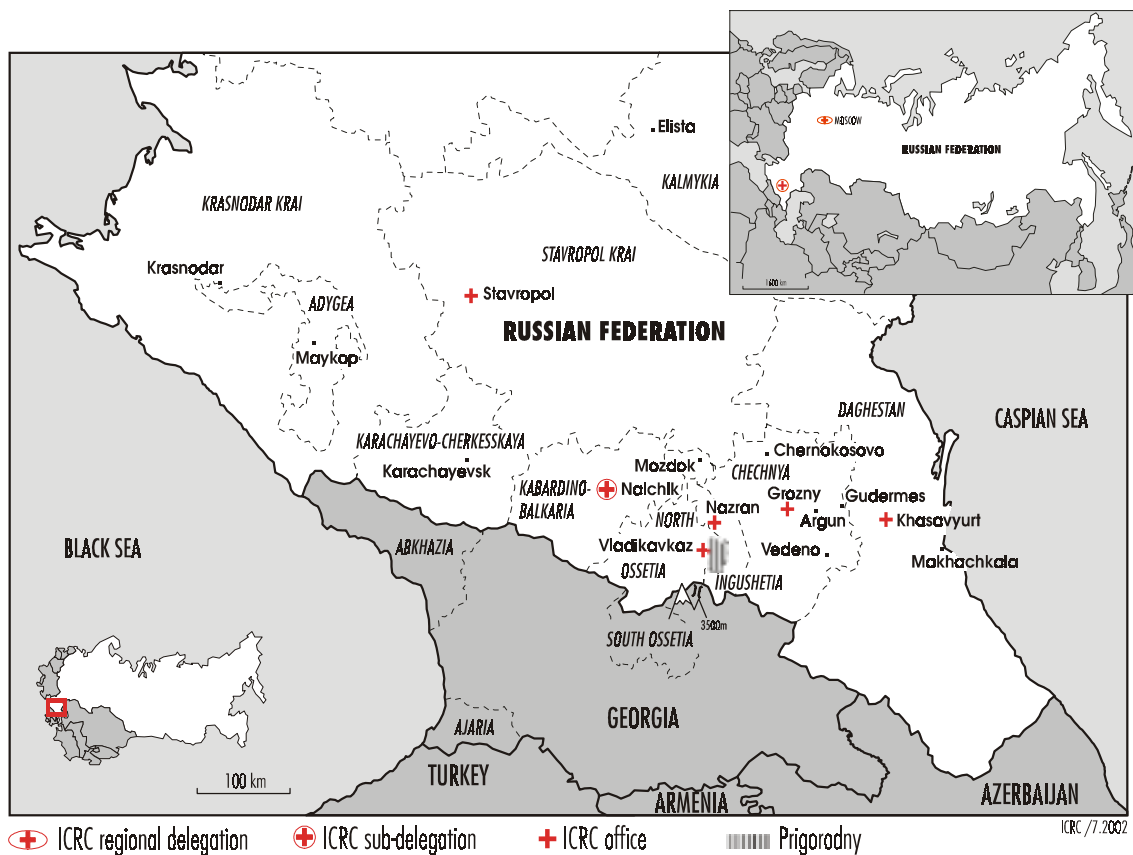


ICRC

UPDATE

Geneva, 8 July 2002

Northern Caucasus and southern Russia: facts & figures on recent ICRC action (April-May 2002)



Executive Summary

- Since the ICRC issued its objectives and corresponding 'Plan of Action' in December 2001, there has been no significant improvement in the situation in Chechnya, or in the northern Caucasus as a whole. The security operation continues in Chechnya. Tens of thousands of displaced civilians have spent their third winter away from home -- the majority (150,000) in neighbouring Ingushetia -- and face mounting financial and emotional pressure. Reconstruction is progressing in Chechnya, but slowly. At this stage, there is no indication of a large-scale return of internally displaced people (IDPs).
- In April, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, led by the ICRC, provided food and other essential supplies and assistance to some 174,000 IDPs in the northern Caucasus and southern Russia. This assistance included medical drugs and equipment, water, the repair of basic infrastructure, legal advice, psychological counselling, educational items and clothing. In May, the ICRC assisted 164,000 IDPs. In addition, assistance programmes continued for resident populations affected by the situation in Chechnya.

Between February and May 2002, the ICRC's extensive mine-awareness programme, which targets children and teachers, reached some 14,000 youngsters in Chechnya.

Following an agreement with the Russian government in March 2000, the ICRC has been granted access to all people deprived of their freedom in connection with the situation in Chechnya, wherever they are being held. Since May 2000, the ICRC has made 153 visits (50 in Chechnya) to 48 detention facilities in the Russian Federation (16 in Chechnya). Delegates have visited 2,225 detainees (1,634 in Chechnya).

- The ICRC's 2002 budget for the Moscow regional delegation, which covers activities in the Russian Federation including the northern Caucasus, was set at SFr 53 million (USD 35.5 million / EUR 36.1 million). Over 86 % of this is designated for the response to the humanitarian emergency in the northern Caucasus.

To date, the ICRC has registered donations (pledged and received) to the amount of SFr 14.8 million (USD 9.9 million / EUR 10.1 million) towards this appeal.

Outstanding needs stand at SFr 40.8 million (USD 27.3 million / EUR 27.7 million).

Context

Since the ICRC published its 'Plan of Action' in November 2001, there has been no significant improvement in the situation in Chechnya or in the northern Caucasus as a whole. The security operation continues in Chechnya. Tens of thousands of displaced civilians have spent their third winter away from home- the majority (150,000) in Ingushetia- and face mounting financial and emotional pressure. In Chechnya, small-scale reconstruction is progressing. Initial signs show that some IDPs in Ingushetia are making tentative forays into Chechnya to check on the condition of their homes and the possibility of returning permanently. But, at this stage, there is no indication of a large-scale return. In April, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, lead by the ICRC, provided food and non-food assistance for some 174,000 IDPs in the northern Caucasus and southern Russia. In May, 164,000 IDPs received aid.

With the consolidation of the Chechen administration in Grozny, the ICRC has been able to work more closely with the relevant authorities. The ICRC's working methods, security set-up and operational activities are known and accepted in the field. Despite this, humanitarian activities have been suspended in Chechnya on several occasions over the past 12 months, mainly because of security concerns and travel restrictions within the republic. Security remains a major concern throughout the northern Caucasus and southern Russia. This was borne out by a bomb blast in Vladikavkaz on 28 April, in which at least 7 people were killed and 41 injured, and a similar explosion on 9 May in the city of Kaspiisk in which 34 people, including 12 children, died and some 150 were wounded.

Following its 'Plan of Action' set out in November 2001, the ICRC has carried out in-depth surveys in Chechnya, Daghestan and Ingushetia to determine the level of economic security of those affected by the situation in Chechnya. The aim is to use the information to better target ICRC operations, and also serve the needs of the humanitarian community and other principle actors involved in the region. Two teams of four international experts on economic security conducted the six-month long surveys. The studies involved 3000 questionnaires and literally hundreds of hours of interviews, focus-group discussions and liaison with humanitarian organisations and national authorities.

The study on Ingushetia was published in April 2002. The key recommendations are: to maintain basic food rations for IDPs in Ingushetia; to target identified groups with complementary food aid and other supplies; and to reinforce the ICRC's role in co-ordinating aid. The ICRC has already started to upgrade its list of IDPS, using well-defined criteria to identify the most vulnerable people. The studies on Daghestan and Chechnya are due to be completed in June, and published in the following weeks.

ICRC presence

The ICRC opened its delegation in the Russian Federation in 1992. Since 1993 and the Prigorodny conflict in Northern Ossetia, the ICRC has been assisting people in need in the **northern Caucasus and southern Russia**. As a consequence of the violent confrontations in Chechnya, the ICRC extended its presence. Today, the sub-delegation in charge of the region is located in Nalchik (Kabardino Balkaria) and supervises the other offices in the region: Grozny (Chechnya), Nazran

(Ingushetia), Khasavyurt and Makhachkala (Daghestan), Stavropol (Stavropol Kraï), and Vladikavkaz (North Ossetia). Twenty ICRC expatriate delegates and specialists and over 300 national ICRC staff are working in these offices.

The ICRC **Regional Delegation in Moscow** employs 15 expatriate and 70 national staff. It supports the operations in the northern Caucasus and implements traditional activities in the region such as tracing lost relatives and the dissemination of international humanitarian law (IHL) to security and armed forces, policy makers, students, the media and general public. The Regional Delegation promotes the integration of IHL into the national legislation of all CIS States. The ICRC also supports the current reform process of the Russian Red Cross (RCC), in close cooperation with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

Humanitarian response

CHECHNYA

Food and non-food assistance

In April and May, the ICRC, with the RRC, provided 84,440 beneficiaries with bread, soap, oil, sugar and tea. This programme targets vulnerable groups in Grozny, Shali, Gudermes, Argun, Urus Martan, Achkhoy Martan and Kurchaloy.

The RRC also provided wheat flour and other items of basic food to social and paramedical institutions and distributed food parcels to 2,628 beneficiaries in nine IDP centres.

Food Assistance (April-May 2002)	
2,924	food parcels
4,330	kg wheat flour
82,902	kg sugar
4,330	kg potatoes
3,880	kg beans
967,798	loaves of bread
82,910	Litres of oil
82,136	tea (boxes of 200g)
1,732	kg onions

Non-food Assistance (April-May 2002)	
158,373	bars of soap
10	kitchen sets
700	m2 plastic sheeting
67	stoves

Water supply

Since December 1st, 2000, the ICRC, which rehabilitated pumping station No 1 in Grozny, has distributed chlorinated water to the population of the city from two large tanks. The average daily output of over 740 m³ of water covers the needs of around 37,000 people.

Medical assistance

The ICRC regularly provides medical material and drugs to nine hospitals in Chechnya. In April, in addition to the monthly supplies, the hospitals received a substantial amount of surgical equipment. In May, 145 people received crutches provided by the ICRC..

On 1 March, 2002, the ICRC implemented a Primary Health Care programme in cooperation with the RRC and the Chechen Ministry of Health. The project assists 23 primary medical care structures (polyclinics, mobile units and feldsher-obstetrics or first-aid posts) in the Shali and Urus Martan districts. The programme is monitored by an ICRC team of specialists. The facilities with qualified medical personal (polyclinics and mobile units) receive medical drugs, while the first-aid posts, with no qualified staff, are visited and supported by 2 RRC mobile medical teams. The RRC also runs a fixed medical point in Grozny. In April and May 2002, ICRC-supported medical facilities carried out 3,581 consultations, 1,560 of which concerned children.

What is a mobile medical team?

A team includes: two doctors (a general practitioner and a paediatrician), a nurse and a driver.

They give basic medical advice and, if needed, distribute medicine.

Cooperation with National Societies

The ICRC supports the 'visiting nurses' programme of the RRC in Chechnya. Fifty-seven nurses provide home care on a regular basis for 720 bedridden elderly. The ICRC supplies fresh and dry food every month, and hygiene kits every 6 months.

Mine awareness

The number of victims of landmines and unexploded ordnance among the civilian population in Chechnya is a major concern for the ICRC. A mine-awareness programme has been implemented with a special focus on children because they run the highest risk of being maimed or killed by these weapons. An especially effective way of teaching mine-awareness to young people is the ICRC's puppet show "New adventures of Cheerdig". The show went on the road between February and May with 88 performances reaching 13,481 children in schools in Groznensko-Selsky, Shalinsky, Nozhai-Yurtovsky, Urus-Martanovsky and Gudermes regions. Following requests from school officials, four performances were also given in schools in Grozny in connection with recent cases of mine casualties among the students. Two presentations were also given to 24 students at the Graphic Arts Department of the Pedagogical Institute. This group is helping to design mine-awareness billboards.

In May, the Chechen children's magazine "Stelaad" ("Rainbow") expressed a wish to work together with the ICRC to promote mine awareness. The next nine issues of the magazine will contain mine-awareness information and advice.

Also in May, the ICRC organized a round table for journalists in the Ministry of Press and Information on the topic of the role of the media in the mine-awareness programme. It was agreed with the Ministry to continue to work with journalists and regularly review and assess national and regional press coverage of the mine problem.

INGUSHETIA

The Republic of Ingushetia hosts some 150,000 officially registered IDPs from Chechnya, a heavy burden to bear for the local population. Some 31,000 people are in IDP camps, but the majority live in collective centres or with host families, which puts a strain on the latter's economic resources.

Food and non-food assistance

Every two to three months, the ICRC distributes food parcels and other supplies, such as hygiene kits, to IDP families, using over 50 distribution points. In addition, the ICRC supports an RRC programme that distributes every week an average of 3 loaves of bread each to 30,000 IDPs in camps. In April, IDPs also received 20,565 sets of clothing. In April and May, 25,600 portions of baby food were handed out to mothers for 3,200 children.

Food and Non-food Assistance April-May 2002	
56,998	food parcels
1,240,000	loaves of bread
59,362	hygiene kits
343,580	candles
20,565	sets of clothing

What's in a food parcel?	
3 kg	buck wheat
500 g	tea
500g	tinned cheese
2 kg	sugar
1.3 kg	tinned beef
870 g	butter
800g	tomato paste

What's in a hygiene kit?	
150 g	toothpaste
720 g	laundry soap
400 g	toilet soap
1 kg	washing powder
2	toothbrushes

Water and sanitation

The ICRC's aim is to make drinking water available in Ingushetia wherever there are major concentrations of IDPs. In the summer of 2000, the ICRC made it a priority to improve the generally low level of hygiene in IDP camps. In the camps over the past two and a half years, the ICRC has built 13 shower installations with 138 cabins, all insulated for the winter. In addition, fresh water is provided to some 40,000 IDP's on a daily basis from a network of 20 bladder tanks.

Medical assistance

The ICRC continues its aid to Ingushetia's main hospital in Nazran. The assistance includes medical drugs, especially antibiotics, anaesthetics and drugs to treat narcosis, as well as sutures, infusions, IV sets, catheters and X-ray material.

Cooperation with National Societies

The RRC 'visiting nurses' programme provides 130 bedridden elderly people with basic care. Beneficiaries receive food parcels every month and hygiene kits every six months.

Mine awareness

Following an evaluation of the mine-awareness project targeting children, additional teaching materials were developed in April and May for use in the ICRC's "Child to Child" programme in IDP camps and collective centres. To devise strategies to reach children, the ICRC works closely with young people who have been injured by mines or unexploded ordnance.

Adults also need to be reminded constantly of the dangers of landmines. To target adults, billboards with mine-awareness messages have been placed in IDP collective centres.

DAGHESTAN

Present in Daghestan since 1995, the ICRC, together with the RRC, continues to provide aid for over 25,000 civilians affected by the events of 1999 in the Republic.

Food and non-food assistance

In April and May the ICRC distributed relief aid of sugar, oil, salt and wheat flour to 4,489 people in the Kurtumkalinskiy and Novolak regions as well as 4,489 hygiene kits to IDPs in these districts.

The RRC, supported by the ICRC, distributed 285 loaves of bread daily to IDP's in the northern regions of Daghestan. In addition, the RRC runs a soup kitchen that provides hot meals every day for 500 IDP school children.

Food Assistance (April-May 2002)	
26,500	hot meals
13,467 kg	sugar
13,467 l	oil
2,248 kg	salt
93,960 kg	wheat flour
132,500	loaves of bread

Medical assistance

In April and May the ICRC provided substantial medical assistance to the Khassavuyrt Central Hospital. In addition, four hospitals received emergency ad hoc assistance following an explosion on 9 May which injured 125 people in the city of Kaspiisk.

Cooperation with National Societies

The RRC, with the help of the ICRC, is running the 'nurses' home visits' programme for some 220 beneficiaries, mainly bedridden elderly people. The ICRC provides food parcels and medicine on a monthly basis, and hygiene kits every six months.

Mine awareness

An ICRC mine-awareness puppet show based on local folklore is being created for children in Daghestan, and young people are involved in designing mine awareness leaflets and poster.

NORTH OSSETIA, KABARDINO-BALKARIA AND THE SOUTH OF RUSSIA

During April and May, the RRC, supported by the ICRC, provided food and other essential supplies to some 20,000 IDPs from Chechnya now living in the southern regions of Russia (Astrakhan, Volgograd, Krasnodar, Rostov, Saratov, Stavropol, Kalmykia, Adygea, Karachayevo-Cherkessia) and in Kabardino-Balkaria and North Ossetia.

In April and May, the ICRC distributed 4,309 school kits and 1,926 pairs of shoes to Chechen children staying at holiday camps in Kabardino-Balkaria.

What's in a school kit?	
2 copybooks	1 pad of drawing paper
1 eraser	1 box of watercolours
2 pens	1 pencil sharpener
1 box of colouring pencils	

Food and non-food assistance April-May 2002	
10,061	food parcels
92,575	kg wheat
4,199	hygiene kits
5,066	sets of clothing

Medical aid

The ICRC sent medical drugs and surgical material to three hospitals that treated the victims of a bomb explosion on 20 April in the central market in Vladikavkaz. The RRC provided the hospitals with materials to dress wounds and distributed food to the families of the wounded.

Cooperation with National Societies

The RRC, with the help of the ICRC, runs the 'visiting nurses' programme which serves 1,269 elderly people, many of whom are bedridden. The elderly receive food parcels and medical drugs every month and hygiene kits every 6 months.

Psychological counselling and legal advice

In southern Russia, in North Ossetia and Kabardion-Balkaria, the RRC, with the support of the ICRC and the International Federation, provides psychological counselling and legal advice for IDPs from Chechnya. In April and May, there were 1,528 psychological counselling sessions and 1,560 legal advice sessions.

Mine awareness

In April and May, the ICRC mine-awareness team seized the opportunity to reach over 250 children from Chechnya who were spending a short time in sanatoriums in several republics and regions of the North Caucasus as part of a rehabilitation programme. Drawing on the ICRC's 'Child to Child' programme, the team conducted 21 mine-awareness sessions and handed out some 5,000 copies of the mine-awareness comic book, 'Ascend', plus the game, 'Find the safest Way', drawing books, crossword puzzles and posters. The materials are designed to reinforce the mine-awareness information and advice given in the classroom, and encourage children to pass the message on to other children as well as adults. The ICRC also distributed over 900 mine-awareness leaflets to the teachers accompanying the children.

Regional social assistance for residents

Throughout the northern Caucasus and southern Russia (Chechnya, Ingushetia, Daghestan, North Ossetia, Kabardino-Balkaria, Karachayevo-Cherkessia, Adygea, Kalmykia, Stavropol and Krasnodar regions) the RRC, with the ICRC's support, assists some 3,800 vulnerable local residents, distributing food parcels and wheat flour once a month and hygiene kits every six months.

Visits to people deprived of their freedom

Following an agreement with the Russian government in March 2000, the ICRC has been granted access to all people deprived of their freedom in connection with the situation in Chechnya, wherever they are being held. Since May 2000, the ICRC has made 153 visits (50 in Chechnya) to 48 detention facilities in the Russian Federation (16 in Chechnya) under the responsibility of the Ministries of the Interior and Justice. Delegates have visited 2,225 detainees (1,634 in Chechnya). The aim of the visits is to assess the conditions of detention and the treatment of detainees in accordance with the Geneva Conventions and international humanitarian law. The ICRC has developed a constructive dialogue with the detaining authorities. It regularly presents its observations and recommendations to the relevant officials.

People who have lost contact with their relatives, including detainees visited by the ICRC, have the opportunity to re-establish links with their families by writing Red Cross messages. These messages are distributed inside Chechnya by the ICRC, together with the Chechen branch of the Russian Red Cross.

Promotion of international humanitarian law

The ICRC's aim is to integrate the concepts of IHL into the standard training programme of the armed forces in the Russian Federation. A special effort is made to hold sessions on IHL and the mandate and role of the ICRC for troops engaged in the Northern Caucasus.

The ICRC also promotes IHL to national and local government officials, university students, the media and the general public.

A travelling exhibition, entitled "Humanity and War", which presents IHL, the Red Cross Movement, the ICRC and its objectives, is making the rounds of towns and cities in the North Caucasus and the South of Russia. It has already been shown in Tuapse (Krasnodar region), Nalchik (Kabardino-Balkaria), Vladikavkaz (North Ossetia), Armavir (Krasnodar region), Maykop (Adygea), Anapa (Krasnodar region). In April the exhibition was set up in Pyatigorsk and then moved to Mineralnye Vody. Local government authorities, education officials, NGOs, and the media attended the opening ceremonies. Some 3,500 people, including schoolchildren, students, military staff and the general public attended the exhibition in both cities.

IHL presentations to armed forces

April 2002:

- Ministry of Interior: 6 presentations – 148 officers, sergeants and soldiers; 26 militiamen; 17 teaching staff at Astrakhan militia training centre; 35 railway security guards
- Border Guards: 2 presentations – 155 soldiers, sergeants and ensigns
- Vladikavkaz College of Culture: 2 presentations – 35 students
- Vladikavkaz State Technological University: 1 presentation – 60 students

May 2002:

- Ministry of Interior: 9 presentations – 611 soldiers, sergeants, junior and senior officers
- Ministry of Defence: 4 presentations – 525 new recruits, sergeants, junior and senior officers
- Stavropol State University : 2 presentations - 80 law students and 15 schoolchildren

For further information, please contact the External Resources Division.