



Jose Tomas/MRCS

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NEWSLETTER

On 17 February 2013 the ICRC commemorated the 150th anniversary of its founding. This event symbolizes the resilience of the spirit of humanity that led to the birth of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. It is a testament to the durability of the Movement's fundamental principles that continue to guide its work worldwide despite numerous challenges. The Movement is also commemorating 150 years of the work of its dedicated volunteers. In this special issue of the ICRC Harare Regional Delegation newsletter, we focus on *The Role of Red Cross/Red Crescent Volunteers in Humanitarian Action* as they meet the humanitarian needs of people in many different situations – from conflict to climate change.

150 years
of humanitarian action

Mozambique: Red Cross volunteer caught in an ambush

On March, 24, 1992, Artur Quilambo, who was then the Head of Health and Social Services for the Mozambique Red Cross Society (MRCS), escaped death while traveling with two other colleagues on their way from providing assistance in one of the refugee camps. Although they were in a MRCS vehicle, with a clear Red Cross emblem, they were attacked by a group of heavily armed men in Bungane, Malehice, Gaza Province.



Jose Tomas/MRCS

Artur Quilambo at the beginning of the discussion.

At the age of 66, Artur can still vividly recollect what happened. "I remember the incident like it was yesterday," Artur says. "It was just a few months before the peace agreement that put an end to the conflict in Mozambique. We (MRCS) were informed that many refugees had arrived in Malehice, so we rushed there to provide humanitarian assistance to the refugees, train midwives and prepare other volunteers to be able to respond to further emergencies," Artur explains. "After a long day, we were tired."

"On our way back, about 30 kilometres outside the city of Xai-Xai, we came across two groups of people heavily equipped with fire arms. We did not suspect anything at that time, we remained confident that the Red Cross emblem would protect us so we went past them, but suddenly one of the groups started firing towards our vehicle, although the bullets missed us," Artur says.



Artur Quilambo narrating his ordeal.

The attack did not stop. "The second group also fired at our vehicle without mercy. In desperation, our driver drove towards the sand dunes on the road side into the bush and back into the dust road until he managed to get out of range of the firing troop." It was during this time that one of the bullets hit Artur's leg. "During that time of desperation, bullets hit our vehicle from all directions but I also felt a sharp pain in my leg near my ankle," he says with a quivering voice, as if reliving the pain.

"The attack did not stop. The second group also fired at our vehicle without mercy..."

Artur was taken to a local hospital where he stayed for about 64 days. "When I fully recovered, I went back to work, but it was not same, I did not have the same vitality that I always carried at work before the ambush. The ambush and the consequent injury on my leg traumatized me," he says looking down at his leg with sadness.

"I have been experiencing acute pain recently and I suspect that something like a small part of the projectile might still be inside my leg (where the bullet penetrated) up to this day. I feel this pain especially when I walk. I noticed that at the hospital they only treated the wound without taking an X-ray to ascertain the extent of the damage that my leg suffered, this could explain the pain I am still feeling." Artur says he is currently saving some money so that he can go for specialized treatment.

Artur joined the Mozambique Red Cross Society as a volunteer in 1981, a few months after its inception. He attended a number of training courses and later on he was appointed the Head of health, social services, water, sanitation and training of volunteers. He enjoyed his job and worked with a lot of enthusiasm.

"During the time that the war was escalating, nothing would affect our morale, because we were confident that all the parties to the conflict respected us and understood the Red Cross emblem. During our trips to assist people made vulnerable by the conflict we met a number of armed groups from various areas but they never stopped us from fulfilling our exclusively humanitarian mission," he recalls. "Sadly, on that fateful day, when we least expected it, we got caught up in that ambush," he continues.

"If I were asked to join the Mozambique Red Cross Society again for another mission, today, I would gladly go with an open mind and I would feel honoured knowing that I am doing something to help someone who is in a very difficult situation".

"During that time of desperation, bullets hit our vehicle from all directions but I also felt a sharp pain in my leg near my ankle,"

- Artur Quilambo

Today, Artur is not employed. He lives through a grant that is given to him by the Mozambique Red Cross Society in recognition of his dedication. The grant is also being given to help him through the injury that almost cost his leg while working for the Mozambique Red Cross Society.



The bullet ridden leg.

Preserving human dignity during conflict: the experiences of Red Cross volunteers

The fight for independence in Rhodesia and civil wars in neighbouring countries left thousands of people homeless and seeking refuge. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) worked together with the national Red Cross Society to meet the immediate humanitarian needs of people who were displaced and provided medical assistance to the wounded without discrimination. The following is an account of the experiences of Justine Mukwecheni who has been a volunteer for the Rhodesia Red Cross Society from 1972 to date.

Justine joined the Rhodesia Red Cross Society in 1972 as a volunteer. He continued to work for the Zimbabwe Red Cross Society after independence until 1998 when he joined the ICRC. Today, 41 years later, he still recalls with clarity the work he did to save lives, and give hope to those made vulnerable by the conflict.

“At one time we rushed to provide first aid services and assist people who were injured when fighting between the Rhodesia armed forces and the liberation movement fighters broke out in Mutoko in 1978.” Justine remembers the pain and suffering he saw on that particular day. “When we got there we found civilians, liberation movement fighters and the Rhodesia army members lying on the ground, some were dead, others wounded, others seriously injured and unconscious,” he recalls. “Two Red Cross helicopters went to that site on that day. I remember we transferred six who were seriously injured to a hospital in Salisbury, they were more in the other helicopter.”



Rhodesia, 1977. The Rhodesian Red Cross and the ICRC jointly distribute relief goods to inhabitants in a protected village in Chiredzi district.

The Red Cross volunteers remained impartial in all their work. “It did not matter to us which side a person was fighting on, we assisted them all without discrimination”.

The national Red Cross Society and the ICRC were accepted by the people in different communities and all parties to the conflict. “We were present to assist vulnerable people in different places and we did so consistently,” he explains. “We responded on two occasions to bomb blasts in Salisbury in 1979 where several people were injured and we also responded to road accidents that occurred. The communities and the different parties to the conflict understood our work, they supported us and this was mainly because they could see the assistance we were giving”.

The life of a Red Cross volunteer at that time was not easy. “We were also affected by the prevailing environment – I had left my family back in the village to dedicate my life to this humanitarian mission of saving lives. Like all the other

volunteers I had a passion for what we did, the burning flame in us to assist vulnerable people could not be turned off”.

The work of the Zimbabwe Red Cross Society as it is known today did not end after independence in 1980. The volunteers together with the ICRC responded to the humanitarian needs of thousands of refugees from Mozambique who fled the civil war to come into Zimbabwe. There were about four Refugee Camps – Mazowe, Nyangombe, Tongogara and a transit camp that was in Waterfalls in Harare.

The national Red Cross Society and the ICRC were accepted by the people in different communities and all parties to the conflict

"The humanitarian situation due to the influx of the refugees was dire – Nyangombe Refugee Camp at one time had over 200 000 refugees, whom we assisted," Justine recalls. "The people needed food, shelter, blankets, water, sanitation facilities and other basic necessities," he continues. Others were separated from their families because of that war. "You could see a 9 year old child who was unaccompanied. We would assist such children and other older people with the means to restore and maintain contact with their families back home in Mozambique".

Red Cross messages (restricted to family or personal news) were exchanged between the families and some families were physically reunited. "It was an overwhelming experience to see the tears of joy from the families when they were



Michele Mercier / ICRC

Rhodesia, 1977. Rapagwala protected village located in Chiredzi, health centre supported by the ICRC.

reunited physically or when they received a Red Cross message from a family member they had lost. This was of more value to them than having shelter or food," Justine says.

For Justine, being a volunteer brought meaning to his life. "It gave me an opportunity to give hope to someone who needed it and watch them smile in appreciation," he says.

Zambia: Responding to humanitarian needs during elections

Adam Mbewe works for the Zambia Red Cross Society (ZRCS). For the past five years, he has worked with other volunteers responding to emergencies that have occurred. Today, he is the First Aid Trainer for the ZRCS and he recalls how the Red Cross volunteers assisted over 200 people during the elections in September 2011.



Gilead Mwenya / ZRCS

"I was stationed at a polling station in Chilanga district located in the Northern Province of Zambia. Together with other volunteers we responded to the humanitarian needs of the people during the elections in September 2011.

I remember we attended to about 16 people at the polling stations facing different issues, for example, some people fainted, others experienced dizziness, headaches largely caused by standing for too long in the queues.

Others had stomach-aches, cuts, fits and general body pains. We had pitched a tent at the polling station to allow for privacy for serious cases – like fainting.

I can recall some particular cases. We attended to 2 people who had fainted. When they fainted we carefully moved them away from the crowd and took them to the tent. There, we allowed them to have fresh air, loosened their clothes to allow for the free circulation of blood in their body and monitored them until they had recovered. While we were there, we encouraged people to drink lots of water because it was really hot on that day and people were getting dehydrated leading to headaches and dizziness.

The Zambia Red Cross Society responded to emergencies during the 2011 Presidential and Parliamentary elections. They were present at polling stations and at the High Court in Lusaka during the inauguration; ready to assist people in line with their mandate. The ICRC provided financial and technical support as well as emergency stocks to build their (ZRCS) capacity.

We attended to 2 people who had fainted. When they fainted we carefully moved them away from the crowd to the tent.

The most serious case we attended to occurred just before midnight when the results for the Members of Parliament were announced. While celebrating the victory with so much excitement a group of people jumped onto the back of a van. The driver didn't see that some people had not properly settled in the car. So he drove and they fell off the moving car. Five people were seriously injured.

I attended to one who had a serious fracture on the limb of the lower leg. Because we did not have splints to support the leg, I used bandages and used the leg that was not fractured as a splint. The other was serious bruised on the hip and was bleeding, fortunately he was not bleeding excessively, so we quickly covered his hip with bandages to control the bleeding. They were both in so much pain. Our vehicle had just ferried a pregnant woman to the hospital so we managed to get a private car and rushed them to the nearest hospital.

I really felt at that time that I contributed positively to my community. I spend most of my time training volunteers on how to provide first aid services, but this time I was actively helping people in different situations".



Doreen Hove/ICRC

Namibia: Helping families see their loved ones in prisons.

Since 2005 David Simataa, a volunteer for the Namibia Red Cross Society (NRCS) has been part of the team that organises the Family Visit Programme (FVP) which happens twice every year in May and December. During these visits about 350 people have an opportunity to visit their relatives who are detained in four prisons in Namibia in relation to the situation in the Caprivi region in 1999. The ICRC and the NRCS with the consent of the prison authorities have been organising family visits and enabling the maintenance of contact between the inmates and their families since 2002.

How does the ICRC and NRCS help families to keep in touch with their relatives who are detained?

The ICRC and NRCS in cooperation with the prison authorities organise the family visit programme twice each year for over 350 family members. They provide them with accommodation, transport and food. The visits are for three consecutive days for the families – it's really an event to look forward to on their part. After the visit the ICRC makes follow ups with the inmates to see if the programme ran smoothly and if there are any areas that need to be improved.

Describe the process of planning the Family Visit Programme?

Together with Tracing Officers, we normally facilitate this programme for over 300 family members who are selected by the inmates. The preparations are very intense. First, the ICRC and the prison authorities agree on the dates. After which the inmates register three family members who should visit them, on the forms provided by the ICRC and the NRCS. We then take the list to the Namibia Broadcasting Services, where the names are announced on radio and the families are asked to visit the NRCS offices. Once they come to our offices we provide all the relevant information and details about the visit which include; the dates to collect their money for transport and food – and also where they will be accommodated. This means by this point we would have booked their accommodation and transport from the Caprivi Region to Windhoek or Walvis Bay depending on where they will be going.



Tell us about your personal experience with the families?

The hustling, bustling and excitement that the families have as they prepare to see their loved ones in detention always captivates me each time I work with them from the

registration stage to the time they visit the inmates. I am moved by their commitment. After travelling for over 1000Km from Caprivi region, in Katima Mulilo the women still have energy to cook for their husbands – it's just an amazing experience especially when you watch them. They arrive at 1am (after travelling for about 18 hours) at the place where they would be accommodated, rest for about two hours, there after they are up with so much energy and excitement to prepare all kinds of traditional meals for their husbands. It is quite interesting to watch them talk and chat at the same time telling each other all the news they wish to tell their son/husbands/father/brothers/uncles in the prisons. I have experienced the excitement from the young children, women and even the elderly of up to 72 years of age. I just enjoy seeing them happy particularly after they have visited their loved one in the prisons; these memories remain priceless to them.

How important is this programme to them from your own perspective?

The programme has helped many families see their relatives in the prisons. Some are not so privileged enough to afford to travel to the prisons without this support. I remember in 2011 when I had the opportunity to talk to some of them about their experiences prior to this programme, one woman mentioned that when she came to visit her husband at Windhoek Central Prison she had spent the night sleeping at a petrol station because she arrived late at night and she also didn't know anyone in Windhoek. It didn't matter to her that it was freezing cold – during the winter season, all she wanted was to see her husband. In addition to this she could not see him as often as she would have loved to because she did not have enough money; her children need money for

food, clothes and school fees. Hence it was never easy for her to balance, so she only saw him once in 2001 before the FVP. Some people could not afford to see their loved ones in the prisons at all.



So, through this programme the families don't struggle any more, this is why they appreciate it very much. As I work with them, I see the joy in their smiles, eyes and the way they talk and that motivates me to make sure that everything is planned perfectly for them during each visit.

The pictures relate the visit in 2011, of women and children from Caprivi Region to their relatives...

Malawi: Building sanitation facilities for communities

In 2012, over 3700 people in a village called Ntowerainfwa located in the northern part of Malawi benefited from a project implemented by the Malawi Red Cross Society (MRCS) to improve their water and sanitation facilities. A volunteer from the MRCS, Lucia Msofi, who was involved in the project shares her experience together with one of the leaders of this community.

It is a cool morning, and they (Lucia and Horace Nyaka, Communication Manager at the MRCS) enjoy the fresh breeze in southern Karonga, 110km from the Malawi-Tanzania border in northern Malawi. They are carrying out a routine field visits to ensure that the MRCS' humanitarian activities in the area are being implemented effectively. As they stop by the roadside, they can already see Ntowerainfwa village where, the MRCS and the Danish Red Cross Society completed a water and sanitation project.

"There are over 3,700 people in 427 households in this village. Every household now has a good standard toilet and hand washing facility as a result of this project", says Lucia. At 36, she is not only a Red Cross volunteer but also a member of the local community. She teaches at the local Community Based Child Care Centre (CBCC) where MRCS, with support from the Danish Red Cross also runs a child-feeding centre.

"...These toilets have locally designed washing facilities. The community members chose what would be more convenient for them"

- Lucia Msofi

"I teach at the CBCC between 7am and 9am then go on house visits. I make two village visits every week to make sure that the sanitation facilities are still in good order and water is available," says the volunteer who was trained by the MRCS.

While in Ntowerainfwa village, which is located about one kilometre from Lake Malawi, they look for one of the community leaders as they are keen to get feedback on the impact of the water and sanitation project in the village. Young men who are on their way from school tell them where to find Hilda Kondwe – one of the community leaders. "I have been working with her for over a year. Together with other villagers we made sure that the project ended in success," Lucia says.

"Although I work in this village all the time it is fascinating to see the impact of the water and sanitation project on the lives of these people all the time; it has improved their hygiene conditions," she continues, "Just look, every house we are going past has a proper toilet. Further, the toilet is not a unique thing in itself. These toilets have locally designed washing facilities. The community members chose what would be more convenient for them," she says.

They arrive at the homestead and are warmly welcomed. They begin to talk about how the toilets and hand washing facilities have changed the lives of the people.



Malawi, 2013. The volunteer for Malawi Red Cross Society, Lucia Msofi (right) is with one of the community leaders Hilda Kondwe (Left). They worked together with the community members to improve their water and sanitation facilities.

"You should have come a year ago, half of this village had no toilets," Hilda says. Pointing at Lucia and with a laugh of gratitude she adds, "it has been a great effort from us – the villagers and this young woman. Lucia continues to encourage us to practice good hygiene in our village".

Lucia Msofi has been working for the Malawi Red Cross Society as a volunteer for one and half years and through her, efforts and those of the villagers they have managed to ensure the availability of water and sanitation facilities in the village within a year.

"Working as a Red Cross volunteer has given me an opportunity to make a huge difference in my own community," Lucia says with a smile.



Namibia: A Volunteer – at 76 years of age



Andreas Uupindi affectionately known as “Tatekulu” meaning “grandpa” has been working with the Namibia Red Cross Society (NRCS) since 1998. The 76 year old man, now a board member for the national society is greeted with smiles and hugs from staff and volunteers as he enters the office. He shares a light moment with the Regional Officer, Message Haukena when Message calls him “my young brother”.

Andreas has served as a board member for the Otjondijupa region since 2001, having started volunteering at the age of 65 – an elderly age. Andreas tells his story. “When I became a volunteer for the NRCS, I was quite old, it was only 11 years ago,” he recalls. “I joined the Red Cross so that I can give back to my community in a positive manner,” he continues.

Like every volunteer Andreas went through intensive training to ensure that all the activities he would do would be in line with the standard and principles of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

“I was trained to provide home-based care and counseling for people living with HIV and AIDS as well as orphans and vulnerable children, in a neutral and impartial way. It does not matter what tribe, race or political party they belonged to, I was trained to provide the needed humanitarian assistance to those who need it. I believe I have done so effectively since the training”.

For Andreas, being a volunteer is not about getting a pay check at the end of the month, it’s a passion to provide voluntary service. “I didn’t get paid, I just did it to help people and to make my community strong and healthy. At times, I used my own car to go to the homes of people we assisted so as to talk to them, help them take their medication and take them to the hospital or clinic where necessary,” he says.

“Serving as a board member of the NRCS is part of my life. I love the mission of the Red Cross and the historical events that gave birth to the Red Cross Movement. Through the NRCS I am a part of something larger than myself, I can help the community and work with wonderful people,” says Andreas.

As a board member, Andreas represents the NRCS at stakeholder meetings and forums; helps the national society establish and maintain partnerships with the local business community; recruits more volunteers and members; and spreads the word amongst his community about the activities of the national society and encourages the people of Namibia to donate their time and money to help vulnerable people.

Andreas notes with sadness that the national society faces challenges in their quest to assist vulnerable people in the country. “One of the major challenges for the NRCS, is gaining the support of local community members and businesses to help their fellow Namibians.” Andreas and the Regional Officer for Otjozondjupa, Message Haukena, approach local businesses several times a year for donations in the form of money, food and non-food items.

Andreas notes that it worries him that some people in Namibia do not understand how the NRCS works and do not know that the national society needs their support to continue helping vulnerable people. “Some people know about the Namibia Red Cross Society, but they think we are the Government or that we are handing things out. But we are not the Government; we remain independent from them (Government) and neutral in all our activities, regardless that we do work together in many activities”.

However Andreas continues to enjoy working for the Namibia Red Cross Society. “I enjoy working for the Namibia Red Cross Society. Although I am 76 now, my age will not stop me from contributing positively to my community! Further, it makes me proud to be a part of a Movement that responds so swiftly to local and global disasters,” he says with a smile.

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- Andreas Uupindi

Zimbabwe: Reducing the risks of droughts in communities

About 1000 people have benefited from a project to reduce the risk of drought that could be caused by deforestation in the long term. The Zimbabwe Red Cross Society together with the American Red Cross Society have been assisting communities to avert the risks of drought. Hopewell Munyari tells the story.

“As the Assistant Disaster Management Officer for the Zimbabwe Red Cross Society (ZRCS) I work with diverse communities. We have a project aimed at reducing the risk of disasters that is on-going in Binga where there are predominately Tonga people. Interacting with a people of a different culture is always interesting because you get to fit into their culture and understand their values as a people. Through my interactions with them I have learnt that the Tonga people have a very rich culture.

It is very gratifying to see such levels of commitment and to also see the positive change that such projects benefit the communities

We are working with people from Simatelele and Siyachilaba. In these communities, the ZRCS together with the American Red Cross Society have been working with them to think about how they can best reduce the risk of disasters like droughts. Under our Building Resilience project these communities have been given a platform to think about what they can do, to also know how other people in similar circumstances have averted the disasters and decide on



what would be worthwhile for them to adopt as a community.

Their major concern was the on-going deforestation that is part of what is causing climate changes. Consistent deforestation leads to a situation where there is more carbon dioxide than the much needed oxygen escaping into the atmosphere. In the long run this results in the depletion of the ozone layer, more heat and less rain then ultimately they become prone to droughts.

In an effort to address these realities, the communities have adopted fuel efficient cooking stoves which they built in their homes. With these stoves, instead of going to fetch firewood every day, they go once a week and this reduces the rate of deforestation. The women in that community (who would normally spend lots of time looking for firewood) now have more time to do other things, and smoke is ventilated outside the home reducing the risk of blindness. Basically they are no longer using open fires in their kitchens to cook.

To date over 200 households with approximately five members have these fuel efficient cooking stoves.

As I work with them on this project I can see that they are building the stoves because they appreciate and understand how it will help them in the long term. They have so much commitment because they mobilize each other to ensure that the project is implemented, they build the stoves, and they have structures on the ground to coordinate their activities. For me, it is very gratifying to see such levels of commitment and to also see the positive change that such projects benefit the communities in the long term by making them safer and less prone to disasters”.



The ICRC: A 150 years and still running!

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) was formed on 17 February 1863 with an exclusively humanitarian mission to protect the lives and dignity of victims of armed conflict and violence and meet their essential humanitarian needs. 150 years later the organisation is still running – saving millions of lives.

On 8 May 2013, the ICRC, Zimbabwe Red Cross Society (ZRCS) and International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) in Zimbabwe joined the Red Cross and Red Crescent (RC/RC) Movement around the world in a commemorative event under the theme “150 years and running”. About 120 staff members and Red Cross volunteers ran in a distance of 4km from ZRCS Headquarters to the ICRC offices in northern Harare.

The baton started in Suva, Fiji at 4am Harare time and ended in Mexico City, Mexico at 7pm Harare time, passing through Canberra (Australia), Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia), New Delhi (India), Kabul (Afghanistan) and Geneva (Switzerland), on its way to Moroni Comoros, Abidjan (Ivory Coast), Ottawa (Canada), Brasilia (Brazil), Lima (Peru) and finally Mexico City.

Members of the RC/RC Movement were walked, ran, kayaked, wheelchair raced and trekked their way across mountains from the start line to the finish line reaffirming that the Movement is 150 years and still running!



Zimbabwe
Run

Tendayi Sengwe/ICRC



Burundi
Volleyball

© ICRC



Rwanda
Walking/football

© ICRC



Afghanistan
Wheelchair race



Brazil
Kayaking

The Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement: Making a difference in the lives of the people

Sporting activities were continuously held worldwide by the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement on 17 February 2013 under the theme 150 years and running. Participants commemorated the millions of lives the Movement has saved since 1863 and demonstrated their continued commitment to humanitarian action. Alex Munai, Cooperation Delegate at the ICRC Harare Regional Delegation, explains the uniqueness of the work of the Movement based on his personal experiences.

When did you join the Red Cross Movement?

I first joined the Red Cross Movement in the 1990s through the Kenyan Red Cross Society. Although I left the Kenyan Red Cross for a while, I returned to the Movement under the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and worked in different contexts that include Ethiopia, Uganda, Sierra Leone and this region. In these and other diverse contexts, the Movement has worked together as partners to prevent and alleviate human suffering and to protect human dignity.

Can you describe how the ICRC, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and the National Societies coordinate their activities?

The three entities are components of the Red Cross Movement, members of the same family, which operate in accordance to their complementary mandates during war, armed violence, natural and man-made disasters. Our humanitarian activities are guided by the seven Fundamental Principles of the Movement and other internal policy frameworks.

The Red Cross Movement often seeks to build on the strengths and capacity of the Movement partner (s) to avoid duplication and enable maximal utilisations of the available resources in the provision of services to those that need it most.

What do you think are the main strengths of the Movement as a whole?

The Red Cross/Red Crescent volunteers! We can quickly respond to emergencies caused by floods, earthquakes, public health emergencies, war or civil unrest anywhere in the world because of the millions of volunteers who are dedicated to our principles and based in communities.

Secondly, we remain independent, neutral and impartial in all our activities, interactions with the donors as well as national authorities and members of different political



Cote D' Ivoire, Department of Bangola, Village of Diéou Zibiao. ICRC and the national Red Cross Society distribute emergency aid.

parties or affiliations, and the victims respectively. This makes us unique because these principles provide a universal standard of reference for all the activities of the Movement worldwide.

The “unity of purpose” is also one of our strengths. In the same way we ran during this event as a united front we also assist people made vulnerable by different situations as a united front, supporting each other in different ways.

What challenges does the Movement face?

We often work in difficult circumstances. In some instances around the world, Red Cross personnel have even been injured or lost lives while on duty, while

Red Cross premises or equipment may not have been respected. At times access to those we seek to serve may have been hindered.

What has and will continue to protect and enable us to carry out our critical work is recognition and respect for the Red Cross/Red Crescent emblem by the public and key stakeholders in governments, the armed and security forces and community leaders around the world, as well as our strict adherence to the seven Fundamental Principles. We appreciate the continued financial and material support we receive from individuals and donors who believe in the mission and work of the Movement.

It is a life-changing experience to volunteer for the Movement, and we need more people to commit their time to their communities. It is the skills and passion of the volunteers which will help the Movement to overcome the daily challenges we face as we seek to make a difference in the lives of others!■

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