

RCRC

Red Cross Red Crescent
ISSUE 2 · 2012 | redcross.int

Courage under fire

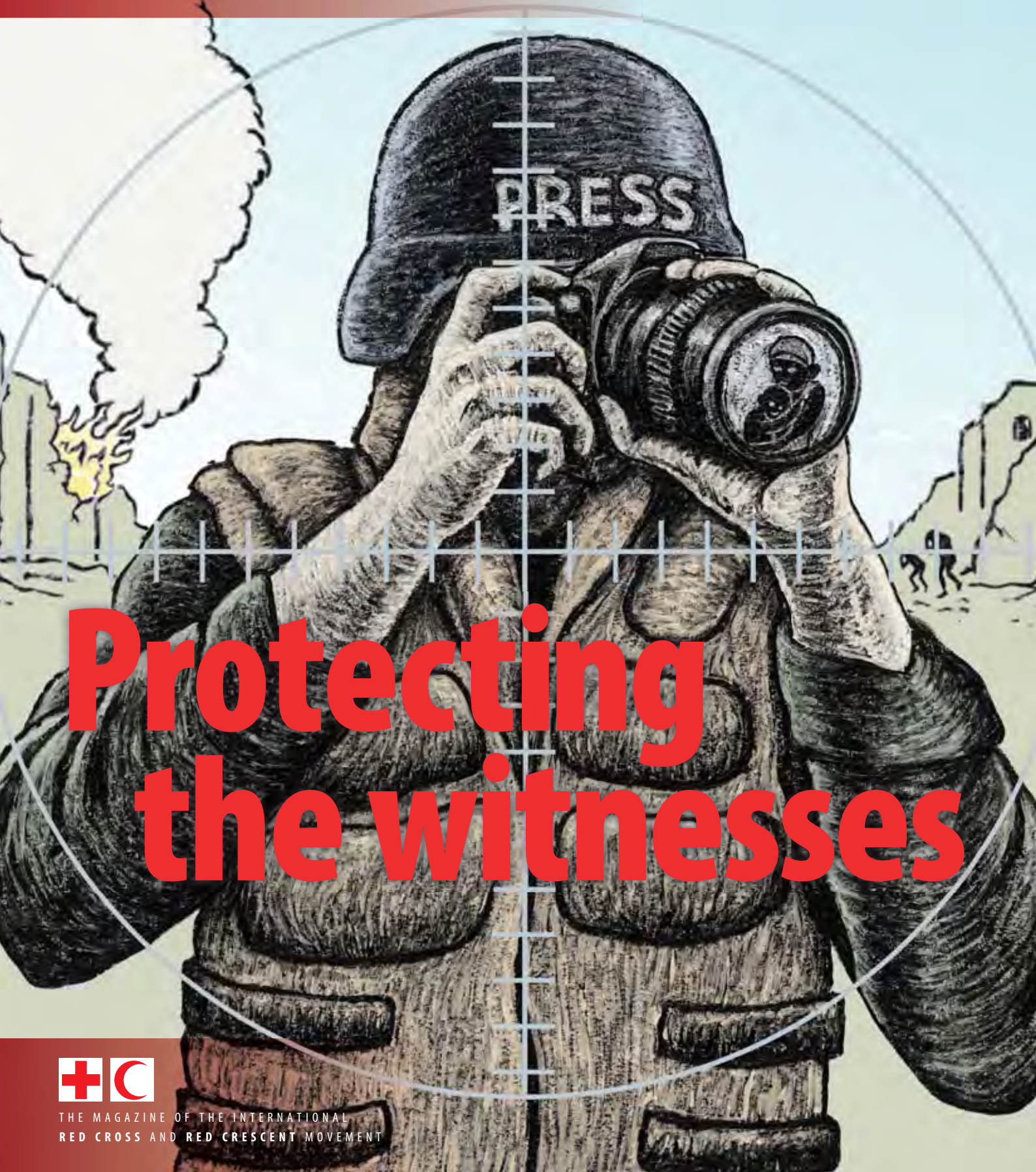
The Syrian Arab Red Crescent saves lives

Prove it!

Adapting evidence-based first aid for communities in need

Replicating resilience

Breaking the cycle of aid dependence in Kenya



Protecting the witnesses



THE MAGAZINE OF THE INTERNATIONAL
RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is made up of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and the National Societies.



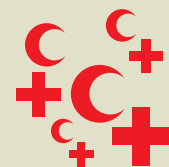
ICRC

The International Committee of the Red Cross 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.



International Federation of
Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) is the world's largest volunteer-based humanitarian network, reaching 150 million people each year through its 187 member National Societies. Together, the IFRC acts before, during and after disasters and health emergencies to meet the needs and improve the lives of vulnerable people. It does so with impartiality as to nationality, race, gender, religious beliefs, class and political opinions. Guided by Strategy 2020 — a collective plan of action to tackle the major humanitarian and development challenges of this decade — the IFRC is committed to 'saving lives and changing minds'.



National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies embody the work and principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement in more than 188 countries. National 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, health and social programmes. During wartime, National Societies assist the affected civilian population and support the army medical services where appropriate.

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

is guided by seven Fundamental Principles:

humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity and universality.

All Red Cross and Red Crescent activities have one central purpose:

to help without discrimination those who suffer and thus contribute to peace in the world.

Journalists' safety: a vital humanitarian concern

WHEN A JOURNALIST IS KILLED in the line of duty, society as a whole is under threat. These deaths not only silence the journalist but also intimidate others into self-censorship. In this sense, freedom of expression (and with that, access to information) is a 'meta right' — a right on which the realization of many other rights depend. It is a cornerstone of democracy, good governance, accountability and society's ability to make informed decisions.

During times of conflict, violent political unrest or natural disaster, the lives of journalists deserve special protection, not only because they perform heroic acts in the face of danger — although that is often the case — but due to the important social role they play. The alternative is a world driven by ignorance, rumour and ungrounded assumptions.

But journalism is a heavily contested domain and media professionals often find themselves in vulnerable positions, under threat from states and non-state actors alike. During the last two decades, around 1,000 journalists have been killed in the line of duty with a large number of deaths in just the last year.

While the tragic deaths of foreign correspondents caught in the crossfire often make headlines, two-thirds of journalists are killed outside armed conflict. The majority are freelancers, working for a local newspaper or radio. The greatest peril is murder, not accidents, and a large percentage of journalists who are killed have received threats. Murder is the most extreme form of censorship and, in countries where the risks are highest, there is a pattern of impunity.



Murder is the most extreme form of censorship and, in countries where the risks are highest, there is a pattern of impunity.

One way to reduce the danger is to 'elevate the issue' — to take it from the local to higher levels. National leaders should, for example, strongly condemn killings of journalists. Investigation and prosecution could occur at the national as opposed to the local level (thus making political interference less likely). Local journalists must link with their international colleagues, and journalistic organizations and civil society groups could

How to protect journalists?

Is it time for a new international treaty? Or just better compliance with the laws already on the books? Read different points of view at www.redcross.int/journalists.

demand greater attention from regional and international bodies provided under international human rights law.

Do we need a new treaty to protect journalists? In my view the current international legal framework is probably adequate in terms of the norms that it recognizes. The challenge lies in implementing the laws that already exist. Declarations or other similar instruments at United Nations and regional levels may help to elevate the issue and increase global awareness.

Humanitarian organizations also play an important role. The ICRC's hotline for journalists — along with training in safety, first aid and humanitarian law provided by the ICRC and National Societies — are good examples of what humanitarian organizations can do. But humanitarian actors can do more by advocating for the role of journalists in natural disasters and armed violence to ensure transparency, accountability and public awareness.

States and society at large should not merely be told that journalists need protection. They need to better appreciate the media's role in situations of catastrophe and conflict so that we all can better understand our world, help prevent conflict, diminish the impact of natural disasters and make informed decisions — especially when the stakes are so high.

By Christof Heyns

Christof Heyns is the United Nations Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions. He is also a professor of law and co-director of the Institute for International and Comparative Law in Africa at the University of Pretoria, South Africa. To read his full report to the UN Human Rights Council on the protection of journalists, please see A/HRC/20/22 on www.ohchr.org.

Photo: United Nations

In brief...

Movement mourns more of its own

The Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC) in July mourned the death of its fifth medical worker killed while delivering first-aid and medical services to people affected by the fighting.

SARC staff member, Khaled Khaffaji, was shot in Deir Ezzor, eastern Syria, on July 9 while on duty in an ambulance clearly marked with the National Society's emblem. "We are devastated. The loss of Khaled is completely unacceptable," said SARC president Dr Abdul Rahman al-Attar.

Less than three weeks earlier, on 22 June, Bashar Yusif, a SARC first-aid volunteer in Deir Ezzor was shot and killed while providing medical assistance to people caught in the fighting. (See page 12.)

Yusif's death came just two days after the ICRC learned that a staff member working in Yemen, Hussein

Saleh, was killed during a military airstrike in southern Yemen's Abyan Governate. Saleh and three other staff members were assessing the humanitarian situation in the area, which has severely affected by fighting. "We are devastated by the tragic loss of our friend and colleague Hussein," said Eric Marclay, head of the ICRC delegation in Yemen, adding that Saleh played a "crucial role within his team helping hundreds of thousands of people".

Meanwhile, moving testimonials continued to pour in to the British Red Cross and the ICRC after the murder in April of Khalil Dale, a long-time aid worker for the British Red Cross, who was serving as a health-programme manager for the ICRC in Quetta, Pakistan when he was abducted in January.

Letters and Facebook postings described Dale as brave, tireless,

inspiring and compassionate, and as someone who brought hope to many. "I will keep Khalil in my heart forever and his memory will give me the strength to keep going," one of the many letters concluded.

The Movement did finally get some good news when it learned in mid July that Benjamin Malbrancke, an ICRC delegate abducted by armed individuals on April 21 in northern Yemen, had been set free. "We are relieved and extremely happy to have our colleague back with us, in good health," said Eric Marclay, who heads the ICRC operations in the country.

Safe water for all

A drinking water and sanitation project by the Nepal Red Cross Society has benefited roughly 3.7 million people in rural communities of the country over the past three decades, according to a report released on World Water Day, 22 March, by the Nepal Red Cross. This amounts to about 15 per cent of Nepal's achievements in drinking water and sanitation, the report notes. The report was just one of many events and achievements highlighted around the world by Movement actors in March, aiming to bring attention to water-related issues and the work being done to bring safe drinking water to communities in need.

Helping Brazil tackle road safety

An approach to road safety developed by the Global Road Safety Partnership (GRSP), a project hosted by the IFRC, has been adopted by the government of Brazil as the methodology in all of its 26 state capitals. This approach to road safety, known as the Proactive Partnership Strategy (PPS), has been successful in reducing road crash-related deaths and injuries in numerous cities in Brazil. "This decision is a tremendous validation of the work that the cities already involved in PPS have been doing over the years," says José Cardita, who manages GRSP's operations in Brazil.

ICRC calls on parties to DRC conflict to spare civilians

Violence in the North and South Kivu regions of the Democratic

Voices

"His life was one of love, not hatred. His life was one of kindness, not cruelty. We will always remember our Khalil, our Ken, as a man who brought joy to us and countless others."

Statement by the family of long-time British Red Cross and ICRC aid worker **Khalil Dale**, after his murder in Quetta, Pakistan.

Republic of the Congo (DRC) has spread to the most remote and difficult-to-reach areas, with a rising number of civilian victims, reports the ICRC. "Most of the victims are civilians, some of whom are very young children, elderly people or women," says Laetitia Courtois, head of the ICRC sub-delegation in Bukavu, South Kivu. "The fighting has forced the inhabitants of entire villages to flee, worsening an already precarious situation."

'Disasters don't need visas'

Issues with visas and work permits for international disaster relief personnel. Coordination of relief agencies. Duties, tariffs and excessive paperwork. Some of the obstacles that aid groups reported facing during operations in the Horn of Africa last year, according to those attending a workshop organized by the IFRC, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the Kenya Red Cross. The workshop aimed to create a better system of laws and agreements in states affected by ongoing drought because, as one attendee noted, "A disaster doesn't need a visa to cross borders."

ICRC report: violations increasing in Colombia

Violations of humanitarian law, including forced displacement, threats of violence, rape and damage to civilian objects, increased last year in Colombia, according to a report released by the ICRC in April. In many cases, fighting has intensified, making it harder for remote communities to obtain basic services such as health care, education, clean water and transportation.



Photo: Reuters/Thomas Mukoya, www.alertnet.org

Fighting in South Sudan gets worse

Since the beginning of the year, the ICRC has stepped up its efforts to respond to mounting humanitarian needs in South Sudan. In early April, needs increased further when hostilities erupted along the border with Sudan. "Many people left their homes in a hurry because of the violence, often leaving everything behind and finding some sort of shelter in makeshift camps," says Melker Mabeck, the ICRC's head of delegation in South Sudan.

Humanitarian index

25: Number of journalists killed due to violence in 2012 as of 14 June, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ).¹

919: Number of journalists killed due to violence since 1992, according to CPJ (70 per cent were murdered; 18 per cent were caught in crossfire during combat; 12 per cent killed by violence while on dangerous assignments).

1,335: Number of hectares of bananas, mango, capsicum (red peppers), water melon, tomatoes and

pawpaw grown in 47 farms as part of a Kenya Red Cross Society's Tana River Drought Recovery project.

100,000: Number of people the Kenya Red Cross hopes to make food secure by 2015.

3.4 million: Number of Kenyans considered at risk of malnutrition during the current drought conditions in the Horn of Africa.

2.3 million: Number of people assisted by volunteers using IFRC's Community-Based Health and First Aid (CBHFA) approach in 2011.

¹ These numbers vary somewhat among press advocacy groups, which categorize reports of journalists' deaths differently.

Contents

ISSUE 2 · 2012 · redcross.int

■ Cover story	4	■ Detention	18
Protecting the witnesses		Inside 'Old Bilibid'	
Journalists are often the first to expose the reality and the crimes of war. They are also crucial witnesses to the suffering and needs of vulnerable people in times of conflict and natural disaster. But they themselves are also often vulnerable to attack. What can humanitarians do to help them get the story out and stay safe during dangerous assignments?		In jails such as Manila's severely overcrowded 'Old Bilibid', the ICRC's Call for Action brings various partners and the Philippine Red Cross together to improve the lives and health of detainees.	
.....		
■ Media	10	■ Evidence-based practices	20
Tweets heard around the world		Breathing new life into first aid	
How social media are transforming humanitarian response. Dispatches from the Japanese Red Cross Society, the IFRC and other National Societies on how to handle today's viral media environment.		The first in a series about efforts to back up Movement work with evidence. How IFRC and National Society research is breathing new life into the way first aid is taught and delivered around the world.	
.....		
■ National Society	12	■ World First Aid Day special	22
Courage under fire		'Everybody as one'	
Showing incredible professionalism, volunteers with the Syrian Arab Red Crescent have been on the front line, recovering the wounded, performing on-the-spot first aid, handing out food and medicines under the worst of conditions.		Working together, the ICRC and the Nigerian Red Cross Society are empowering violence-torn communities with the best first-aid practices, adapted to a region where access to medical care is limited and supplies are few and far between.	
.....		
■ Focus	14	■ Food security	24
Forgotten dignity		The hungry season	
The inmates of Madagascar's Antanimora prison live in cramped, overcrowded, unhealthy and insecure conditions, forgotten by the outside world. These photos are a window into the daily life inside Antanimora, where regular ICRC and family visits, and small rehabilitation projects aim to restore the health and dignity of all inmates.		In the Sahel, the regular dry season is being exacerbated by conflict. The aftermath of conflict in Libya, displacement caused by new fighting in Mali and a slow international response have added to the region's woes.	
.....		
		Replicating resilience	26
		In eastern Kenya, farmers are turning drought-resistant cassava roots into flour for pizza dough. A little further north, a 1,335-hectare farm is transforming the local food economy and breaking the cycle of hunger and aid dependence. Can projects like these be sustained and expanded to meet the needs of a desperate region?	
.....		
		■ Resources	29

Articles, letters to the editors and other correspondence should be addressed to:

Red Cross Red Crescent
P.O. Box 372, CH-1211 Geneva 19, Switzerland
E-mail: rcrcc@ifrc.org ISSN No. 1019-9349

Editor
Malcolm Lucard

Production Officer
Paul Lemerise

Design
Baseline Arts Ltd, Oxford, UK

Layout
New Internationalist, Oxford, UK

Printed
on chlorine-free paper by Swissprinters Lausanne SA, Switzerland

Editorial board

ICRC
Dorothea Krimitsas
Sophie Orr
Florian Westphal

IFRC
Andy Channelle
Pierre Kremer
Jason Smith

We gratefully acknowledge the assistance of researchers and support staff of the ICRC, the IFRC and National Societies.

The magazine is published three times a year in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish and is available in 188 countries, with a circulation of more than 80,000.

The opinions expressed are those of the authors and not necessarily of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. Unsolicited articles are welcomed, but cannot be returned.

Red Cross Red Crescent reserves the right to edit all articles. Articles and photos not covered by copyright may be reprinted without prior permission. Please credit *Red Cross Red Crescent*.

The maps in this publication are for information purposes only and have no political significance.

On the cover: Illustration by Anna Cooper.

Photos this page, from top:
REUTERS/Julien de Rosa, courtesy www.alertnet.org; Ibrahim Malla/SARC; Guillaume Binet/ICRC; Heather Murdock; Claire Doole/IFRC.



4. Protecting the witnesses



12. Courage under fire



14. Forgotten dignity



22. 'Everybody as one'



26. Replicating resilience



Protecting the

Journalists are often the first to expose the reality of war and the suffering of vulnerable people. But media workers are also targets. What can humanitarians do to help keep them safe — and get the story out?

ON THE EARLY AFTERNOON of 24 May 2012, radio journalist Ahmed Addow Anshur was walking through the Suuq Bo'le, a market in the Dharkenley district of Mogadishu, Somalia, when he was shot and killed by four men who witnesses say quickly sped off on motorcycles.

Anshur died instantly from bullet wounds to the head and the chest, making him the sixth Somali journalist murdered in the country this year. If the current trend continues, 2012 could become one



Bearing witness

During warfare or natural disaster, journalists and humanitarians have very different agendas. The first: to get a story out, to serve as witness about what's happening on the ground. For the humanitarian, it's about reaching the people with the assistance they need to survive.

But these agendas do overlap. For humanitarian groups, journalists can help give a voice to the most vulnerable people and their stories can motivate an international or local response. Meanwhile, humanitarian groups often provide the information and access journalists need to tell those stories.

Sadly, journalists like aid workers often carry out their professions at great risk. The conflict in Libya, Syria and Yemen, and the civil unrest in Egypt and Tunisia, made 2011 one of the most deadly for journalists. Meanwhile, journalists covering insecure areas or conflict in Colombia, DRC, Iraq or Pakistan face the threat of death even when doing routine reporting on politics, the economy, crime or natural disaster.

Now the media landscape is changing even more rapidly than the nature of warfare. As small arms and armed groups proliferate, so do bloggers and citizen journalists who, armed often with little more than a cell phone and a laptop, are broadcasting images directly around the world from areas where international media cannot go.

In this hi-tech and violent world, do journalists covering humanitarian crises need greater protection under the Geneva Conventions and Additional Protocols? Do humanitarian groups have a responsibility to speak up for journalists who, in a certain way, could be considered a vulnerable group?

Visit our website, www.redcross.int, for more about journalism during conflict and natural disaster.

Without journalists such as French photographer Rémi Ochlik, the world would not get news about important humanitarian stories. Before Ochlik was killed along with American correspondent Marie Colvin in the besieged Syrian city of Homs in February, he covered stories in Haiti, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Libya. Here, Ochlik is seen in Cairo, Egypt during civil unrest, November 2011.

Photo: REUTERS/Julien de Rosa, courtesy www.alertnet.org

e witnesses

of the worst years for Somali journalists since 2009, when nine reporters were killed.

"The violence towards journalists gets worse when there is a political transition," says Mohamed Ibrahim, a freelance Somali journalist who also works as a *New York Times* correspondent and is secretary general of the National Union of Somali Journalists (NUSOJ).

"When the situation becomes very political, each group tries to manipulate the media by threatening or killing journalists," he says. "Also, there are gangs

not related to any political factions that could be involved in these killings as well."

As with most of the attacks on journalists here, the identity of Anshur's killers is unknown and most violent crimes against journalists go unsolved. According to the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), based in New York, 41 journalists have been killed in Somalia since 1992, making it the most dangerous country on the African continent for media workers.

On the murky front line of modern conflict, it's local journalists such as Anshur who are most

at risk. War reporters who move from country to country face extreme dangers — as the numbers killed since 2011 during violence in Libya and Syria attest. But local reporters, as well as the ‘fixers’, translators, drivers and media workers who help international war reporters, make up the bulk of media workers killed.

“Most of the journalists who are killed are local reporters covering local stories,” says Mohammed Keita, who directs operations in Africa for the CPJ. “They are far more vulnerable than international journalists because they have little institutional support and they live and work in countries where the rule of law is not very strong.”

Life expectancy: 24 hours

This climate of fear has a chilling effect on those trying to bear witness to the humanitarian consequences of conflict or insecurity. “Our life expectancy is 24 hours — renewable.” That’s how Solange Lusiku describes the situation for journalists in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), where eight journalists have been killed since 2006.

A champion of the free press, Lusiku is the editor-in-chief and publisher of *Le Souverain*, an independent newspaper in Bukavu, the capital of South Kivu province in eastern DRC, a region plagued by violence. Like many journalists and press advocates, Lusiku says a free press is not only vital to democracy and human rights, but to any effective humanitarian response.

“Just as the press contributes to the promotion of democracy, it also promotes humanitarian assistance,” she says. “Humanitarian actors need the press to present facts requiring urgent intervention or to alert people about a dangerous and disastrous situation — even to inform the public about the work they have done.”

While reporters often need humanitarian groups for mobility, statistics and access to dangerous areas, Lusiku says relief agencies also need journalists. “In situations of conflict, we need an independent press in order to have reliable information that has been neither censored nor self-censored,” she adds. “This also allows humanitarians to guide and plan their interventions.”

This is why, maintains CPJ’s Keita, humanitarian groups should advocate for the protection of journalists. During natural crises such as the ongoing drought in the Sahel or Horn of Africa, the state of media freedom in the affected countries should be part of the discussion, Keita argues.

“If a government is engaged in downplaying the extent of the crisis in the name of protecting the image of the country, and they can manipulate data about the humanitarian crisis, it will also have an impact on the response,” he says.

“You have to be careful. Later on, if there are international trials or tribunals, these stories could be used by the prosecution or the defendant.”

Tania Mehanna, reporter for the Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation and veteran correspondent of international conflicts

Humanitarian responsibility?

If this is so, what is the role and responsibility of humanitarian organizations towards the press? And do the laws governing armed conflict adequately protect those who risk their lives to get the news out about the realities of war or other dangerous emergencies?

Recent events, from high-profile deaths and kidnappings of journalists in Afghanistan, Colombia, Libya, Pakistan and Syria to the growing global body count (25 killed as of mid-June 2012 by violent means, according to CPJ), suggest that journalists are increasingly vulnerable to attack in places where humanitarian reporting is desperately needed.

Since 1992, in fact, CPJ has documented 919 cases in which journalists were killed due to acts of violence. Of those, 70 per cent were murdered, 18 per cent caught in the crossfire during combat and 12 per cent killed by violence while on dangerous assignments.

Numerous national and global organizations (including CPJ, Reporters Sans Frontières and the International Federation of Journalists) campaign vigorously for press freedom and greater protection for journalists. Most offer training and guidelines for journalists on how to stay safe while on dangerous missions and they publicly push for prosecutions — even launching their own investigations — of crimes against media workers.

An emblem for the press?

Some press groups argue that it’s time for new, stronger protections — even a special press emblem

Reporter’s notebook

How am I protected?

Under Article 79, Additional Protocol I of the Geneva Conventions and Protocols, journalists are protected as any other civilian or non-combatant — as long as they do not take part in hostilities. They are offered no special status based on the dangerous work they do. However, Article 79 specifically recognizes journalists and affords them all the protection given to civilians in times of combat. Journalists who are accredited as war correspondents with a military force benefit from prisoner-of-war status if captured.

Are reporters who work as employees of the armed forces protected?

Reporters who work as correspondents or employees for a branch of the military would be considered legitimate targets of war but they would also be afforded the same protection as soldiers if taken prisoner.

Grey area: should I embed?

Journalists can also choose to ‘embed’ with military troops. This means travelling with military units and following their security requirements. Embedded journalists are protected as civilians under IHL but enjoy no special status under the law unless they have been accredited by the armed forces as officially recognized war correspondents. Also, the troops they are travelling with would be considered a legitimate military target. Many journalists choose not to embed as this can restrict their freedom to move and report independently.



— that would be codified by new provisions in international humanitarian law (IHL).

At an international conference for the protection of journalists in January, Murad al-Sharif, deputy secretary-general of the Press Emblem Campaign (PEC), reiterated his organization’s call for a new international convention to protect journalists.

“What’s essential today is to conclude a treaty that ensures media professionals around the world are treated fairly,” says al-Sharif, who advocates for a treaty that could provide a system for monitoring violations and prosecution of those who target journalists.

Because journalists often are obliged to put themselves in harm’s way to do their jobs, al-Sharif says they need special status and protection beyond what is already afforded to them as civilians under the Geneva Conventions and Additional Protocols (see sidebar). The PEC, created in 2004, also believes a special emblem for reporters could help reduce unintentional deaths of journalists during combat.

The call for a new convention is not universal, however. In fact, many media support groups and humanitarian organizations argue that what is needed is better enforcement of existing laws, not more laws.

For these advocates, a special status or protective category for journalists raises as many questions as would be solved by new treaty law. For example: Why just single out journalists? Many professionals, from sanitation engineers to medical doctors, carry out vital, life-saving work during conflict. Do they need special protection as well? And how do we decide who is a journalist, especially in this era when reporting is often done by ordinary citizens with a cell-phone camera?

📍 The vast majority of journalists killed in the line of duty are local reporters who are specifically targeted. In this photo, Somali journalists carry the body of their colleague, Abdisalan Sheikh Hasan, during his funeral in southern Mogadishu, December 2011. Photo: REUTERS/Ismaïl Taxta, courtesy www.alertnet.org

“In situations of conflict, we need an independent press in order to have reliable information that has been neither censored nor self-censored.”

Solange Lusiku, editor of *Le Souverain*, based in Bukavu, DRC

The original authors of Protocol I had many of these questions in mind when they agreed that creating a special status for journalists could weaken the fundamental protections provided to all civilians. “Any increase in the number of persons with a special status, necessarily accompanied by an increase of protective signs, tends to weaken the protective value of each protected status already accepted,” according to an ICRC commentary on the discussions leading up to the 1977 protocol.

For the ICRC, which has long recognized the critical role the media play in exposing the brutal reality of war, the protection of journalists is part of its overall strategy to promote better compliance with existing protections for civilians under IHL.

One of the key objectives of ICRC’s Four-Year Action Plan for the implementation of international humanitarian law is to encourage governments to take concrete action to protect journalists. The suggested efforts range from enhanced military training to stronger legal remedies “to ensure that ... violations do not go unpunished”.

Because prosecution for violations of IHL often occurs in military or civilian courts of countries who have signed the Geneva Conventions, many legal experts say strengthening national legal systems is a critical part of ending the impunity that killers of journalists have generally enjoyed (see page 1).

Staying alive

The real challenge, however, is to prevent the killing of journalists in the first place. For this reason, the ICRC offers a variety of services for journalists work-

ing in danger zones. Since 1985, it has provided a hotline for reporters, news organizations and the family of journalists who are in trouble.

The organization has also intervened on behalf of reporters who are trapped, detained, kidnapped or injured. Most recently, the ICRC served as a neutral intermediary between warring parties in the safe return on 30 May of Roméo Langlois, a journalist for the television network France 24, who was captured by the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia in late April.

When journalists are killed during fighting, Movement actors often help to recover and return their remains. The ICRC and the Syrian Arab Red Crescent, for example, were involved in repatriating the bodies of American journalist Marie Colvin and French photographer Rémi Ochlik, both killed during the bombardment of Homs, Syria in February 2012.

In addition, the ICRC and some Red Cross Red Crescent National Societies, offer dozens of IHL training sessions each year for journalists on how to handle concrete events that happen during conflict.

This year, the ICRC also intends to release a new audiovisual training tool that, combined with training from ICRC staff, is designed to help journalists better describe what they are witnessing, understand when the law is being violated or upheld and learn how IHL protects their safety.

"The idea is not to turn the journalists into lawyers," says Dorothea Krimitsas, ICRC's deputy head of public relations who manages the journalists' hotline and efforts to bring IHL training to journalists.

"Because there has been two decades of war, there aren't any journalism schools or institutes. So most [journalists] are not aware of how international law, or the norms of Geneva Conventions, relate to reporting the conflict."

Mohamed Ibrahim, freelance journalist and correspondent for the *New York Times*, based in Mogadishu

"The idea is to help them find the references they need to navigate the intricacies of international humanitarian law."

The humanitarian angle

This type of training can have a direct and important impact on how news is reported during warfare, says Tania Mehanna, a veteran reporter who has covered many international conflicts for the Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation. She has also attended several ICRC workshops on IHL and journalism.

During her coverage of the wars in Afghanistan, Iraq and Lebanon, for example, she was often confronted with tough choices. One of the questions that came up during each of those conflicts was how certain weapons — including cluster bombs and incendiary agents such as napalm and white phosphorous — were being used.

"When you report on prohibited weapons or those that are allowed, but only under certain circumstances, this kind of information can be very helpful when you write your story," says Mehanna.

"You have to be careful," she adds. "You have to know for sure whether particular weapons have in fact been used because whatever you say is going to be taken very seriously. Later on, if there are international trials or tribunals, these stories could be used by the prosecution or the defendant."

For journalists in countries such as Somalia, this type of professional training is sorely needed, says Somali journalist Mohamed Ibrahim. "Most journalists here are young people who make very little money — not even enough to take care of their daily needs," he says. "And because there has been two decades of war, there aren't any journalism schools or institutes. So most of the Somali journalists are not aware of how international law, or the norms of Geneva Conventions, relate to reporting the conflict."

Raising professional standards and ethics — fostering the notion that journalists are independent and not taking sides in politics or the conflict — is another step that can help make journalism a safer career choice in Somalia, he says.

In places such as Somalia, Ibrahim says journalists often report on issues related to international humanitarian law, whether they intend to or not. A better understanding of both humanitarian and journalistic principles, Ibrahim says, could not only help save the lives of journalists — but also help them get the story out about other vulnerable people affected by conflict and natural disaster.

"During the drought, Somali journalists here have really done a lot, they have really done their best," says Ibrahim. "But they need to increase their skills so they know better how to cope with reporting within this very difficult and dangerous humanitarian situation." ■

'Inconvenient witnesses'



Three questions for Solange Lusiku, editor-in-chief and publisher of *Le Souverain*, an independent newspaper in eastern Congo.

Do you feel that local journalists are more exposed than international ones?

No, I think that once in the field, the dangers are the same. Whether you are local or international, we're all journalists in the field. However, I do remember once when atrocities were committed in Kaniola, a village located in the Walungu territory more than 50

kilometres from Bukavu — where men, women and children were slaughtered like goats — my personal reporting material was erased by the rebels but they did not dare to do the same to an international journalist.

Do you feel protected under the laws of war? No, the lords of war and combatants in eastern DRC have no clue about the law of war. Once they have a weapon in hand, they can shoot anyone they want and whenever they want to. Besides, journalists are inconvenient witnesses. It's better to get rid of them.

Do you think the protection for journalists can be strengthened? Yes, protecting journalists is a very high priority because the work of journalists raises awareness as to what is really happening. When the gunfire begins, journalists do not know how to protect themselves. Training journalists on their own security is a necessity.



Witness to war crimes

The images of photographers such as Ron Haviv are often about giving a voice to the voiceless and bearing witness. In Bosnia, when accompanying Serbian paramilitary forces in 1992, Haviv documented the execution of Bosnian civilians in what would later become known as 'ethnic cleansing'. More recently in DRC, he documented attempts by warring parties to displace populations and control access to food and medicine. In a recent interview, Haviv spoke about how journalism can help expose violations of humanitarian law.

When you witness an atrocity such as an execution, what's going through your mind?

The first thing I'm thinking about is: is there anything I can do to stop this from happening? Often, just my presence somewhere has changed the dynamic. Because there is a witness, there is a non-local.

But it is very precarious. On a few occasions, a killing happened in front of me and I wasn't able to stop it and I was also not allowed to take any photographs. So there was no actual evidence. So I promised myself that if I were in the same situation again and I wasn't able to stop it from happening, I needed to be able to come out with some sort of

photograph as evidence. That way, at the very least, the people don't die in vain.

Did the photos of the executions have an effect?

The photographs were published in many magazines before the first shot was even fired in Sarajevo and I was very confident that this was evidence of the kind of ethnic cleansing that everybody had been talking about and that the international community would react. But, at first, the photographs did nothing. They eventually became adopted by the Bosnian causes to motivate people to join their cause, as a kind of propaganda. Eventually, they were used in The Hague to issue indictments for various people involved in war crimes in the former Yugoslavia.

During your recent coverage of the war in Libya, you and others took compelling photos of a hospital in Tripoli where there were signs that people had been bound and executed.

Executions were taking place by Gaddafi loyalists against the rebels. But at the same time, it was very apparent that Gaddafi loyalists were being executed by the rebels as well. Coming across these scenes, it was incredibly important, first, that it be known and second, that other organizations knew where to go

to begin their own investigations. For reconciliation to occur, people need to understand what happened during the transition.

- 📍 The sole survivor of a massacre finds his home in ruins after the Bosnian army recaptured his village from Serb forces in the fall of 1995. He is standing on what is believed to be a mass grave of sixty-nine people, including his family.
- 📍 In 2011, journalists including Ron Haviv found numerous bodies in a Tripoli hospital where executions appeared to have taken place. Photos: Ron Haviv/VII



For more examples of how journalists report on international humanitarian law, see www.redcross.int.

The tweets heard around the world

The Japanese Red Cross Society learns how actively engaging both traditional and social media is a critical part of crisis response.



1 Minutes after the earthquake hit in March 2011, Japanese Red Cross Society spokesperson Saya Matsumoto began sending ‘tweets’ like this one via the Twitter social network to subscribers worldwide — including many journalists.

2 This Japanese Red Cross Society video, posted on YouTube, shows how hospital staff reacted quickly, preparing for mass casualties and converting the lobby into a triage area.

3 A woman is rolled into the Ishinomaki Red Cross hospital after she and her son were found trapped in the rubble nine days after the tsunami hit, igniting an international media frenzy.

4 On the first anniversary of the earthquake and tsunami, this video, posted on YouTube by the Japanese Red Cross Society, carries a simple message of thanks.

IN THE DAYS AND NIGHTS just after the March 2011 tsunami in north-eastern Japan, the Red Cross hospital was the only major health facility in the city of Ishinomaki to survive. Its generator-powered lights stood out like a beacon when night fell on an otherwise darkened landscape.

Although the hospital was overwhelmed with victims who needed care and shelter, there was a virtual blackout when it came to news of Ishinomaki. The nearby airport was so heavily damaged even helicopters could not fly in or out. Rail lines and roads were cut, and the extensive destruction in the area meant it took time for reporters to discover what was going on in Ishinomaki.

It wasn’t until a journalist from Kyodo News came to the hospital and filed a report that media began flooding in and the hospital made a critical decision to change hospital policy that restricted the media to a special press area during major disasters.

The director of the Planning and Communication Division, Masaaki Abe, decided to welcome the media as much as possible — over the phone, in person, at any hour, providing as much information as possible. He wanted to make up for the lack of news during the first two days and not let the nuclear power plant accident obscure events in Ishinomaki, so he asked staff members to be as cooperative as possible with the media.

An important channel for information

It wasn’t always easy. Staff were not used to the cameras, questions and demands of the media. But with no functioning city government, the media was crucial in getting out important messages about what the city needed, what the hospital and medical teams were doing on the scene and what challenges relief workers were facing.

“The media is not always an obstacle to medical activities,” says Tadashi Ishii, the hospital’s disaster management coordinator. “Through this disaster, I’ve learned that the media can be our partners.”

Journalists were even allowed to attend the medical team’s daily coordination meeting. So when breaking stories arose — such as when two people were found alive nine days after the tsunami — the hospital could respond effectively. After being found at 16:00, the survivors were brought to the hospital for treatment by 17:00. At 20:00, the hospital held a press conference together with a family member of the survivors.

Managing misleading tweets

At the same time, the Japanese Red Cross Society took a very proactive approach to social media. In the days following the earthquake and tsunami, simple messages with photographs were tweeted by the organization in order to convey the urgency

of the Red Cross response. Over a four-day period from 11 to 14 March, tweets from @federation (the IFRC's Twitter handle) reached more than 2.2 million people.

But that's not to say that the Japanese Red Cross Society's post-tsunami experience with media was always easy. An incorrect assertion, first posted on a blog and then echoed on Twitter, said that the Japanese Red Cross Society was taking a 20 per cent administration fee on all donations, recalls Saya Matsumoto, a Red Cross communications officer.

That in turn led to further negative press and the decision by the Japanese Red Cross to set the record straight. "We had to run a newspaper advertisement saying that 100 per cent of all

donations would be distributed to the survivors and we did not take any [percentage]," says Matsumoto, adding that while the amount spent on the ads was relatively small, it could have been spent on relief activities.

"From this experience, I've learned that in the world of the internet, you have to be very careful what you say," says Matsumoto. "Anything can be tweeted and spread in a way you did not intend. Twitter has become an important tool, which can influence public opinion. If you don't respond to tweets that are spreading wrong information, a large number of people can easily be misled."

For more, see www.redcross.int.

Web extra!

Dispatches from disaster: A British Red Cross programme is trying to change the way media cover emergencies.

We interrupt this program: When the Australian Broadcasting Corporation goes into Red Cross reporting mode.

See: www.redcross.int.



Facebook and Twitter have turned mass communication on its head

#Question for Movement: How to use social media to raise humanitarian consciousness?

When an 8.7-magnitude earthquake struck off the coast of Sumatra, Indonesia on 11 April, IFRC's Asia Pacific zone office in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia was physically shaken by the tremor. Fearing a repeat of the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, the communications unit immediately tweeted a first-hand account, closely followed by contact details of Red Cross Red Crescent spokespeople on the ground. Within minutes, interview requests flooded in from the BBC, CNN and Al Jazeera, all of whom were following the IFRC's communications manager on Twitter.

In rapid-onset emergencies Twitter has proved to be a powerful tool in rapidly building media attention around a crisis. Breaking news emerges on the 'twittersphere' before it makes the TV news headlines. If the Red Cross Red Crescent is to be considered a credible first responder, it's vital that we are seen to be actively tweeting relevant and useful information within minutes of a disaster striking.

Twitter's impact can be measured not only by its reach. Its conversational nature makes it the perfect mechanism for humanitarian organizations to communicate at a more emotional and personal level, which in turn generates greater interest among public supporters.

Social media platforms allow us to explain how we are helping and how the public can help us. We can share powerful eye-witness stories, upload near-real-time photographs, advocate on specific areas of concern, answer questions and correct misinformation. But in this age of 'citizen's journalism', what are the

potential pitfalls for humanitarian organizations where we don't have editorial control? For an organization like the ICRC, the risks are evident. When operating in sensitive political environments, misinformation spreading across the 'blogosphere' could have a detrimental impact on operational security and access to vulnerable populations.

A major concern today is that through repetition in social media, 'someone's truth' becomes 'everyone's truth'. Managing misinformation and the reputational risks associated with negative criticism on social media platforms requires speed, skill and dexterity. Forward planning in crisis management cannot be neglected and the chain of command in signing off on public statements must be streamlined if we are to engage with authority and conviction on issues where immediate responses are required.

Ultimately the opportunities outweigh the risks. Social media is here to stay and non-engagement is simply not an option. By their very nature, Facebook and Twitter break down hierarchical barriers, enabling volunteers to become communicators for their National Societies. Leaders in Red Cross Red Crescent National Societies must embrace this shift and harness the huge potential inherent in their membership.

By **Patrick Fuller**

Patrick Fuller is communications manager for the IFRC's Asia Pacific zone.



Courage unde

With the world's eyes turned towards the armed conflict unfolding in Syria, much of the humanitarian response has fallen on the shoulders the Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC). Showing incredible bravery, SARC volunteers and staff have been on the front line, recovering the wounded, performing on-the-spot first aid, handing out food and medicines to people in desperate need. The only humanitarian group with access to most of the country, the National Society has been a vital partner to the ICRC, the IFRC and other humanitarian actors. But the SARC has paid a heavy price. Since fighting broke out, five of its first-aid volunteers and staff (including a secretary general) and two board members have been killed. These photographs pay tribute to a National Society struggling to fulfil its mission in the cauldron that is present-day Syria.





☞ The funeral of Syrian Arab Red Crescent volunteer first-aid worker Mohammad al Khadraa, killed in Douma while working in a clearly marked SARC vehicle in April.

☞ SARC medics and residents help a woman at the site of an explosion in Damascus in May.

☞ Volunteers distributing food and other supplies in the besieged city of Homs.

☞ SARC doctors bring medicine, food and other vital services to the town of Bludan in February.

All photos Ibrahim Malla/SARC except upper right: REUTERS/Khaled al-Hariri, courtesy www.alertnet.org

er fire





More than 2,600 people are incarcerated at Antanimora Penitentiary, a facility designed to house 800 detainees. In each building, several levels have been erected in order to accommodate the high number of detainees. Still, many sleep side by side on the floor, in severely cramped conditions.

Even before political crisis gripped the country in 2009, Madagascar was one of the poorest countries in the world. With donors suspending most financial aid to the country, the prison system — already in disrepair — was hit hard. Madagascar's detainees live in cramped, overcrowded and unhealthy conditions, forgotten by the outside world. As in many parts of the world, detention carries a heavy stigma, for detainees and their families. Many in Madagascar's Antanimora prison, for example, have not seen their children in more than ten years. For many families, there are too many miles — and too much shame — associated with the long, arduous trips to visit imprisoned relatives. These photos by Guillaume Binet are a window into the daily life in Antanimora prison, where regular ICRC and family visits, along with other steps such as building new latrines and kitchens, are helping to restore the health and dignity of all those on the inside. Text by the ICRC's Marie-Servane Desjonquères.

Forgotten dignity

Open areas between the living quarters give detainees a chance to walk around, exercise and socialize within boundaries marked in white powder by prison authorities. In some of the prison yards, detainees have set up open markets where those who have the means can buy food, soap, cigarettes or get a haircut.





Every afternoon, detainees line up and wait to be served a meal composed simply of boiled cassava roots. Some are able to buy food and cook for themselves in their living quarters.



When family members come to visit, they are separated from detainees by two grills spaced about two metres apart. The twice-a-week visits last only ten minutes. Given that it takes some families many hours to make the long journey to Antanimora, many simply don't visit their loved ones.



Life is not easy for prison workers either. In certain areas of the prison, one guard might be responsible for overseeing 250 detainees. That means making tough decisions on the spot, such as when inmates get sick during the night and ask to be let out of their cells.

There are few organized activities for those incarcerated at Antanimora, but religious groups come regularly, and detainees can drop in to join the prayers and songs.





🕒 In the women's section of Antanimora, children born behind bars can live with their mothers until they are 18 months old, after which they are turned over to relatives or care-giving associations that often bring the children back to spend weekends with their mothers. There is a special area of the prison for mothers and infants, but it is also severely overcrowded.

🕒 As in many detention facilities around the world, the ICRC conducts regular visits with detainees in order to talk with them, and authorities, about prison conditions and the treatment of prisoners. In some cases, they also have the chance to share news with family.



IN A RUN-DOWN 19TH CENTURY BUILDING originally constructed by Spanish colonial rulers in the heart of the Philippine capital of Manila, almost 4,000 male inmates live in a space designed for just 1,800 people. Sandwiched between shopping malls and a metro station, the Manila City Jail — or 'Old Bilibid', which translates simply as 'old prison' — is the quintessential urban detention centre.

In one of the jail's 14 packed 'dormitories' — concrete walls roofed with corrugated iron — ICRC deputy protection coordinator Kirsty Macdonald visits Ruben*, a security detainee (a designation given to those accused of crimes related to the country's internal conflicts) who has been in the jail for more than four years, but has yet to see his trial completed.

Inside the dorms, makeshift sleeping compartments have been constructed out of plywood and cardboard. Given the overcrowding, only some inmates can have these; usually they are taken by those detainees with some power or financial means.

Ruben slept on the floor in the hall for two years and has only recently saved up enough money to buy his own compartment — so small, it barely has space for his mattress.

"What's worse," explains Macdonald, "is that the jail is built on a low-lying area, so every time it rains the dorms are flooded with a foot of water."

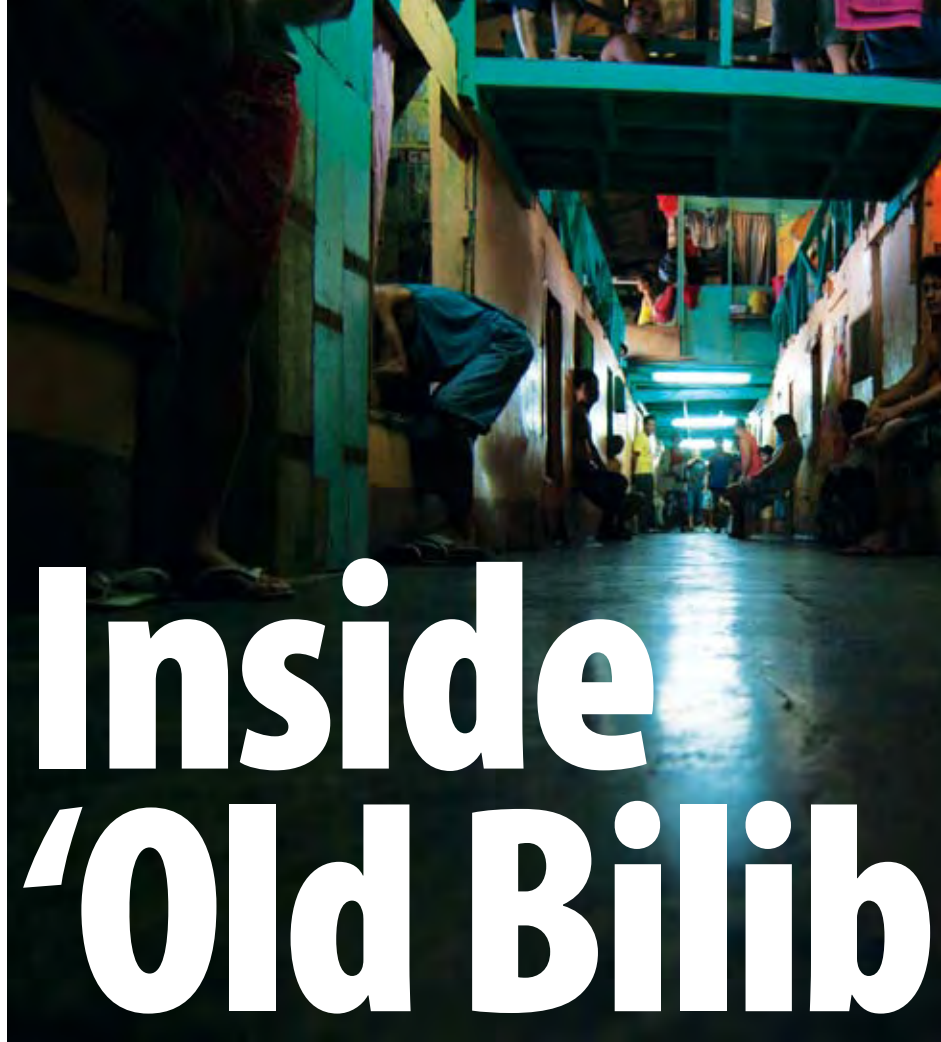
Some inmates with power or money manage to get sleeping compartments on the first floor, above the flood waters. Others, like Ruben, are on the ground floor and regularly have to deal with soaked clothing and sodden mattresses.

The visit with Ruben is typical of detainee visits the ICRC conducts all over the world. Questions are asked about his living conditions, contact with his family and the progress of his case through the courts, something about which Ruben is increasingly frustrated.

A call for action

The visit over, Macdonald has other appointments. The reason: the ICRC has expanded its detention-visit programme in recent years into a much broader and more ambitious initiative titled 'Call for Action'. The idea is simple — to improve living conditions in Philippine jails and to help speed up the judicial process so that detainees do not languish for years before their cases are decided.

But the task is complex and daunting. So today Macdonald will also meet with jail warden Ruel Rivera to discuss the installation of a drainage system that would reduce the flooding. From there, the conversation moves on to a tougher challenge: the length of time inmates stay in Old Bilibid.



Inside 'Old Bilibid'

The ICRC in the Philippines seeks to improve detention conditions through holistic judicial reform, better health care and family contact arranged by the Philippine Red Cross.

The statistics are staggering. Of 3,986 detainees, just 210 have been brought to trial and convicted. The others are waiting for their case to be heard or completed. One man has been there 17 years and has still not been sentenced. Typical waiting times can range from five to ten years.

The delays are a source of frustration not just to the inmates, but also to Rivera, who must cope with a massively overcrowded jail, simply because the judicial system is so slow and complex.

Cases often move from the police, to the prosecutors, to the courts and back again, each time passing through the hands of officials who may be unacquainted with how long the individual has already been detained and who are already overburdened with a huge backlog of cases.

That's why the ICRC is also working, together with jail officials and judges, in a task force aimed at identifying the longest-serving detainees and trying to get their cases dealt with more quickly. "Sometimes," says Macdonald, "it's just a question of one



id'

“We must cooperate or nothing will move... We are talking about a total overhaul of the [judicial] system, so the challenge is huge.”

Marlo Magdoza-Malagar,
judge of the Metropolitan Trial Court in Manila

➤ In the men’s quarters of Manila’s old city jail, almost 4,000 inmates live in a space designed for 1,800 people.

Photo: L. Piojo/ICRC

“My husband is getting old”

In another part of Manila, at the headquarters of the Philippine Red Cross, family members of those detained come for emotional and financial support through the years of waiting.

Here mothers can talk to counsellors about the difficulties of coping alone and can receive funding to help them finance the often-long journeys from their homes to the prisons where husbands, sons or sisters are being held.

Among those gathered at the Red Cross building is Ami,* a woman with seven children, whose husband has now been detained for 12 years. Ami’s youngest child was born just as his father was imprisoned and all her children, she says, “are always asking me when he is going to be released”.

Facilitated by the Philippine Red Cross and with support from the ICRC, Ami manages to visit her husband four times a year — a long journey which involves a full day’s travel.

She weeps as she asks again for news of his case. She, like so many families of detainees, has received little information from the authorities and, although she has now heard that his trial has been completed, neither she nor her husband has heard anything about a verdict or a release date.

“We share stories,” she says of her visits with her husband, “and I give him news of the children.”

“But,” she continues wearily, “my husband is getting old.” ■

By **Imogen Foulkes**

Imogen Foulkes is the BBC’s United Nations correspondent based in Geneva, Switzerland.

*Not their real names.

piece of paper that’s missing, that needs to be taken to the relevant court.”

Their day in court

On this day, Macdonald’s focus is on helping find some remedies through the country’s complex legal system. After the jail visit, she is off to see Judge Marlo Magdoza-Malagar, an executive judge who coordinates Manila’s metropolitan trial courts and can, perhaps, speed up some of the slowest cases.

Immediately upon entering Malagar’s office in Manila’s city hall, the difficulties the judge is facing become clear. In her outer office, several assistants sit at cramped desks, each piled high with paper work. A couple of antiquated computers don’t look up to the job of coping with the sheer extent of cases.

In Judge Malagar’s own office, the picture is similar. It is a tiny windowless space, where each available surface seems to have become a resting place for case files. But the judge herself is upbeat. After contacting a variety of courts across Manila about especially slow-moving cases, she reports that several of them actually replied to her on the same day; excellent progress, she believes.

“We must cooperate, or nothing will move,” says Malagar, a long-time supporter of the Call for Action. “We are talking about a total overhaul of the [judicial] system, so the challenge is huge.”

An evolving mission

This holistic approach to fostering more humane jail conditions for all detainees is just one example of the evolution of ICRC’s approach over the decades.

The organization began visiting detainees and civilian internees during wartime nearly 100 years ago and its right to visit detainees during conflict was recognized officially in the 1949 Geneva Conventions.

After the proxy conflicts of the Cold War, the nature of warfare changed — with a growing number of internal or non-international conflicts — and ICRC delegates increasingly found themselves visiting people detained on security grounds who were mixed with inmates accused of common-law crimes.

In the Philippines, for example, where the ICRC first began working more than 60 years ago, its primary role was visiting detainees accused of taking part in the country’s ongoing internal conflicts. Half a century on, this work remains one of the ICRC’s biggest efforts in the country, visiting around 700 people detained on security grounds and providing support for their families.

Because these ‘security detainees’ are held in civilian jails — where a conservative estimate puts the total inmate population at 130,000 — it soon became clear that the ICRC’s mission would have to address the general prison population as well.

“We would be visiting five or six security detainees in a jail with a population of 4,000,” says ICRC protection coordinator Sébastien Bourgoïn, “and what we saw were the appalling conditions that everyone had to endure, regardless of the reason for their detention.”

PROVE IT!

First in a series on Movement efforts to back up practices with evidence



Research into best practices is shaping the way first aid is taught and delivered. The challenge: how to bring everyone up to speed with practices based on evidence while adapting to local situations.

IN APRIL, PAUL OKOT was riding through Kampala, Uganda when he came across a motorcycle crash. The driver, a young man, was bleeding profusely. An emergency health programme officer for the Uganda Red Cross Society, Okot knew what to do first.

While others were looking for water to clean the wound, Okot knew that stopping blood loss was the most crucial first response in this case. “For every cut, you apply pressure,” says Okot, recounting how he took off his tie and pushed it steadily against the victim’s arm.

If the situation had occurred a few years earlier, before the *Africa First Aid Materials* were developed, Okot might not have been so sure. “Before the evidence-based methods, there were mixed messages,” he says, noting that until recently, there were no clear, uniform recommendations about which first-aid treatments were most effective.

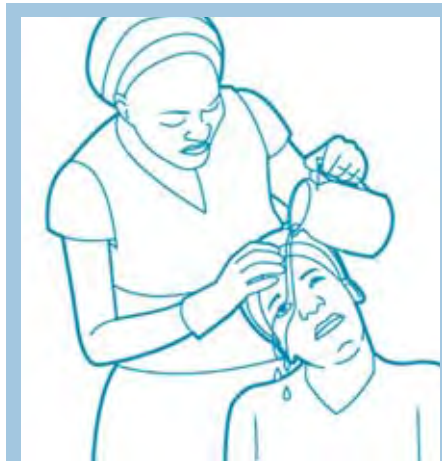
In Europe, for example, before regional certification standards were adopted five years ago, many National Societies taught different techniques for things as basic as ‘recovery positions’ — the best postures for keeping an unconscious person’s airway open — says Pascal Cassan, the national medical adviser with the French Red Cross.

“The French had their way. The British had theirs. The Germans had theirs,” says Cassan, whose National Society hosts the European Reference Centre for First-Aid Education. “There were eight to ten different recovery positions being taught.”

But which one was best? Which technique saved the most lives? In 2005, Red Cross experts in Europe and the United States created separate research groups to find answers to questions and discrepancies relating to a wide range of procedures. They reviewed thousands of scientific research papers to determine which medical interventions and first-aid methods had the best outcomes.

One of the first results was the *European First Aid Manual*, first published by the Belgian Red Cross in 2006 and most recently

Breathing new life into first aid



Images from the *African First Aid Materials* (a set of guidance documents developed by the Belgian Red Cross with a consortium of African National Societies) show evidence-based first-aid techniques have been adapted to suit the local context.

updated as the *2011 European First Aid Manual*. In the United States, the American Red Cross and the American Heart Association teamed up to produce similar guidelines.

Since then, the effort to harmonize best practices, based on evidence, has gone global. The IFRC, along with leading National Societies in Europe, the Americas, Africa and Asia, combined experience to produce the *International First Aid and Resuscitation Guidelines 2010*. This document, the authors say, represents the first global, evidence-based recommendations for first aid.

What does ‘evidence-based’ really mean? The phrase has become a buzzword in the humanitarian and development worlds. In short, it defines approaches or actions that are based on scientific proof that a given practice is effective. In the medical field, the term came into use in the 1990s as researchers sought to give doctors sound advice on a wide range of practices based on a thorough review of scientific literature.

“Normally, doctors or physicians who want to keep up with the best practices need to read dozens of academic articles,” says Philippe Vandekerckhove, CEO of the Belgian Red Cross–Flemish community, which published the *2011 European First Aid Manual*. “It’s not possible for one person to

make a critical review of all the research that's out there and determine the best approach.

"In this case, for first-aid responders, we've consolidated the research, we've cut through the clutter," says Vandekerckhove, whose National Society also hosts the Centre of Expertise, a reference centre that promotes evidence-based practices. "We've judged which of the research papers out there are of a high enough quality, assessed the findings and then made recommendations."

It was no light task. In developing the IFRC guidelines, for example, a global team of reviewers poured over more than 30,000 articles that examined treatment for emergencies such as heart attacks, blood loss, small wounds, broken bones and much more.

First, a small team of trained researchers discounted low-quality research papers that did not follow sound scientific research methodology. Then an advisory body of medical experts reviewed the papers and synthesized the data to determine the approaches that have had the best results.

From that, recommendations were developed to suit particular contexts, says David Markenson, who chairs the American Red Cross's Scientific Advisory Council.

"The evidence shows what the best technique is universally," he says. "But what can be applied to different environments is not universal. The process allows all National Societies in different countries to say, 'There are five things that are proven to work for this disease, but in my country, with this type of emergency and limited resources, number three works the best.'"

No 'one size fits all'

That's essentially what happened after Europe began implementing its first region-wide first-aid certification in 2006. People like Okot — and others in Red Cross Red Crescent National Societies in Africa — saw a gap in how the guidelines would apply in their countries.

"It became clear that a simple translation of the European guidelines was not enough, it was not going to work," says Vandekerckhove. "There had to be materials adapted to Africa."



A review of medical research proves that traditional, local remedies can be more effective than modern medicines. Research carried out for the *African First Aid Materials*, for example, validated some traditional techniques for disinfecting wounds and treating people dehydrated due to diarrhoea. A traditional technique of putting honey on wounds is particularly effective in reducing the risk of infection if done properly. By contrast, the *European First Aid Manual* suggests the application of over-the-counter disinfectants that are not necessarily available in many parts of Africa. Likewise, the advice to Europeans to buy an over-the-counter oral rehydration fluid for people suffering from dehydration is replaced in the African context with variations of traditional recipes for mixtures using corn flour or locally available plants and salt.

The recommendations in the European manual, for example, were based on the assumption that people could reach a doctor, or be met by an ambulance, within 10 to 15 minutes. In some parts of rural Africa, it can take days to get medical attention. The way people are treated at the scene is therefore different and situations first aiders might face

are often different. For example, the African materials, which were developed by African medical experts, has a chapter on child birth while the European manual does not.

The way victims are transported in rural Africa can also be different. "You find things like bicycle ambulances," says Okot. "The first-aid manual used in these areas, therefore, had to address how to transport someone on a cart pulled by a bicycle without making certain injuries worse."

Spreading the message

But getting the word out about the best techniques around the world can prove tricky, says Vandekerckhove. "There were interesting examples in which certain illustrations in the European guidelines would be misinterpreted in some African communities." In the European guidelines, for example, a 'thumbs-up' indicated an approved technique, but in many parts of the world, a thumbs-up means something is bad or it can be taken as an insult.

The way people learn also varies. In Europe, the guidelines are always put into manuals, which can serve as textbooks for a course. In Africa, guidelines are compiled into 'materials' that National Societies can transform into theatrical performances, posters, talks, DVDs and even songs.

Perhaps the biggest challenge for global implementation is resources. "It's not easy to get all volunteers in all countries, even the trainers, up to speed on the latest approaches," notes the French Red Cross's Cassan. "It is going to take time and resources and a lot of commitment."

But it's worth the investment, he argues. "When it comes to first aid, the Red Cross Red Crescent sets the standard in many countries — so it's important that we position ourselves as a leader in terms of the best, evidence-based practices."

That appears to be exactly what bystanders understood when the Uganda Red Cross's Okot jumped in to help the injured man in the streets of Kampala. "They were attempting to do something, but it was different from what I was planning to do. When they saw I was Red Cross, they left me to administer first aid. They knew I knew how to do it." ■

By **Ricci Shryock**

Ricci Shryock is a freelance journalist based in Washington DC and Dakar, Senegal.



“Everybody as one”

FOUR YEARS AGO, 26-year-old Brian Azi Nyam was caught in the crossfire when fighting broke out between communities in the volatile city of Jos, Nigeria. He and his best friend were shot.

Nyam called out for help, but no one came. His friend died on the street.

“I was lying down there, shouting, crying for help,” he says. “Nobody. [I was] just looking. There was nothing else to do. It was very painful.”

On his lunch break from Nigerian Red Cross Society first-aid training, Nyam says if he had been trained then as a part of an emergency rescue team, he might have been able to save his friend’s life.

Since 2009, the ICRC and the Nigerian Red Cross have trained 2,755 community members like Nyam, in 105 locations across Nigeria. Students learn basic life-saving skills so they can respond when a bomb goes off or fighting breaks out between communities.

Trainees from rural areas say they are also learning how to respond to accidents where the hospitals are too far away to save the lives of the victims.

The ICRC and the Nigerian Red Cross Society bring the best first-aid practices, based on the latest research, to communities where basic emergency care and medical supplies are few and far between.

The training also reflects a social dynamic that remains elusive in much of northern Nigeria.

In the past decade, thousands have been killed in inter-communal violence in this region. Jos residents say Christians are still afraid to go into Muslim neighbourhoods, while Muslims still fear Christian neighbourhoods. At the training sessions, Christians, Muslims and competing ethnicities study in the same classes and students are instructed to give their rivals the same care as their friends.

“Both the Christians and the Muslims are one here,” student Victoria John says on her third day of training. “We are not even sure that this is a Christian or this

Students learn how to transport a spinal cord injury victim during training given by the Nigerian Red Cross Society and the ICRC in Plateau State, Nigeria in May. Photo: Heather Murdock

is a Muslim,” she adds, referring to a victim she may one day help. “I will not treat this one? No. We take everybody along as one.”

The violence in Nigeria appears religious because it is often Christians and Muslims who are fighting, but the root of the problem is a complex combination of political, socio-economic and ideological disputes. In Jos, which is located in a northern, central region known as the “Middle Belt”, more than 1,000 people have died in sectarian clashes over the past two years, according to Human Rights Watch.

Community leaders select first-aid students to represent a cross section of the area they come from. Training students from rival groups together also helps the Nigerian Red Cross and the ICRC maintain their neutrality, by not favouring one group over another.

Nigerian Red Cross trainer Ghali Bashir Adam says simple techniques, like teaching students to ensure their own safety and open the airways of unconscious victims, are the most important elements of this training. With limited resources available, students are taught the many ways a piece of cloth can be used for emergency treatment, like for tying a spinal cord victim to a board to immobilize them to prevent further injury. A person who is bleeding excessively can be helped by applying compression to the wound and then giving them a drink of water, Adam explains.

Trainers also regularly take new courses to hone their skills and learn the latest first-aid techniques. Updating these techniques often involves simplifying them so they can be performed skilfully under intense pressure, says Adam. New scientific research also adds to the first aiders’ repertoire, like the recent discovery that adult victims found not breathing often still have oxygen in their hearts and can be helped with immediate compressions.

Beyond first-aid training, Adam says making various religious and ethnic groups work as a team gives participants an outlook that cannot be taught in a lecture.

“Both the Christians and the Muslims are one here... We are not even sure that this is a Christian or this is a Muslim.”

Victoria John, a first-aid student during her third day of an ICRC and Nigerian Red Cross Society training session

Web extra!

Keeping it simple

The Nigerian Red Cross Society’s Ghali Bashir Adam explains how simplifying first-aid techniques allows ordinary people to save loved ones during chaotic emergencies. Also, the Red Cross Society of China brings best first-aid practices to a vast and diverse country.

www.redcross.int

At a clinic in an area known as a hotspot of violence between Christian and Muslim communities, students of all faiths learn how to open an unconscious victim’s airway — and about the principle of impartiality. Photo: Heather Murdock



“This particular training contributes a lot in uniting the communities that experienced violence,” he says outside a quiet clinic located near a military checkpoint that is set up to separate Muslims from Christians if fighting erupts. “It helps in the reconciliation.”

Emergency responders in the field say students aspire to be impartial while giving care, but it’s not always easy. Impartiality is an ongoing process, because although they may not have favourites, the world around them does.

Friday Apuwa Danlad has been a Nigerian Red Cross volunteer for more than 12 years and was among the first on the scene for at least 18 bomb blasts, accidents and sectarian clashes. Like other volunteers, Danlad says he responds to injuries and stays out of the conflict. But at the scene of a bombing, or in a neighbourhood that has been marred by sectarian violence, he is often recognized by his Christian appearance, not the emblem on his red vest.

If Danlad has to transport a Muslim victim to a hospital close to home, he asks Muslim colleagues to carry the victim. He will also take over from Muslim colleagues who could put themselves in harm’s way by transporting a victim into a Christian neighbourhood.

During a conflict, rescue workers say they are often accused of helping one side over the other. According to Danlad, community-based training alone helps raise the profile of the Nigerian Red Cross, making missions safer and potentially more effective.

“We need awareness — both [in] Christian and Muslims societies — about the purpose of the Red Cross,” he says. “So that when there is an emergency situation, we the Red Cross should not be at risk.” At the training centres, students emphasize that not all emergency needs in Nigeria are associated with conflict. Like many countries in Africa, Nigeria is short of doctors and hospitals, and injured people often have to travel long distances to receive any kind of help.

A 23-year-old accounting student, Sani Garba Maren is a first-aid trainee in a village outside of Jos. When his neighbour’s house caught fire, the children — a boy and a girl — were badly burnt and were rushed to the hospital in a car. The little girl died before could get treatment.

Like Nyam, who mourns the loss of his best friend, Maren wonders if he could have saved her life. “Now that they have showed us how to take care of burning skin,” he says, “if anything happens like a house burning, I can go with my small, small materials to help.” ■

By **Heather Murdock**

Heather Murdock is a freelance journalist based in Abuja, Nigeria.

IN A REMOTE VILLAGE in the Sahel region of Burkina Faso, Hadjatou Diko cradles Issa, her six-month-old son. A Red Cross nurse has diagnosed him as acutely malnourished.

Issa knows nothing of the potent cocktail of drought, cricket infestations, fragile economies and conflict that is causing a severe food crisis in eight countries across the Sahel. But, along with around 16 million other people in this region, Issa knows hunger.

Throughout the Sahel, a swathe of scrubland creeping out of the Sahara and stretching across Africa from Senegal to Sudan, malnutrition rates are generally high, particularly affecting children under 2 years of age. However, this year, the situation has become so bad the United Nations (UN) is warning that 1 million children under the age of 5 are at risk of acute malnutrition.

“Normally the harvest, between September and November, allows households to build up reserves of food to see them through to the next harvest,” says Jacqueline Frize, an independent food security consultant. “Families manage their resources as best they can to make ends meet over the hungry season — the final few months when their reserves begin to dwindle. This often involves reducing the number of meals per day and selling some sheep and goats.”

The vast majority of families in the Sahel survive on cultivating the land and tending livestock. However, inadequate rains in 2011 caused many crops to fail and the impact, following a bad harvest in 2010, was devastating. This year the hungry season began many months earlier than usual and millions now are just barely able to survive.

“Children, particularly those aged under 5, need to eat regularly because they are growing,” Frize says. “A lack of food, along with limited access to health care, clean water and adequate sanitation facilities, makes children here much more vulnerable to disease.”

The hungry season

The aftermath of conflict in Libya, fighting in Mali and a slow international response have added to the suffering throughout the Sahel.

“These combined factors can quickly result in acute malnutrition, which can have lasting consequences in mental and physical development. In extreme cases, the child dies.”

And failed harvests aren't the only problem. Food prices are rising and poverty-stricken households now can't afford the food available in the markets when their own crops fail. So they are turning to extreme and unsustainable coping mechanisms, such as selling off livestock, searching for wild food, leaving home to look for work, reducing the number of daily meals and depending on friends and extended family.

For Diko, 37, this prognosis is all too familiar. Although she has had nine children, four died before reaching the age of 5. “It's a problem trying to feed my family,” she says. “There's not enough to cook porridge

According to the UN, around 320,000 Malian people have fled their homes, including more than 131,500 people who have sought refuge in neighbouring Burkina Faso, Mauritania and Niger. Six-year-old Malian refugee Tata Mint Ibrahim is one of 60,000 people living in a refugee camp in Mbera, Mauritania, about 40 kilometres from the border with Mali.

Photo: REUTERS/Joë Penney, courtesy www.alertnet.org



for the baby. Many people, including my husband, leave for work at the gold mine or in Côte d'Ivoire."

The complications of conflict

Meanwhile in Mali, conflict has deepened the economic hardship of a population already affected by poor harvests during the agricultural and pastoral season of 2011–2012. The majority of rural households maintain their livelihoods thanks to farming and livestock activities.

"Displaced from their home without any food stock, no valuable belongings and weakened livestock, people are also facing market disruption... [with] no money to afford rising food prices on the market," says Jules Amoti, a food security delegate for the ICRC. "In addition, internally displaced people and refugees in Burkina Faso, Mauritania and Niger are a burden for resident populations already affected by the food crisis.

"On top of that, the return of breadwinners from Libya cut off many households from remittances, one of the main sources of income in Mali for poor families," he says. In this context the ICRC's objective is to obtain maximal security guarantees from different armed groups operating in the region to allow safe access for ICRC and Mali Red Cross staff when delivering humanitarian assistance.

Well before the fighting became widespread in Mali, the ICRC had already launched a vast assistance programme (food aid, distribution of agricultural inputs, cash-for-work activities and vegetable production) in addition to animal vaccination, feeding and livestock de-stocking to preserve livelihoods, sustain immediate needs and help build community resilience.

"However, this programme has been hampered by the ongoing insecurity situation in northern Mali," says Amoti. "The current and projected food insecurity is likely to continue and to spread if no emergency response is provided to help the population and protect their livelihoods." Despite the challenges, by mid July, ICRC's dialogue with armed groups and others in the field allowed it to mount a major distribution of food and seeds — along with medical support — in various parts of northern Mali.

Response still too slow

The situation in the Sahel has not taken the international community by surprise, but responding to a looming food crisis is always difficult. Unlike an earthquake or flood, there is no clear starting point. With no visible destruction it can be hard to raise the necessary funds before a crisis reaches famine levels. In Senegal, the UN, the IFRC and other international organizations started working on a Sahel response plan in September 2011. But questions are already being raised in the international media about the slow response, with comparisons being

➔ Six-month-old Issa Diko being weighed and measured at the Burkinabe Red Cross Society community-based nutrition project in Peguense, a remote village in the Sahel region of Burkina Faso in February. The child was assessed as acutely malnourished and referred to the health centre 15 kilometres away.

Photo: Sarah Oughton/IFRC



made to last year's crisis in the Horn of Africa. "Planning started early, but the response was not early enough to protect people's livelihoods," says Nathalie Bonvin, IFRC regional food security, nutrition and livelihoods delegate in Dakar. "Therefore most agencies are focusing on major food distributions. Yet it should have been possible to protect livelihoods if coordination had been better and enough funds were raised."

However, the Movement is also taking a longer-term approach, building people's resilience to future food crises. (See page 29 for new IFRC documents urging global donor and NGO coordination around long-term food security solutions.)

"We're strengthening agricultural activities by improving irrigation and farming techniques," says Bonvin. "We're also focusing on women, providing education on water management and on good hygiene and nutrition practices."

It's not too late

Back at the health post in Peguense village, Diko listens carefully to the Red Cross nurse. A couple of years ago, with Red Cross support, her 3-year-old son made a full recovery from acute malnutrition. So she knows there is still hope for Issa.

And it's not too late for the international community to get its act together in the Sahel — which means 'the edge' in Arabic. Governments, humanitarian agencies and affected communities will need to work together and take some tough decisions so that, maybe, for Issa's children it will be different. Living in the Sahel will no longer have to mean always living on the edge. ■

By Sarah Oughton

Sarah Oughton is a communications officer at the British Red Cross.

"It should have been possible to protect livelihoods if coordination had been better and enough funds were raised."

Nathalie Bonvin, IFRC regional food security, nutrition and livelihoods delegate in Dakar



A project in eastern Kenya has broken the local cycle of hunger and aid dependence. The Kenya Red Cross Society is scaling up similar efforts, but can they be sustained and expanded to meet the needs of a hungry and desperate region?



Replicating resi

WALKING THROUGH DENSE BANANA and mango groves, past neat rows of red pepper, onion and tomato plants, it is hard to believe this fertile, well-watered farm is in the heart of the Horn of Africa — home to devastating crop failures and cyclical droughts that have left millions of people hungry and dependent on food aid in recent years.

Here on this farm in north-eastern Kenya, images of parched landscapes and hungry faces seem a remote reality. Still, even in this verdant oasis, memories of hunger are never far from the minds of people such as former cattle herder Hassan Odh who now works on the farm.

“During the drought of 2004 we went hungry and were totally dependent on food aid,” he says. “During the severe drought in 2008, I lost my cattle again and knew I had to find another way of supporting my family.”

Odh is one of nearly 4,000 former pastoralists who have seen a spectacular reversal of fortune since they joined the Tana River Drought Recovery project — an initiative that the Kenya Red Cross Society set up in late 2009 to introduce sustainable

📍 A farmer at the Kenya Red Cross Tana River Drought Recovery Project shows the fruits of his labours. Photo: Claire Doole/IFRC
👉 A farmer with a handful of bell peppers. Photo: Claire Doole/IFRC

farming to communities that could not sustain traditional livelihoods in drought-stricken north-east Kenya.

“To begin with, it was hard to convince pastoralists that they could become farmers,” says Mata Ramadhan, the local project officer. “They couldn’t conceive of settling in one area and growing crops.”

But today 1,335 hectares (3,300 acres) of bananas, mango, red peppers or capsicum, water melon, tomatoes, onions and pawpaw provide food for thousands of people and a regular income for the people working on 47 farms along the banks of the Tana River, which flows steadily from Mount Kenya to the Indian Ocean even in periods of drought.

From the farms, a steady stream of donkey carts are piled high with produce to sell in nearby Garissa, the capital of North Eastern province. Demand for their produce is strong and, last year, the farmers even produced a surplus at the peak of the drought that decimated the region

“Drought no longer worries us,” says Odh. “We know that it won’t bring hunger as we can always get water from the Tana and irrigate our crops, whether rain falls or not.”



“Kenya was a net food exporter 25 years ago. Today it is a net food importer and aid dependent, which shouldn’t be the case.”

Abbas Gullet, secretary general of the Kenya Red Cross Society

up to join. It’s regrettable that the herders’ culture is changing, but in a context where so many pressures are making that way of life impossible, many herders and humanitarians say that adopting agriculture is a better option than aid reliance.

“Communities in the three divisions where we work are now food secure,” says Ramadhan, “but to really break the cycle of aid dependency in a district where 77 per cent live below the poverty line, we need to scale up and replicate.”

The Tana River Drought Relief project shows it is possible to empower communities to diversify their livelihoods and become food secure, breaking the endless cycle of relief aid distributed from one drought cycle to the next.

But it took donors until the severe drought of 2011 — the worst in the Horn in 60 years — to realize that they had to change tack and build the resilience of local communities if they were to prevent a recurrence of the humanitarian catastrophe.

According to Michael Mutuvu, disaster risk reduction manager for the Kenya Red Cross Society, “Last year’s drought was a red flag to donors, allowing us to make the strategic shift of focus we had sought for several years from relief to food security.”

The wholesale distribution of food aid and water had made communities dependent on relief, undermining their ability to support themselves. Locally controlled agriculture that enables communities to become food secure “ensures dignity, self-sufficiency and is much more cost effective,” adds Mutuvu.

This philosophy is reflected in the National Society’s strategic vision for 2011–2015, which does not even have a budget for food aid. On the other hand, its 20 new food security projects account for 50 per cent of programming, extending across the arid lands of northern Kenya and the drought-stricken south-east.

Resilience

A father of 33 children, five of them still at school, 89-year-old Odh now feels secure about his family’s future. He and the other farmers laugh at the suggestion they might miss their former lives as herders. “That life is over,” they chorus. “We now have tin-roofed houses with running water, television and our children are getting a college education so they can become doctors, teachers or even journalists.”

Pumping up

With funds from the Japanese, the Finnish Red Cross Societies and other partners, the project has distributed tonnes of seeds and supplied numerous irrigation pumps to better use the water from the River Tana, Kenya’s largest waterway. If the Kenyan government provided enough funding to irrigate the fertile farm lands here, some say the Tana river basin has the potential to feed half the country.

The Kenya Red Cross Society would like to extend the project to ensure the food security of more pastoralists. Motivated by the opportunity of a decent livelihood as the failing rains continue to deplete their livestock, many herders are queuing

Web extra!

Turning tubers into ‘gold dust’

How a resilient and drought-resistant root is providing a new cash crop. www.redcross.int



'Climate-smart' agriculture

But can this be reproduced elsewhere? In Yatta district in south-east Kenya, 80 per cent of the population relies on food aid in a region where farmers who are dependent on rain-fed agriculture have struggled with the impact of climate change.

According to John Mbalu, coordinator of the National Society's local Machakos branch, the last good harvest of maize, the staple crop, was in 1997.

In October 2011, the Kenya Red Cross Society teamed up with the Kenya Agricultural Research Institute (KARI) in an initiative to encourage farmers to diversify and move away from crops like maize and beans, which require a lot of water, to grow a new variety of drought-resistant cassava.

"It is a 'climate-smart' food security project where farmers benefit directly from scientific research straight out of the laboratory," says Mbalu.

But its introduction has not been without challenges. Cassava is seen as a poor man's crop and, if not handled correctly, can be poisonous. Farmers were initially sceptical of the value of growing a crop with such a low retail value. Once they hit upon the idea of grinding and milling the cassava to make flour, everything changed.

"Cassava is now like gold dust for us," says David Muoka, the chairman of a local farmers group. A former teacher and banker, 62-year-old Muoka is a man with a vision. "The crop has great commercial potential not only as flour but it can also be turned into industrial starch and the peel used by the animal feed industry."

And then, of course, there's pizza. The Kenya Red Cross's Machakos branch, which is providing a

"Cassava is now like gold dust for us. The crop has great commercial potential not only as flour but it can be turned into industrial starch and the peel used by the animal feed industry."

David Muoka, chairman of a local farmers group in Yatta district



📍 Digging for gold in Kenya's Yatta district. Long thought of as undesirable by many Kenyans, cassava is being grown by the Kenya Red Cross Society to make flour, which some farmers smilingly call 'gold dust'.
Photo: Claire Doole/IFRC

ready-made market for the cassava by buying the flour to make pizzas for its new income-generating pizza delivery service.

According to Mbalu, cassava can help farmers move beyond subsistence farming to generating a sustainable income whatever the rainfall. He is hopeful that by May 2013 they will have tripled the number of farmers planting cassava to 10,000 — a number that will make the venture commercially viable and ensure the farmers' food security.

But the Kenya Red Cross estimates it would take 20,000 farmers and the construction of a dam for the project to make the whole district food secure and before it could be scaled up to neighbouring drought-stricken areas.

A drop in the ocean?

The Kenya Red Cross Society aims to ensure 100,000 people are food secure by 2015 — a 'drop in the ocean' in a country where 3.4 million people are considered at risk of hunger, according to Mutuvu. He points out that the bulk of the work has to be done by government. "We are just the catalysts for change at the community, business and corporate levels," he says.

The projects also send a powerful message of local and regional self-reliance — a theme echoed throughout the Kenya Red Cross's response to the Horn of Africa crisis. At the height of the drought last year, for example, the National Society worked with national telecom providers to launch the 'Kenyans for Kenya' campaign, which raised US\$ 10 million in five weeks from the public and corporate sectors. The money went to fund both the immediate needs of the victims and the new food security projects.

"It showed that after years of dependency on international aid, we can find national solutions to national problems," says Kenya Red Cross Secretary General Abbas Gullet. "It gave us back our national pride and dignity."

As these projects move forward, there are still many challenges. For example, will the farms themselves become truly self-sustaining and not reliant on outside funders? Will other funders, or the Kenyan government, invest in replicating this model? The Kenyan government has set a target for every Kenyan to be food secure by 2030 — a target that Gullet considers a tall order but viable.

"Kenya was a net food exporter 25 years ago," he says. "Today it is a net food importer and aid dependent, which shouldn't be the case. The ministries of agriculture, water, education and health have to change and shift their priorities and invest in manufacturing, science, technology and education." ■

By **Claire Doole**

Claire Doole is a freelance journalist based in Geneva, Switzerland.

PUBLICATIONS



The road to resilience: Bridging relief and development for a more sustainable future

IFRC discussion paper on resilience's path (2012)

Available in Arabic, English, French and Spanish

The road to resilience: Bridging relief and development for a more sustainable future IFRC 2012

This 32-page discussion paper makes the case for a development model that focuses on strengthening the resilience of communities through greater investment in disaster risk reduction, long-term food security solutions, improved disaster response laws, and other efforts that meet both humanitarian and sustainable development goals. Available in Arabic, English, French and Spanish

Working for the ICRC ICRC, 2012

Have you ever thought of working in the humanitarian field? Do you have 'soft' skills and professional experience? If so, the ICRC may be the place for you. This brochure explains some of the jobs you could be doing with the ICRC. It includes useful links to the ICRC on Facebook, YouTube and other sites. And a chapter is devoted to the benefits the ICRC offers its employees. Available in English

Reducing the Risk of Food and Nutrition Insecurity among Vulnerable Populations IFRC-IFPRI, 2012

Vulnerable populations are minimally resilient to shocks, whether caused by humans or

natural disasters. Emerging threats and new trends — such as climate change, population growth, ageing societies, urbanization, infectious and non-communicable diseases, and environmental degradation — are bound to aggravate the consequences of shocks on already-vulnerable populations. Available in English

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies IFRC 2012

The IFRC's new global brochure offers fresh insight, facts, figures and photos to help external audiences understand what the IFRC is, what they do and how they and their 187 member National Societies help vulnerable people around the world. Available in Arabic, English, French and Spanish

Towards social inclusion: physical rehabilitation programme ICRC, 2012

This brochure promotes the ICRC's physical rehabilitation work, describing the benefits of these services for disabled people — from recovering their mobility to being integrated back into society. It also explains what the ICRC does to ensure that people have access to physical rehabilitation and describes some of the situations in which it provides these services. Available in English and French

Volunteers, Stay Safe! A security guide for volunteers IFRC, 2012

This booklet addresses the common situations that volunteers and youth may face at the local level, such as road accidents, domestic and school violence, common criminality (theft, burglary or robbery) and health problems (quality of water and food, diarrhoea, malaria, stress), and what to do before, during and after a disaster. It also provides basic guidance on establishing 'volunteers, stay safe' procedures and aims to

inform National Society decision-makers on how to promote a culture of safety and provide operational security support to volunteers. Available in Arabic, English, French, Russian and Spanish

Medical waste management ICRC, 2012

The world is generating more and more waste, and hospitals and health centres are no exception. Medical waste can be infectious, contain toxic chemicals and pose contamination risks to both people and the environment. If patients are to receive health care and recover in safe surroundings, waste must be disposed of safely. Choosing the correct course of action for the different types of waste and setting priorities are not always straightforward, particularly when there is a limited budget. This manual provides guidance on what is essential and what actions are required to ensure good management of waste. Available in English and French

Constraints on the waging of war: an introduction to international humanitarian law ICRC, 2011

This fully revised fourth edition of *Constraints on the waging of war* considers the development of the principal rules of international humanitarian law from their origins to the present day. It focuses particularly on the rules governing weapons, and the legal instruments through which respect for the law can be enforced. Combining theory and actual practice, this book appeals to both specialists and students turning to the subject for the first time. Available in English from Cambridge University Press. Sfr. 30. Available in Spanish from the ICRC

Shelter Coordination in Natural Disasters IFRC, 2012

This handbook provides an overview of the IFRC's approach to shelter coordination with its partners. It

is aimed at shelter coordination personnel, to provide a summary of the coordination functions; agency decision-makers at global or country level who may be contributing personnel to a Shelter Coordination Team or participating in a country-level cluster; and donors and affected governments. Available in English

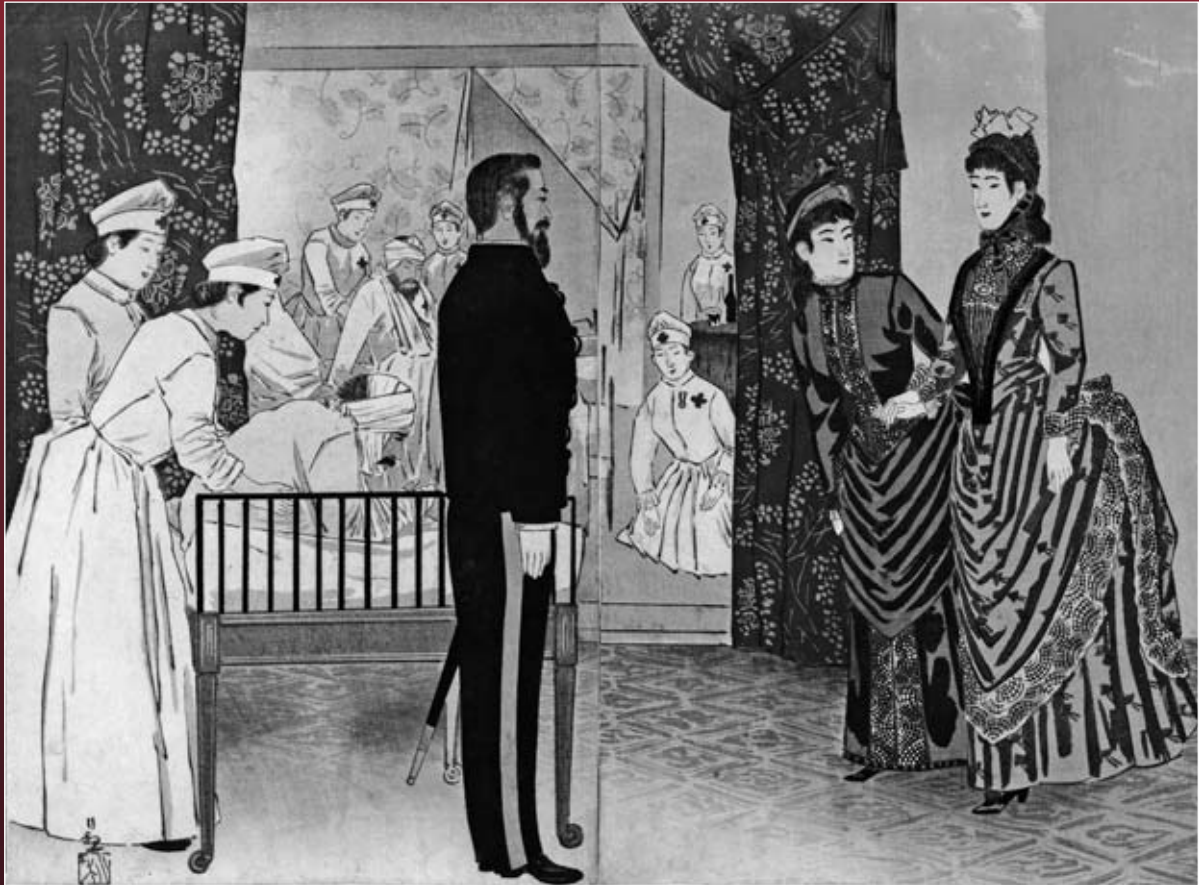
Contingency planning guide IFRC, 2012

These guidelines aim to ensure that Red Cross Red Crescent disaster response is consistent and of a high quality. It provides an overview of the key elements of contingency planning, and is aimed at assisting National Society and IFRC staff responsible for developing contingency plans at all levels. This document provides guidelines, not strict rules; planning priorities will differ according to the context and scope of any given situation. Available in English

Nuclear weapons ICRC, 2011

The existence of nuclear weapons raises profound questions about when the rights of states must yield to the interests of humanity, the capacity of our species to master its own technology and the reach of international humanitarian law. Every individual can take action towards ensuring that international negotiations lead to the prohibition and elimination of all nuclear weapons. Available in English, French and Spanish





A painting of Japanese Emperor Meiji and Empress Shoken visiting the wounded in Hiroshima during the Russo–Japanese War (1904–1905). Empress Shoken helped create the Japanese Red Cross Society in 1887 and, in 1912, established an international fund to increase peacetime activities of all Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies. Celebrating its 100th anniversary this year, the Empress Shoken Fund continues to help build the resilience of vulnerable people through disaster response operations, disaster risk reduction, preparedness, health programmes and other community-based activities.