



ICRC

Niger: The work of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement in Diffa in 2015

In 2015, tens of thousands of people in Diffa had to contend with the repercussions of the fighting raging in and around that region. They included thousands of displaced persons who had sought shelter from the violent unrest in north-eastern Nigeria and thousands of others who had fled their homes in an attempt to find somewhere safe from the fighting and attacks, which had resulted in many casualties.



This situation strained the food supply and other resources of host communities already bearing the brunt of the combined effects of armed conflict and the natural disasters (floods and drought) that plague the region.

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement took the following humanitarian action to meet the significant increase in these people's needs in 2015.

Caring for the wounded and supporting health facilities



1,100 surgical operations were performed

The ICRC:

- helped treat more than 650 patients (conflict wounded or others in urgent need of surgery) at the Regional Hospital Centre (RHC) by carrying out some 1,100 operations;
- based a surgical team at the RHC (this consisted of an anaesthetist and four nurses who also provided local staff with training in new skills and technology);

- defrayed the costs of services not provided by the ICRC (laboratory tests, X-ray examinations, oxygen, hospital beds, food, surgical procedures, etc.);
- set up a dispensary at the RHC and regularly restocked it with medicine, medical consumables and surgical equipment;
- upgraded the operating theatre at the RHC;
- regularly supplied the Integrated Health Centre at Bosso with medicine, medical consumables and hygiene products;
- conducted prenatal checkups of 319 women and checkups of 227 infants, gave 6,219 people health counselling and treated 164 children under the age of five in the village of Baroua (in the commune of Bosso) for malnutrition;
- provided free health care for 4,878 people and family planning counselling for 300 women in the Baroua health post;
- distributed 4,500 mosquito nets to pregnant women and children under the age of five in the communes of Diffa, Gueskéroou and Toumour.



Food aid for displaced persons and vulnerable residents



Some 7,600 tonnes of foodstuffs were distributed among more than 116,000 people

The ICRC:

- distributed 6,190 tonnes of foodstuffs (millet, rice, beans, oil, salt and supercereals) to 94,524 people (internally displaced persons from islands in Lake Chad and villages along the Komadugu Yobe river and refugees/returnees from Nigeria, who have congregated in the main reception areas of N'guigmi, Kabléwa, Diffa, Toumour, Yébi and Bosso);
- provided 20,130 members of families hosting displaced persons with some 1,100 tonnes of food;
- distributed 360 tonnes of food to 9,000 people in 10 villages in the communes of Diffa, Chétimari and Mainé Soroa (where agricultural output at the end of the 2014 season had been far from adequate) to enable households to bridge their need for cereals between the 2014 and 2015 growing seasons.

Supporting agricultural production



Over 9,000 farmers received seed and fertilizer

The ICRC:

- distributed 20 tonnes of improved millet seed and 5 tonnes of improved black-eyed bean seed to 6,000 people in 7 villages in the commune of Mainé Soroa;
- distributed 10 tonnes of improved rice seed and 12.5 tonnes of fertilizer to 3,000 people in Diffa and Chétimari;
- stabilized 30 hectares of crescent-shaped dunes and cut 100 kilometres of fire breaks in Gueskéroou and Toumour.

Supporting livestock breeders



1.5 million animals were vaccinated against parasites to help 35,000 pastoralists' households

The ICRC:

- supported the vaccination of almost 1.5 million animals belonging to 35,000 households of pastoralists in the departments of Bosso, Diffa, N'guigmi and Mainé Soroa;
- joined forces with the Association pour la Redynamisation de l'Élevage au Niger to set up 14 animal fodder banks, which were initially stocked with 1,480 tonnes of wheat bran in order to supply livestock breeders with animal feed at a reasonable price.

Improving access to drinking water



Almost 100,000 people now have better access to water

The ICRC:

- financed the sinking of two high-flow boreholes (20 m³/h) in the towns of Diffa and Mainé Soroa, providing water for 55,000 people (residents, displaced persons and returnees);
- built and commissioned 52 boreholes equipped with hand pumps, serving 28,000 displaced persons or returnees in the communes of N'guigmi, Bosso, Toumour, Gueskéro, Diffa and Chétimari;
- built four additional tapstands in order to complete the extension of the small-scale water supply system at Garin-Dogo, which serves at least 2,000 people (residents, displaced persons and returnees);
- supplied and installed a submersible pump in the high-flow borehole at Bosso to ensure that 5,000 people (residents, displaced persons and returnees) have a continuous water supply;
- sunk 9 boreholes and distributed 90,000 sachets of water purifier to 3,000 households in Diffa and 63,250 Aquatab water purification tablets to 1,265 households.

Sanitation and housing



More than 16,663 shelter kits were distributed

The ICRC:

- distributed 6,074 kits consisting of tarpaulins, blankets, impregnated mosquito nets, mats, cooking kits, buckets, lengths of cloth for clothing, hygiene kits and local cooking pots, which improved the living conditions of 36,444 people who have congregated in the main reception areas of N'guigmi, Kabléwa, Yébi, Bosso and Toumour;
- distributed 5,500 tarpaulins to vulnerable people and 1,000 blankets to pregnant women, children under the age of five and the elderly;
- distributed 4,089 emergency shelter kits for displaced persons in the communes of Bosso, Mainé Soroa, Kabléwa and Diffa, and repaired 50 emergency shelters at the Sayam Forage refugee camp;
- built 783 banco huts for 783 displaced and returnee families in the communes of Mainé Soroa, Diffa and Kabléwa;
- built 202 family latrines, 76 of which were in the camps at Sayam and Kabléwa;
- built 15 public latrines at Diffa and 6 latrines in the youth centre and in the reception area at Mainé Soroa;
- distributed hygiene articles to 3,000 households in 12 villages in the commune of Chétimari;
- distributed hygiene and water storage kits to 7,500 households in Diffa;
- trained 20 Red Cross volunteers to run community awareness-raising sessions on water, hygiene, sanitation and nutrition.

Visiting detainees



Some 420 detainees were visited in order to monitor their treatment and detention conditions

The ICRC:

- made 19 visits to 4 places of detention;
- registered and monitored the individual cases of 1,191 people who had been arrested in connection with the conflict;
- facilitated over 173 brief telephone calls to restore contact between detainees and their families;
- collected over 29 Red Cross messages from detainees;
- renovated detainees' cells and latrines in the prison and police station and extended the prison infirmary;
- distributed more than 22,000 food supplement packs to 400 prison inmates.

Restoring family links



More than 460 telephone calls made it possible to restore family links

The ICRC:

- facilitated 287 telephone calls for displaced persons or refugees;
- registered 33 unaccompanied minors, 25 of whom were reunited with their families;
- collected 80 allegations of arrest and located 66 of the missing persons.

Promoting international humanitarian law (IHL) and universal humanitarian values



Community dialogue with over 4,000 people (young people, women, residents and displaced persons, plus civilian, military and customary authorities) provided an opportunity to provide information on humanitarian action and IHL

The ICRC:

- ran information sessions on humanitarian action, especially on restoring family links, for almost 4,000 civil servants, community leaders and representatives, religious leaders, youth and women's associations, as well as representatives of sections of the population receiving assistance, in the departments of Bosso, N'guigmi, Diffa, Mainé Soroa and Goudoumaria;
- held training courses for members of the defence and security forces in Diffa to improve their awareness of the essential rules of IHL and the need to respect humanitarian activities;

- held question and answer sessions for hundreds of religious and community leaders, to highlight their duty to respect the law of war and the dignity of the victims of armed conflicts as set forth in Islamic law and legal precedent and IHL; many of these leaders also received first-aid training;
- gave a presentation to members of civil society and to civilian and military doctors and nurses on protecting medical personnel, facilities and vehicles in times of armed conflict;
- organized awareness-raising sessions for more than 30 journalists working for community radio stations on how to handle information during an armed conflict and on how to get the message across that the Red Cross engages in neutral, independent and impartial humanitarian action and offers a wide range of services.