



ICRC

FACTS & FIGURES ERITREA

January - December 2014

The ICRC opened its office in Eritrea in 1998 and worked throughout the 1998-2000 armed conflict with Ethiopia, protecting and assisting persons affected by the conflicts. Nowadays, the ICRC remains active in the entire country to contribute its humanitarian role in alleviating the problems and sufferings arising from the consequences of conflicts and the continuous border stalemate.

Encouraging renewable energy with solar water system (SWSS) equipment for the communities

In collaboration with the Water Resource Department (WRD) and Zoba Authorities, the ICRC was active in providing water to vulnerable border communities. Two new solar-powered water systems were constructed in the villages of Segubi (Southern Red Sea) and Geza-Dengur (Debub). Both the projects enabled around 2,000 beneficiaries and their dependants to get clean water inside their villages. The solar-powered water systems reduce running costs and avoid fuel dependency. To meet the required skills to maintain the solar water systems, the ICRC with the WRD trained 26 water technicians of the six zobas in operation and maintenance of solar water supply system.

The ICRC also repaired 10 water systems that serve around 40,000 beneficiaries in 10 villages of Debub, Southern Red Sea and Gash-Barka. The ICRC further conducted pump tests to identify the availability of water in six villages and improve sustainability of rural water supply through material donations, such as hand pump spare parts and small survey equipment.

SWSS project in Debub



Communities strive to achieve self-sufficiency

The ICRC is assisting civilian communities to remain productive and sustain themselves. The focus has been on projects aimed at enabling residents, returnees and resettled communities to regain a sustainable livelihood. It includes conducting livestock anti-parasite treatments, foot-pump distributions and ponds construction for the livestock.

The livestock anti-parasite treatment program, which began in 2005, is currently the biggest ICRC operation in Eritrea. The ICRC, in cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture, treats around 2.3 million animals throughout the year. The treatment program benefited around 450,000 people whose livelihoods largely depend on the health and productiveness of their animals.

The ICRC also assisted 132 farmers to increase their household food production by providing them with foot-operated irrigation pumps, vegetable seeds and farming tools.



Although Eritrea lowlands have recently suffered from scarce rainfall, the country enjoyed relatively good rains in 2014. However, there are shortages of water for animal grazing during dry seasons. The ICRC built three ponds in Gash-Barka in Geza Qelati, Gula and Asheli villages that help 22,500 people.

Relations with the Red Cross Society of Eritrea

In early 2012 the Red Cross Society of Eritrea (RCSE) suspended its cooperation activities with the ICRC. The ICRC and the RCSE agreed in 2014 to resume cooperation activities and, accordingly, the RCSE has submitted a draft document outlining the three priority areas for renewed cooperation.

Those areas are: 1) the reestablishment of the network of RCSE tracing focal points in order to strengthen the Tracing/Maintaining Family Links capacity of the Movement in the country, 2) support to the RCSE to be involved in the National Emergency Preparedness and Response, especially the first aid component, and 3) the organization of joint dissemination sessions on the RC&RC Movement, IHL, Fundamental Principles, and operational priorities in the country and region.

ICRC Team in Asmara



Financial support and family-link services

The ICRC has continued to support vulnerable civilians and restore family links for people affected by the past border conflict between Eritrea and Ethiopia as well as by ongoing constraints related to unresolved issues. In addition, the ICRC extended its humanitarian support to families by tracing missing relatives and establishing family contacts lost as a consequence of migration.

The ICRC maintained its financial support to Ethiopian nationals living in Eritrea who face economic constraints to renew their Eritrean residence permit. In addition, the ICRC has extended its support to Ethiopians wishing to go back to their country on a voluntary basis but who cannot afford the required pre-departure clearance and travel costs.

The ICRC has also covered medical expenses for vulnerable Ethiopians approaching the institution on an individual basis.

Red Cross Messages (RCM) remain a lifeline for many separated families due to the closed Ethiopia-Eritrea border. Increasingly, they also assist in the reestablishment of family links severed due to migration. For many communities in Eritrea, internet access, postal services and even phone connections are not available. Hence, the ICRC maintains the tracing and family links services to allow for separated families to maintain contact and exchange family news. Nearly 1,950 RCM messages were distributed and answers collected throughout the year.

As part of these activities, the ICRC has retrieved academic transcripts from Asmara University for former Ethiopian students who left the country, allowing them to continue their studies abroad and pursue employment.



Upon request of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and after registration of the individual data of refugees concerned, ICRC travel documents were issued to 168 Somali refugees to leave Eritrea and be resettled in a third country.

Eritrean publics increase their knowledge on International Humanitarian Law

The ICRC continued to raise awareness and promote respect for international humanitarian law (IHL) among civilians and the authorities. IHL is a body of rules that during wartime protect people who are not participating in hostilities by limiting the means and methods of warfare to prevent unnecessary suffering.



The ICRC sponsored the participation of Eritrean authorities to the IHL national implementation seminar and Arms Trade Treaty workshop conducted in Kenya and Tanzania respectively.

The ICRC regional legal adviser gave four sessions to students of Asmara Law College on the qualification of conflicts, conduct of hostilities, civilian protection and implementation-enforcement of the Law to develop and promote the interest and the studies on IHL.



The ICRC also made presentations to local authorities and beneficiaries of assistance projects to introduce them to the ICRC's mode of action, its activities in the country, the RC&RC Movement and humanitarian fundamental principles.

In coordination with the National Union of Eritrean Youth and Students (NUEYS), the ICRC conducted dissemination sessions to the NUEYS members on the basics of IHL and the ICRC in five regions.

The ICRC took part in the Sawa National Youth Festival and National and Regional Book Fairs to disseminate about IHL and the mandate of the ICRC.

Mission: The ICRC is an impartial, neutral and independent organization whose exclusively humanitarian mission is to protect the lives and dignity of victims of armed conflict and other situations of violence and to provide them with assistance. The ICRC 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 Geneva Conventions and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. It directs and coordinates the international activities conducted by the Movement in armed conflicts and other situations of violence.



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