressure pumps. Nine boreholes were drilled in Chivi and Makoni Districts and each fully equipped with pressure bush pumps. In Tsholotsho district, three boreholes were rehabilitated.

Community support and involvement

Working together in the spirit of mutual support, the involvement and participation of local communities at the grassroots level is of utter importance to implementation of this program. The ICRC continues to work closely with communities that have dug out all the trenches for water pipes, and erected platforms on which water tanks were mounted. ■

Zimbabwe Wins International Competition

Last December, the University of Zimbabwe (UZ) represented by Fadzayi Mahere, Thabani Mpofu, and Farai Mushoriwa scored a double prize when they clinched the first prize at the Pan-African International Humanitarian Law (IHL) Moot Court Competition in Arusha, Tanzania.

The team qualified to represent Zimbabwe after winning the National IHL Moot Court against Midlands State University held at the UZ campus in Harare. The event was presided over by a high profile panel of judges made up of the Judge President of the High Court, Honourable Justice Rita Makarau; the Judge-Advocate General of the Zimbabwe Defence Forces, Brig. Gen. Charles Tarumbwa; the Counsel to Parliament of Zimbabwe, Ms. Choice Damiso; and the Head of the ICRC Harare Regional Delegation, Mr. Zoran Jovanovic.

Winning the Pan-African Competition

At the international competition, the Zimbabwe team faced eleven other universities from Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia, Uganda, Lesotho, Mauritius, Sierra Leone, Tanzania and Rwanda. The team emerged as the semi-finalists after five challenging preliminary rounds. On the final day of



Arrival of the Zimbabwean team from Arusha at Harare International Airport.

the competition, the team met Ethiopia in the last round which was a simulated court proceeding in the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda. Full of anxiety, the Zimbabwe team jumped in excitement as they were declared the winners of the competition. Their coach, Advocate Happias Zhou, was the backbone of the team supporting the students and advising them on how best to prepare for both the national and international competitions.

"...opened my eyes to new things, and I will never be the same again".

"The Pan-African Moot Court Competition opened my eyes to new things, and I will never be the same again" declared Fadzayi Mahere, the lady of the Zimbabwean team. The four trophies that the team brought back home from Tanzania are a testimony that the experience was one to remember. Over and above the trophies, two team members; Fadzayi Mahere and Thabani Mpofu were awarded highly coveted internships. This is a great career opportunity for the soon to be graduated University of Zimbabwe law students. ■



The Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement in Southern Africa

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), 186 National Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies (from 186 countries), and the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (the International Federation) together constitute the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. The mission of the Movement is to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found, and to protect life and health, ensuring respect for the human being during armed conflict and disasters such as floods and landslides.

The ICRC cooperates with National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and with their International Federation in order to ensure a coordinated, rational and rapid humanitarian response to the needs of people affected by armed conflict, situation of internal violence or disasters. In a country affected by armed conflict, the ICRC and that country's National Society pool their resources through various activities such as first aid and health care, distributing food, taking war casualties to hospital and restoring family links between separated family members. This can also involve National Societies from other countries that wish to offer assistance in places where the ICRC is working.

Cooperation between Movement partners is an important channel for developing the skills and knowledge of National Societies. Thanks to its operational experience and knowledge, the ICRC makes its expertise available to the National Societies in the fields of first aid,

disaster preparedness and response, health care, restoring links between separated family members, and promoting international humanitarian law and the Movement's principles. Towards this end, the Movement's partners are regularly involved in orientation and training workshops and seminars, and exchange of human resources to gain valuable experience in other contexts.

Movement Cooperation in Southern Africa

Within the six countries in the Southern Africa region where the ICRC is working based in Harare, thousands of people affected by the conflicts in Angola and the Democratic Republic of Congo remain displaced as refugees in and outside established camps in Zambia. The ICRC continues working towards establishing links between separated family members, and tracing the families of separated children in order to reunite them with their loved ones or closest relatives. In Namibia and Botswana, the respective Red Cross

National Societies work closely with the ICRC to facilitate family visits to loved ones detained in prisons as a result of the 1999 uprising in the Caprivi region of Namibia. In Zimbabwe, the National Red Cross Society is involved in disaster response and management to assist people affected by floods, community based HIV/AIDS, First Aid, restoring family links, and water and sanitation.

The ICRC also provides technical, financial and material support to strengthen National Societies in the region with respect to disaster preparedness and response. More 100 volunteers from Red Cross National Societies in the region received special training and orientation on how to facilitate unimpeded humanitarian assistance in times of armed conflict and situations of violence by building relationships with authorities. In addition, 30 volunteers and staff participants to the "Regional Disaster Response Training" workshop organised by the International Federation in Botswana. ■



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The International Committee of the Red Cross is the Movement's founding body. In addition to carrying out operational activities to protect and assist victims of armed conflict, it is the promoter and custodian of International Humanitarian Law. It is also the guardian of the fundamental principals.



National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies act as auxiliaries to the public authorities of their own countries in the humanitarian field and provide a range of services including disaster relief and health and social programmes in wartime. National Societies assist the affected civilian population and, where appropriate, support the army medical services.



The International Federation
of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

The International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies supports the humanitarian activities of the National Societies for vulnerable communities. By coordinating international disaster relief and encouraging development aid, it seeks to prevent and alleviate human suffering.

Malaria Treatment Training as Rains Begin

Following a request by the Ministry of Health, the ICRC health team in December organized the training of 35 nurses on how to use a newly introduced malaria pharmaceutical drug, Coartem. The emphasis was on accurate detection and treatment of malaria, especially its severe form. Introduction of Coartem, its correct, effective and efficient use and the use of Rapid Diagnosis Laboratory Tests (RDT) were also presented. Nurses who attended the five-day training held in Mutare came from various health centres in Makoni district, Manicaland Province including the five health structures supported by the institution. The training incorporated practical sessions which were given at Mutare Provincial Hospital.

The District Medical Officer for Makoni district, Dr Mungati, thanked the ICRC for its support saying, "The use of Coartem will go a long way in reducing malaria infection in the district". Other government provincial and health officials graced the five-day event. The training was given at the beginning of the rain season which witnesses an upsurge of malaria cases. ■

ICRC Supports ZINWA

In November, the ICRC signed a memorandum of understanding with Zimbabwe National Water Authority (ZINWA) for a program aimed at improving the water quality and quantity to residents of Harare and its outskirts. The institution is supporting ZINWA in its rehabilitation of Morton Jaffray Water Treatment Plant, and will donate water testing laboratory equipment for testing water quality. The ICRC is also providing technical expertise to the network maintenance workshop responsible for repairing leakages and ensuring effective



Police officers with ICRC delegates in Tsholotsho District after the briefing sessions.

delivery. According to ZINWA, the programme will benefit residents living in Harare, Norton and Chitungwiza. ■

ICRC at SADC Peacekeeping Workshop

On 5 December 2007, the ICRC was invited by the SADC (Southern Africa Development Community) Regional Peacekeeping Training Centre in Harare to give a presentation on "International Humanitarian Law Integration and Training in multidimensional Peacekeeping Operations" during its Peacekeeping Support Operation workshop organized from 3 to 5 December. The ICRC's Armed Forces Delegate based in Pretoria delivered the lecture to an audience of some 70 participants from the SADC, United Nations, African Union, military / political attachés accredited in Zimbabwe, and civilian institutions involved in peacekeeping.

Youth Learn Humanitarian Law

In November, a series of five dissemination sessions on

humanitarian law and principles were organized for about 1300 youth attending National Youth Service and vocational training at institutions outside Harare. The sessions were delivered in Gweru, Chisumbaji, Middle Sabi, Magamba, and Katiyo at government-owned agricultural farms and vocational training centres where the young people are undertaking skill training. ■

Police Attend ICRC Information Sessions

In October, the ICRC organized two briefing sessions on the institution's history, mandate and operations for 52 police officers of the Zimbabwe Republic Police. The sessions held in Rusape and Tsholotsho brought together police officers from throughout the two districts where the ICRC has activities. The interactive sessions provided the ideal opportunity to make the institution and its activities better understood by the Zimbabwe Republic Police. The ICRC gives similar briefing sessions to Police all around the world. ■

(See picture above)



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The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is an impartial, neutral and independent organisation whose exclusively humanitarian mission is to protect the lives and dignity of victims of war and internal violence and to provide them with assistance. It directs and coordinates the international relief activities conducted by the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement in situations of conflict.

It also endeavours to prevent suffering by promoting and strengthening humanitarian law and universal humanitarian principles. Established in 1863, the ICRC is at the origin of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

For further information, visit our website at www.icrc.org or contact our communication department at our Harare regional delegation.



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