

GEORGIA



The ICRC has been present in Georgia since 1992. It supports the families of missing persons and protects and assists displaced people and other vulnerable groups in conflict-affected regions. It visits detainees throughout Georgia, including Abkhazia and South Ossetia, and provides expertise on health-related issues in places of detention. It promotes the national implementation of IHL and its integration into armed and security forces' doctrine, training and sanctions and into academic curricula. In cooperation with Movement partners, the ICRC helps to strengthen the capacities of the Red Cross Society of Georgia.

EXPENDITURE (IN KCHF)

Protection	2,681
Assistance	8,754
Prevention	1,820
Cooperation with National Societies	685
General	-

► **13,939**

of which: Overheads 851

IMPLEMENTATION RATE

Expenditure/yearly budget	93%
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PERSONNEL

Expatriates	29
National staff (daily workers not included)	198

KEY POINTS

In 2010, the ICRC:

- where possible working with the National Society, helped some 28,580 people, including 1,429 IDPs, recover from the effects of the August 2008 hostilities, by providing them with support to improve or restore their livelihoods
- supported the Red Cross Society of Georgia in building its capacities to assist vulnerable people, by training staff and volunteers in first aid, mine action and needs assessment
- enabled family members separated by armed conflict to exchange news, reuniting 29 with relatives at their request, and to cross the administrative boundaries in case of emergency
- encouraged coordination mechanisms to clarify the fate of persons missing from the 2008 hostilities and earlier conflict, while working with NGOs and family associations to extend support to their families
- worked to improve the living conditions of detainees by means of a confidential dialogue with the relevant authorities, the provision of support to prison health care, and the launch of a family-visits programme
- supported the authorities in integrating IHL into national legislation, the armed forces and academic curricula

CONTEXT

The effects of the 2008 international armed conflict between Georgia and the Russian Federation continued to be felt by the civilian population living along the Abkhaz and South Ossetian administrative boundaries, which were still patrolled by Russian border guards. Although the withdrawal of border guards from Perevi in October was a step towards greater mobility for the population, movement restrictions and related arrests continued to affect many, worsening existing economic problems. IDPs accommodated in State-built settlements, returnees and elderly

Georgians remaining in South Ossetia without family faced particular hardship.

The peace negotiations (Geneva Talks) between Georgia, the Russian Federation and the *de facto* Abkhaz and South Ossetian authorities continued, with the UN, the European Union (EU) and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe acting as mediators.

The EU Monitoring Mission did not gain access to Abkhazia or South Ossetia, but its mandate was extended for another year.

MAIN FIGURES AND INDICATORS

PROTECTION

CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)			
Red Cross messages		Total	UAMs/SCs*
RCMs collected		741	
RCMs distributed		704	
Reunifications, transfers and repatriations		Total	
People reunited with their families		29	
People transferred/repatriated		98	
Human remains transferred/repatriated		3	
Tracing requests, including cases of missing persons¹		Total	Women
People for whom a tracing request was newly registered		53	21
People located (tracing cases closed positively)		23	
Tracing cases still being handled at 31 December 2010 (people)		83	19
			Minors
			12
			12
Documents			
Official documents relayed between family members across borders/front lines		22	
PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)			
ICRC visits		Total	Women
Detainees visited		25,190	
Detainees visited and monitored individually		104	10
Detainees newly registered		25	5
Number of visits carried out		88	
Number of places of detention visited		30	
			Minors
			2
			2
Restoring family links		Total	
RCMs collected		65	
RCMs distributed		72	
Detainees visited by their relatives with ICRC/National Society support		12	

* Unaccompanied minors/separated children

1. not including people missing as a consequence of the 1992–1993 Georgian-Abkhaz conflict

ASSISTANCE

CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)					
Economic security, water and habitat			Total	Women	Children
Food		Beneficiaries	619	42%	11%
	<i>of whom IDPs</i>	Beneficiaries	31		
Essential household items		Beneficiaries	4,746	44%	19%
	<i>of whom IDPs</i>	Beneficiaries	238		
Agricultural, veterinary and other micro-economic initiatives		Beneficiaries	28,581	43%	20%
	<i>of whom IDPs</i>	Beneficiaries	1,429		
Water and habitat activities		Beneficiaries	72,487	35%	15%
	<i>of whom IDPs</i>	Beneficiaries	6,370		
PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)					
Economic security, water and habitat					
Essential household items		Beneficiaries	59		
WOUNDED AND SICK					
Physical rehabilitation					
Centres supported		Structures	2		
Patients receiving services		Patients	1,088	115	429
New patients fitted with prostheses		Patients	78	16	
Prostheses delivered		Units	196	26	5
	<i>of which for victims of mines or explosive remnants of war</i>	Units	33		
New patients fitted with orthoses		Patients	404	39	318
Orthoses delivered		Units	802	61	656
Crutches delivered		Units	226		

ICRC ACTION AND RESULTS

The ICRC continued to monitor the situation of civilians in central and western Georgia, Abkhazia and, as the only humanitarian organization present, in South Ossetia, adapting its response to their needs. With the Red Cross Society of Georgia, and after training its volunteers, the ICRC assessed the needs of families of missing persons and of people affected by mines/explosive remnants of war (ERW) in central and western Georgia, aiming to provide recommendations to the authorities and plan future action.

Some vulnerable people, particularly the elderly, in Abkhazia and South Ossetia still received food and essential household items from the ICRC. To aid long-term recovery, the ICRC provided agricultural support to people across Georgia, enabled others to increase their income through micro-economic initiatives, which it extended to rural areas of South Ossetia, and built water supply systems along the South Ossetian administrative boundary. ICRC rehabilitation projects helped improve living conditions and sanitation in collective centres housing IDPs and a kindergarten in central and western Georgia and in an orphanage in South Ossetia. To extend access to health care in South Ossetia, the ICRC renovated health centres, donated supplies and equipment to the centres and to hospitals, and provided medical support to elderly people. With the relevant authorities' permission, it reunited family members separated by conflict and transported in particular ill people to hospital across the administrative boundaries.

The ICRC alerted the authorities to the presence of mines/ERW, contributed to their efforts to include mine awareness in school curricula, and trained National Society volunteers in data collection and the assessment of mine/ERW victims' needs. It supported physical rehabilitation centres in Gagra and Tbilisi and enabled some South Ossetian patients to receive such services in the Russian Federation.

The ICRC reminded the authorities of their obligation to provide answers to the families of missing persons, offering technical support to the relevant parties with regard to those missing in connection with the 2008 hostilities. As a neutral intermediary, it encouraged the parties to establish a tripartite coordination mechanism to resolve the cases of missing persons. This helped revive the dialogue between Georgian and *de facto* Abkhaz authorities, resulting in the creation of a similar mechanism in relation to the 1992–93 Georgia-Abkhazia conflict. It consolidated the collection of ante-mortem data from the families and launched a pilot project to address families' psychological and social needs through local providers.

The delegation monitored the individual cases of security detainees, including those held in relation to the conflicts and the alleged planned military mutiny in 2009, people accused of spying and those arrested for crossing the administrative boundaries. In March, the ICRC handed over its tuberculosis (TB) programme in prisons, begun in 1998, to the authorities, continuing to offer ad hoc support to the programme and technical input for a pilot primary health care programme, including mental health aspects,

for detainees. For the first time, families were able to visit across administrative boundaries relatives detained in western and central Georgia and South Ossetia.

The Georgian authorities and the *de facto* authorities in Abkhazia and South Ossetia held discussions with the ICRC on IHL and other norms relevant to conflict and other situations of violence and were briefed on ICRC activities to enlist their support. Progress was made in discussions with the Georgian authorities on establishing a national IHL committee.

The ICRC continued to develop its longstanding efforts to promote IHL among the armed forces, academic circles and the general public, providing relevant training for military lawyers, officers and troops. The delegation also assisted the Education Ministry in introducing IHL-related topics into school curricula and stimulated wide interest in the subject through competitions for university students. Widespread media coverage prompted by ICRC initiatives raised public awareness of humanitarian issues.

In cooperation with the International Federation, the ICRC continued to support the Georgian Red Cross in developing its capacities, particularly in emergency response. It coordinated its activities with Movement partners and other humanitarian actors, as appropriate.

CIVILIANS

The situation of civilians living in areas affected by the August 2008 hostilities was closely monitored by the ICRC. All parties were reminded of their obligations under IHL and other relevant norms to protect civilians and to meet their basic needs.

Civilians get relief and income-generating opportunities

Vulnerable people living on both sides of the Abkhaz and South Ossetian administrative boundaries continued to receive assistance as needed, provided by the ICRC, where possible, jointly with the National Society. Following assessments of changed circumstances, the planned cash grants and micro-credit programmes were replaced by additional agricultural support or micro-economic initiatives.

In central and western Georgia and Abkhazia, 9,935 IDPs, returnees and affected residents (2,915 households) maximized their summer harvest with ICRC-donated seed and agro-chemicals. In South Ossetia, 14,000 similarly vulnerable people (4,242 households) received similar inputs for their orchards and vegetable gardens.

Through micro-economic projects in central and western Georgia and Abkhazia, 3,904 vulnerable people (1,046 households), including 50 households whose breadwinner was missing or who lived in mine/ERW-contaminated areas, increased their incomes, with ICRC funding, material supplies and, in 833 cases, business training. In South Ossetia, 742 people (242 households) received tractors, livestock or beekeeping equipment. IDPs in collective centres who had participated in similar projects in 2009 received additional guidance.

To plan further assistance, Georgian Red Cross/ICRC teams conducted a household survey among such vulnerable families in central and western Georgia, sharing the findings with the authorities. Similarly in South Ossetia, the ICRC identified vulnerable IDP families requiring assistance.

Vulnerable groups still needed household basics and regular or ad hoc food supplies to cover immediate needs. Some 4,805 people therefore received essential household items and 619 got food rations from the ICRC. They included mostly: people living in South Ossetia, such as returnees in rural areas and 576 households (1,248 people) affected by weapon contamination (see below); elderly people or those awaiting integration into welfare programmes; households that were assisted with the transport of flour supplies from the market back to their villages; and 250 others, including residents of Abkhazia's remote Kodori valley and IDPs expelled from Tbilisi to western Georgia.

Communities enjoy better water, sanitation and health services

Overall, 72,487 people, including 6,370 IDPs, benefited from ICRC renovation/infrastructure projects. These included the refurbishment of water and sewage networks and the replacement/installation of roofs, windows and sanitation facilities in collective centres and settlements housing IDPs in central and western Georgia. In South Ossetia, an orphanage was refurbished and villagers received materials to repair houses.

On both sides of the South Ossetian administrative boundary, communities had access to more and better-quality water through ICRC projects to construct/renovate water supply systems; the irrigation system was assessed regarding potential need for improvement. Georgia's water supply company received ICRC equipment and training enabling it to upgrade its services. In South Ossetia, the water board restored the Tskhinvali/Tskhinval sewage system, the irrigation network and public infrastructure using a truck, excavators, materials and expertise provided by the ICRC.

In South Ossetia, ambulance and health facilities were able to function thanks to ICRC provision of materials and infrastructure renovation (see *Wounded and sick*). The authorities refurbished the Tskhinvali/Tskhinval hospital and nursing school using such assistance; seven health centres were renovated/constructed by the ICRC. The Tskhinvali/Tskhinval children's polyclinic received fuel and transport for an immunization campaign. With clearance from the relevant authorities, 34 people needing specialized medical care were transported across administrative boundaries by the ICRC.

Mine/ERW-affected communities helped in reducing risks

Authorities welcomed ICRC input on the location of mines/ERW. An ICRC-initiated working group standardized data-collection forms, while the Georgian Red Cross agreed to exchange data with the national mine action centre. Red Cross volunteers were trained in data collection and assessment of victims' needs. In South Ossetia, families received firewood to reduce risks associated with gathering wood in weapon-contaminated areas, a safe play area was built in the Tskhinvali/Tskhinval district, and

ICRC-trained schoolteachers undertook mine-risk education. The South Ossetian mine-clearance unit acquired additional expertise through ICRC training.

Families and authorities benefit from ICRC expertise on family links and missing persons

Family members separated by conflict communicated or sought to trace relatives through the tracing and RCM services, and in 29 cases were reunited across administrative boundaries by the ICRC, with clearance from the relevant authorities. Three families also had the remains of relatives returned to them, while 22 official documents were relayed between family members across the administrative boundaries. With the ICRC acting as a neutral intermediary, 98 people also crossed administrative boundaries, mainly for medical care.

The authorities concerned were reminded of their obligation to provide answers to the families of persons missing in relation to the August 2008 conflict. The Georgian, Russian and *de facto* South Ossetian authorities met three times under the auspices of a tripartite coordination mechanism convened by the ICRC, exchanging and updating lists of missing persons. The parties had received the names of the 45 people still being sought by the ICRC by end-2010. Missing persons' families provided the ICRC with ante-mortem data.

To follow up the cases of over 2,000 people missing from the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict, with the ICRC acting as neutral intermediary, the Georgian and *de facto* Abkhaz authorities met in December, which led them to establish a coordination mechanism and to set up a forensic working group.

Around 190 families of missing persons received psychological support, as well as legal and economic assistance, through group meetings and home visits conducted by local NGOs and associations trained by the ICRC. A new NGO was identified to extend such services to families of people missing in relation to the 2008 conflict.

In both contexts, the authorities were offered ICRC technical support regarding the management of human remains.

PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM

Security detainees across Georgia, including people held in connection with armed conflicts or the alleged planned military mutiny in 2009, or for crossing the South Ossetian administrative boundary, or who had been accused of spying, were visited individually by the ICRC according to its standard procedures. The authorities received confidential feedback on the findings and, as necessary, recommendations regarding detainees' treatment and living conditions. Detainees held by the *de facto* Abkhaz Interior Ministry and security services also continued to benefit from ICRC visits.

Detainees in the custody of the *de facto* South Ossetian Interior and Justice Ministries, including, for the first time, those held

in police stations, received ad hoc ICRC visits. By year-end, the *de facto* authorities had not replied to a formal offer made by the ICRC in 2009 to visit all detainees regularly.

Detainees contacted relatives through RCMs and received family parcels, some containing medicines otherwise unavailable, with the ICRC acting as a neutral intermediary; in total, 55 parcels were delivered. Thanks to a programme launched by the ICRC in coordination with the relevant authorities, 10 detainees in Georgia and 2 in South Ossetia were able to receive visits from 18 relatives.

In the absence of projects undertaken by the *de facto* Abkhaz authorities to improve detention conditions, detainees in their custody received recreational and cleaning materials from the ICRC.

Contact was established with Georgia's new national mechanism to prevent torture.

To mark the handover of the ICRC TB programme in prisons to the Georgian authorities, the authorities and the ICRC published a brochure and presented the programme at Tbilisi's medical school. The authorities continued to receive ad hoc ICRC support in terms of transport of health teams, supervision of detainees with multi-drug-resistant TB, and maintenance of prison TB facilities.

With ICRC expertise and funding, the ministry newly responsible for primary health care in prisons established a pilot project plan for two detention facilities, and the penitentiary medical department introduced disease-reporting software and trained prison health staff in primary and mental health care.

To exchange expertise with colleagues, representatives from Kyrgyzstan studied the TB programme in Georgian prisons during a visit facilitated by the ICRC, while joint teams of Georgian and ICRC representatives visited Azerbaijani and UK prisons. A Georgian representative attended an expert meeting on TB in Germany, with ICRC funding.

In South Ossetia's Tskhinvali/Tskhinval prison, the refurbishment of women's cells in a separate block was completed; a ventilation system was installed in a newly renovated block.

WOUNDED AND SICK

In South Ossetia, the needs of some 30 medical facilities continued to be monitored by the ICRC. Four main rural hospitals and the nursing school offered better services thanks to ICRC donations of medicines and medical, surgical and maternity-care supplies and equipment, as well as of bed linen, hygiene kits, water supply and storage equipment, and teaching materials. Rural health centres received similar provisions. Elderly Georgians remaining in South Ossetia were regularly visited by the ICRC, which provided them with basic health care and hygiene items. Disabled elderly people got walking aids; as needed, patients received incontinence pads.

There were an estimated 5,600 amputees, including mine/ERW victims, throughout Georgia. By year-end, the physical rehabilitation centre run by the Georgian Foundation for Prosthetic Orthopaedic Rehabilitation in Tbilisi had achieved financial autonomy, enabling the ICRC to end its funding as planned. The centre continued to receive monitoring visits from the ICRC, which also financed and ensured the delivery of prostheses and orthoses. Meanwhile, the authorities were urged to take account of international standards in developing Georgia's national physical rehabilitation policy. Abkhazia's Gagra Orthopaedic Centre received ICRC technical assistance and funding for the centre's partial refurbishment and to cover the costs of importing prosthetic/orthotic materials, as well as help with transporting these across the administrative boundary. Five South Ossetian patients were treated in the Russian Federation, with ICRC support (see *Moscow*).

While no South Ossetian doctors were available for ICRC-funded training, two Abkhaz surgeons upgraded their skills at an ICRC emergency-surgery course.

AUTHORITIES

The Georgian and *de facto* Abkhaz and South Ossetian authorities were reminded of their responsibilities under IHL and other relevant norms, were briefed on ICRC operations with a view to enlisting their support, and drew on ICRC expertise to address the issue of missing persons (see *Civilians*). Other international actors sought the ICRC's views on the general situation and operational issues.

PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM	GEORGIA	ABKHAZIA	SOUTH OSSETIA
ICRC visits			
Detainees visited	25,158	4	28
Detainees visited and monitored individually	72	4	28
	<i>of whom women</i>	5	2
	<i>of whom minors</i>		2
Detainees newly registered	10		15
	<i>of whom women</i>	3	2
	<i>of whom minors</i>		2
Number of visits carried out	48	8	32
Number of places of detention visited	19	3	8
Restoring family links			
RCMs collected	16	20	29
RCMs distributed	39	13	20
Detainees visited by their relatives with ICRC/National Society support	10		2

To encourage Georgia's adherence to key IHL treaties, the authorities and the ICRC pursued discussions on the creation of a national IHL committee. To this end, an earlier study on the compatibility of Georgian legislation with IHL was being updated by the ICRC, which also sponsored Georgian representatives to attend fora such as the third Universal Meeting of National IHL Committees held in Geneva, Switzerland, (see *International Law and Cooperation*) and a regional IHL seminar in Belarus (see *Moscow*). These efforts contributed to Georgia's ratification of the Second Protocol to the Hague Convention on Cultural Property.

ARMED FORCES AND OTHER BEARERS OF WEAPONS

The Georgian Defence Ministry, and particularly the relevant working group, continued to integrate IHL into military training, including field manuals, and operations, inviting the ICRC to contribute expertise. Officers of the Joint Staff and military lawyers honed their IHL skills at week-long ICRC courses, while troops heading to Afghanistan learnt about IHL and the ICRC during pre-deployment briefings. A representative of the Georgian Army Joint Staff participated in the fourth Senior Workshop on International Rules governing Military Operations, held in Lucerne, Switzerland (see *International Law and Cooperation*). The Georgian Army Joint Staff and the ICRC printed and distributed 1,500 copies of an IHL handbook for officers, as well as 16,000 copies of a booklet for soldiers on the rules of behaviour in combat.

In Abkhazia, the ICRC maintained a dialogue on IHL with military personnel and the *de facto* authorities.

In South Ossetia, the *de facto* armed and security forces, the Russian Interior Ministry and Russian border guards learnt about the ICRC's mandate and IHL through dissemination sessions and seminars.

CIVIL SOCIETY

Journalists regularly reported on humanitarian issues and ICRC activities across Georgia, using ICRC-provided information and focusing particularly on activities for detainees and missing persons, including the tripartite coordination meetings (see *Civilians*). Russian journalists covered ICRC activities in South Ossetia, while local media in Abkhazia and South Ossetia broadcast similar items. Local government and NGO representatives across Georgia attended briefings on ICRC action.

The Education Ministry continued to finalize the integration of IHL topics into new school curricula and textbooks with ICRC technical support. University lecturers providing input to the integration process learnt more about IHL and the teaching of the subject from the ICRC, while two universities included IHL in 2010–11 teacher-training curricula. A national coordinator was appointed to oversee IHL teaching in schools after the end of ICRC involvement, and reference publications were made widely accessible in digital form at the National Library.

IHL was an optional subject in the law curricula of leading universities, where students received copies of the 1949 Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols. Tbilisi State University and the ICRC consolidated their longstanding cooperation through a written agreement. Student teams tested their IHL skills at an ICRC-organized national IHL competition, while a Tbilisi State University team participated, with ICRC sponsorship, in the international Jean-Pictet Competition on IHL, held in Canada. In western Georgia, an ICRC-coordinated university project brought together lecturers, students, schoolchildren and representatives of local authorities, NGOs and the media to learn about IHL.

Students in Abkhazia attended an ICRC presentation and a local IHL competition. In South Ossetia, the local university agreed to include IHL in its law curriculum, using ICRC publications, and sent a law lecturer to an IHL seminar in the Russian Federation, with ICRC sponsorship.

RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

Movement partners met regularly to coordinate both aid efforts and support to the Georgian Red Cross.

The Georgian Red Cross and the ICRC worked together to assist people affected by the 2008 hostilities, distributing relief supplies and agricultural inputs, conducting household surveys and improving capacities to deal with victims of mines/ERW (see *Civilians*).

With Movement support, the National Society developed its emergency management and assistance strategies, focusing on training trainers and volunteers in first aid, the Safer Access approach and restoring family links, and working with local authorities to help vulnerable groups. With European first-aid certification in mind, it prepared to publish the Georgian-language version of an ICRC first-aid manual.

With ICRC support, the Georgian Red Cross reinforced links between its headquarters and 33 branches, prepared to commission an audit of its accounts and drafted a communication strategy.

The Red Cross in Abkhazia discussed possible cooperation projects with the ICRC.

Reference documents relating to the Restoring Family Links Strategy for the Movement were translated into Georgian to facilitate its implementation by the National Society in 2011.