

ETHIOPIA



⊕ ICRC delegation ⊕ ICRC sub-delegation ⊕ ICRC office
 ▽ ICRC-supported prosthetic/orthotic centre
 * The ICRC delegation to the African Union is also in Addis Ababa

The ICRC has been continuously present in Ethiopia since 1977. Its priority is to protect and assist people detained, displaced or otherwise affected by the 1998–2000 international armed conflict with Eritrea or by other armed conflicts. It helps to preserve the livelihoods of vulnerable communities affected by past conflict, often compounded by natural disasters, and supports physical rehabilitation services. It visits detainees, restores family links, particularly for relatives separated by the closed Eritrea-Ethiopia border, ensuring compliance with IHL with regard to any persons still protected by the Third and Fourth Geneva Conventions. It also supports the Ethiopian Red Cross Society.

EXPENDITURE (IN KCHF)

Protection	1,891
Assistance	4,900
Prevention	2,210
Cooperation with National Societies	883
General	-

▶ **9,884**

of which: Overheads 603

IMPLEMENTATION RATE

Expenditure/yearly budget	93%
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PERSONNEL

Expatriates	26
National staff (daily workers not included)	138

KEY POINTS

In 2010, the ICRC:

- ▶ pursued dialogue with the authorities, aiming to re-establish trust and regain authorization to work in the conflict-affected Somali Regional State and to visit detainees in federally run places of detention
- ▶ helped provide access to clean water and sanitation facilities for 140,000 villagers in Tigray and northern Afar and for 7,000 detainees in 3 civil prisons in Tigray
- ▶ with the Swedish Red Cross, supported the Ethiopian Red Cross Society in a project to assess and improve the family-links service
- ▶ continued to support 7 physical rehabilitation centres, while launching with the Ethiopian authorities a three-year diploma course for prosthetic/orthotic technicians
- ▶ generated greater awareness of IHL among regional authorities, police, community leaders, journalists, legal professionals and law students

CONTEXT

Ethiopia's ruling party, the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front, won the general election in May with an overwhelming majority. Unlike 2005, there was no violence afterwards, although some opposition parties and advocacy groups expressed concern about the conduct of the poll.

The non-international armed conflict in the Somali Regional State (SRS) continued throughout the year, despite the signing of peace agreements between the Ethiopian government and two armed groups – the United Western Somali Liberation Front and a break-away faction of the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF). The main group of the ONLF was not party to any agreement, and continued to clash with the Ethiopian National Defence Force (ENDF). There were press reports of casualties on both sides.

Elsewhere in Ethiopia, violence fuelled by a mix of intercommunal and political grievances recurred sporadically, causing casualties and forcing some people to flee their homes. Areas affected included Afar, Gambella, Oromia, and the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional State.

In several regions, including Oromia, flooding, drought and wild-fires displaced civilians and damaged property and land. Food shortages were also reported, although a better harvest of staple crops was forecast at year-end.

The physical demarcation of the Ethiopia-Eritrea border remained stalled, with both countries maintaining a large military presence at their common border. Armed skirmishes, resulting in casualties, were reported on both sides.

MAIN FIGURES AND INDICATORS				
PROTECTION				
CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)				
Red Cross messages		Total	UAMs/SCs*	
RCMs collected		7,429	594	
RCMs distributed		5,481	414	
Tracing requests, including cases of missing persons		Total	Women	Minors
People for whom a tracing request was newly registered		99	22	35
People located (tracing cases closed positively)		73		
	<i>including people for whom tracing requests were registered by another delegation</i>	38		
Tracing cases still being handled at 31 December 2010 (people)		356	38	76
Documents				
People to whom travel documents were issued		144		
Official documents relayed between family members across borders/front lines		29		
PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)				
ICRC visits		Total	Women	Minors
Detainees visited		7,812		
Detainees visited and monitored individually		92		1
Detainees newly registered		42		1
Number of visits carried out		11		
Number of places of detention visited		7		
Restoring family links		Total		
RCMs collected		24		
RCMs distributed		28		
People to whom a detention attestation was issued		54		

* Unaccompanied minors/separated children

ASSISTANCE				
CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)				
Economic security, water and habitat		Total	Women	Children
Water and habitat activities	Beneficiaries	140,000	25%	50%
PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)				
Economic security, water and habitat				
Essential household items	Beneficiaries	8,455		
Water and habitat activities	Beneficiaries	7,000		
WOUNDED AND SICK				
Physical rehabilitation				
Centres supported	Structures	7		
Patients receiving services	Patients	7,985	1,717	1,650
New patients fitted with prostheses	Patients	913	123	70
Prostheses delivered	Units	1,830	239	125
	<i>of which for victims of mines or explosive remnants of war</i>	445		
New patients fitted with orthoses	Patients	1,645	452	578
Orthoses delivered	Units	2,874	699	1,191
	<i>of which for victims of mines or explosive remnants of war</i>	26		
Crutches delivered	Units	5,043		
Wheelchairs delivered	Units	355		

ICRC ACTION AND RESULTS

ICRC operations in Ethiopia continued on a restricted basis, as the organization sought, during dialogue with the authorities, to re-establish trust and resume former levels of activity. Talks centred on two issues: renewed ICRC access to the conflict-affected SRS and the resumption of visits to security detainees held under federal jurisdiction, neither of which had been authorized since mid-2007.

Meanwhile, ICRC protection and assistance activities focused mainly on the northern border regions of Tigray and Afar, the areas worst hit by the 1998–2000 international armed conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea and by ongoing border tensions. The ICRC worked with local water authorities and rural communities to repair water pumps while constructing or upgrading bore-holes, wells, springs and reservoirs, thus reducing health risks for 59,000 civilians and saving women and children the daily trek to collect water. Together with the Ethiopian Red Cross Society, the ICRC installed hundreds of latrines and conducted workshops on good hygiene practices, benefiting 81,000 people. These projects were designed to improve health levels in regions prone to water-borne diseases.

Some 7,000 detainees in three civil prisons in Tigray had improved water and sanitation facilities after the ICRC worked with the authorities to carry out infrastructural improvements, also providing maintenance training to prison managers and technical staff in Tigray and northern Afar. In both these regions, the ICRC visited detainees of Eritrean origin held in regional facilities, monitoring general detention conditions and, where necessary, making confidential representations to the authorities. Detainees, both Eritrean and Ethiopian, received essential household and hygiene items as needed.

Family members dispersed by conflict, mainly Ethiopian and Eritrean civilians separated by the sealed border, exchanged news through the family-links service. The ICRC, together with the Swedish Red Cross, supported the National Society as it assessed the service at branch level across Ethiopia. The aim was to identify the needs of the population in different regions, then reorient and strengthen the network accordingly.

Seven physical rehabilitation centres for people with disabilities, including the war-disabled, continued to receive ICRC support in the form of funding, materials, on-the-job supervision and training. Following the signing of an agreement with the federal authorities in late 2009, the ICRC began teaching a three-year diploma course for prosthetic/orthotic technicians in Addis Ababa, with international certification. The course, attended by 25 personnel, was intended to improve the scope and quality of services in a country where limited facilities and relatively small numbers of trained staff struggled to cope with the demand for rehabilitative care.

Another priority was to raise awareness of and support for IHL, the Movement and its neutral, impartial and independent stance among the regional authorities, the police and influential sectors

of civil society. With ICRC input, the police progressed towards integrating international human rights law and humanitarian principles into training, and IHL was incorporated into a new, standard public international law degree in universities. Over 500 legal professionals, including judges, learnt more about IHL during two ICRC-run courses.

Backed up by ICRC funds, materials and technical support, the Ethiopian Red Cross continued to build its capacities, focusing on the provision of emergency assistance and the promotion of IHL, in addition to running the family-links network.

CIVILIANS

Dialogue maintained over renewed access to the SRS

The ICRC remained concerned by reports of IHL violations committed in the SRS. However, the organization was unable to resume its activities there, despite repeated representations to the authorities, and so had no first-hand knowledge of the situation on the ground. The ICRC was carrying out its humanitarian activities in the SRS until 2007, when it was expelled from the region by the Ethiopian authorities and accused by them of supporting armed groups, an allegation it strongly denied. During 2010, the ICRC pursued a dialogue with the authorities with a view to clarifying these accusations, re-establishing trust and regaining access to protect and assist conflict-affected populations.

Repatriated Ethiopians receive assistance

People of Ethiopian origin repatriated from Eritrea via Sudan received upon arrival food, blankets and hygiene items provided by National Society personnel with ICRC support. Following consultations with the ICRC, the Ethiopian authorities allocated funds to assist recently repatriated people, subsequently taking over the provision of food. The ICRC continued to monitor the situation, to the extent feasible, to ensure that people were repatriated voluntarily and in accordance with IHL.

Separated families exchange news

Ethiopian and Eritrean civilians separated by the sealed border, refugees, many from Eritrea and Somalia, and a number of Eritrean children who had crossed the border and were living in Ethiopian refugee camps continued to restore contact and/or exchange news with relatives through the family-links service. Eritrean nationals who had studied in Ethiopia before the armed conflict and subsequently returned home, received official documents, mostly education certificates, with ICRC assistance. These allowed them to apply for further studies or jobs. With a view to improving the scope and quality of the service, the Ethiopian Red Cross, supported by the Swedish Red Cross and the ICRC, assessed the family-links needs of different communities across the country, identifying areas where services might require strengthening.

Families awaiting information about relatives reportedly missing in relation to the 1998–2000 war with Eritrea were contacted by the ICRC to respond to their economic, legal and psychological needs. To help families with a missing relative, plans were

established for a number of small-scale economic initiatives, including grants of goats and poultry, to be implemented in 2011 by the National Society with ICRC support.

Victims of drought, flood and violence receive emergency relief

People in violence-prone regions further destabilized by natural disaster received shelter materials, essential household items and high-calorie biscuits from the National Society and the ICRC, to help them through the immediate period of crisis. In Oromia, for example, where rivers overflowed banks and inundated villages, displaced people received items including blankets, sleeping mats and soap. The ICRC also provided Movement partners with logistical support and trucks to distribute food, medicine and livelihood support to thousands more people affected by drought, flooding and wildfires.

Patients wounded during episodes of violence in Afar were treated at Dubti hospital with medical supplies provided by the ICRC.

Rural communities access clean water and sanitation facilities

Some 57,000 people in the border regions of Tigray and northern Afar faced fewer health risks after local authorities, communities and the ICRC repaired around 100 hand pumps and upgraded springs and reservoirs. With ICRC support, 2,000 people in these areas benefited from the construction of 5 new water points in the form of boreholes and hand-dug wells, followed by technical training for communities to ensure adequate maintenance. These measures ensured women and children no longer had to walk for hours each day to fetch water from open wells, which could be polluted, or from rivers that often dried up during the dry season.

In areas where unsafe water sources and inadequate sanitation facilities had made acute diarrhoea a perennial problem, villagers worked with the health authorities and the ICRC to install hundreds of latrines. Alongside this, communities learnt more about reducing the risks of illness through good hygiene practices during a series of workshops conducted by the ICRC. Some 81,000 people benefited from these projects.

PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM

People continued to be detained in Ethiopia for reasons of State security. Those detainees did not receive visits from ICRC delegates, however, because the government continued to deny the organization access to the SRS and to federally run places of detention where most security detainees were held (authorization to visit such facilities had been withdrawn in stages between 2004 and 2007). Dialogue was pursued with the authorities with the aim of obtaining access to all detainees within the ICRC's purview, including any POWs of Eritrean origin.

Given the access restrictions, the ICRC focused on visiting detainees of Eritrean origin and monitoring general conditions in regionally run detention centres in Tigray and northern Afar, according

to its standard procedures. The authorities received confidential feedback on the ICRC's findings and, where necessary, recommendations for improvements. A total of 7,812 detainees were visited, 92 monitored individually and 42 newly registered, during visits by the ICRC. Detainees also used the RCM service to contact or stay in touch with relatives.

Some 2,000 detainees in three civil prisons in Tigray gained access to cleaner and more reliable water and sanitation facilities after the ICRC helped the authorities upgrade infrastructure – including septic tanks, latrines, water reservoirs and showers – and conducted an assessment to identify potential future projects. Female detainees in one of the prisons benefited from renovations to their cell block. To reinforce the authorities' efforts to improve detention conditions for 7,000 detainees, 20 managers and technical staff working in prisons in Tigray and northern Afar improved their knowledge of infrastructure maintenance during a three-day workshop run by the regional prison administrations and the ICRC. The workshop included a tour and assessment of living conditions in a prison.

More than 8,450 detainees in Tigray and northern Afar received blankets, hygiene items, education materials and leisure items during visits by ICRC delegates. Some of the detainees were people of Eritrean origin, without family members living nearby who could provide them with the necessities. Meanwhile, the ICRC provided blankets, mats, jerrycans and kitchen utensils to detainees left without shelter following the structural collapse of a detention centre in Oromia.

WOUNDED AND SICK

More than 7,980 disabled patients, many of whom had been injured during armed conflict or episodes of violence, underwent treatment at seven physical rehabilitation centres, which continued to receive ICRC support in the form of funding, materials, equipment, on-the-job supervision and training. Four of the centres had ICRC specialists on staff full-time, while the other three received supervisory visits.

In a country where thousands of people had conflict-related disabilities, and where existing physical rehabilitation services required upgrading, staff at every centre, together with national and local authorities, participated in ICRC initiatives designed to ensure the services were sustainable in the long term. In 2010, Ethiopia ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. With ICRC input, the government further developed a national plan of action to upgrade physical rehabilitation services.

Key staff at all the centres were joined by a range of national and regional government officials at the annual planning seminar, organized by the ICRC. A central issue discussed was how to retain existing staff. To help boost the pool of skilled personnel, 25 technicians began an internationally recognized three-year diploma course in prosthetics/orthotics in Addis Ababa, taught by the ICRC. The course started in March, following the signing

of an agreement between the federal authorities and the ICRC in late 2009. In another new initiative, all the ICRC-supported centres began assembling wheelchairs for patients, in addition to the production and fitting of prostheses and orthoses.

AUTHORITIES

By year-end, the ICRC had not received authorization to resume activities in the SRS or visits to security detainees under federal government jurisdiction (see *Civilians* and *People deprived of their freedom*). Following the general election, these issues were raised again during meetings between government officials and the ICRC. Talks were set to continue in 2011.

In a project designed to build awareness and grassroots support for IHL and the mandate and activities of the Movement, more than 425 regional government officials in regions prone to violence and ethnic tensions participated in presentations given jointly by the National Society and the ICRC. Almost 50 officials from various federal government ministries participated in a day-long IHL seminar. The ICRC did not pursue questions of IHL implementation with the authorities as their attention was focused on other priorities.

ARMED FORCES AND OTHER BEARERS OF WEAPONS

During briefing sessions, more than 400 officers from the ENDF learnt more about IHL and the Movement, many of them prior to their deployment on peacekeeping missions to Darfur, Sudan, and Liberia. Otherwise, the ENDF, which had halted cooperation with the ICRC following the expulsion of the organization from the SRS in 2007, decided to leave on hold plans to cooperate with the ICRC in reinforcing the integration of IHL into training.

The police continued to incorporate international human rights law and humanitarian principles into doctrine, training and operations, although progress was slowed somewhat by preparations for the national election. More than 500 police personnel – including riot control and “anti-terrorism” officers – participated in 12 events on international human rights law and humanitarian principles, organized jointly by training establishments and the ICRC. Female officers also attended specialist courses. Seven police training centres were better equipped to teach humanitarian principles after receiving training materials from the ICRC.

CIVIL SOCIETY

More than 450 community elders and religious leaders in regions prone to violence and ethnic tensions enhanced their awareness of IHL and the work and mandate of the Movement during presentations run jointly by the National Society and the ICRC.

The Ethiopian media regularly reported on ICRC activities in Ethiopia, drawing on ICRC press releases and newsletters.

More than 120 journalists working in Afar and the eastern areas of Dire Dawa, Hararghe and Oromia improved their skills in humanitarian reporting and their grasp of IHL during a two-day ICRC workshop in Harar city.

More than 500 judges and other legal professionals attended 2 ICRC-run seminars on IHL. With ICRC input, IHL was included as an elective course in Ethiopia’s new, standardized public international law degree. IHL research in academia received a potential boost when 720 law students at four universities – Jimma, Bahir Dar, Gondar and Mekele – participated in half-day IHL seminars organized by the ICRC. A student from Mekele won third prize in the ICRC’s IHL essay competition for the region, while three students from Gondar University participated in a regional IHL moot court competition. At the request of Gondar University’s law faculty, the ICRC donated the texts of IHL treaties and books to its library. To further enhance IHL teaching, two lecturers from Bahir Dar and Jimma Universities attended a ten-day IHL training course abroad.

RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

The Ethiopian Red Cross worked with the ICRC in assisting struggling communities in violence-affected regions, running the family-links service (see *Civilians*) and promoting IHL and humanitarian principles (see *Authorities* and *Civil society*).

In addition, the National Society received ICRC funds, training, expertise and logistics back-up to develop its management, infrastructure and skills in these areas. For example, key headquarters and branch personnel running the family-links service and IHL promotional activities had their salaries covered by the ICRC. Staff at four branches also received technical support during monitoring visits by joint National Society/ICRC teams.

With ICRC support, some 70 National Society personnel from 8 branches improved their tracing skills at a workshop run by the Ethiopian Red Cross. In case of violence during April’s election, the Ethiopian Red Cross and the ICRC prepared a contingency plan, during which 52 National Society volunteers were trained to train others as ambulance attendants and in first aid. Subsequently, more than 600 volunteers received training as ambulance attendants, and 525 underwent training in first aid. Some 300 detainees in 10 detention centres also learnt first-aid skills.

On World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day (8 May), 13 National Society branches held events, including round-table discussions, to generate political and public support and funding for the Movement and to recruit volunteers. Movement components met regularly to coordinate activities.