



Abidjan (regional)

In the countries covered by the regional delegation, established in 1992, the ICRC supports the authorities in implementing IHL, encourages the armed and security forces to respect IHL, and develops protection activities particularly in the field of detention and restoring family links. It also supports the institutional development of the region's National Societies. Since the outbreak of the crisis in Côte d'Ivoire in 2002, the ICRC's regional delegation in Abidjan has focused on maintaining and expanding its operational capacity to protect and assist people affected by the crisis, visiting detention places and monitoring the situation countrywide. The ICRC coordinates its activities with the Red Cross Society of Côte d'Ivoire.

COVERING

Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Togo

EXPENDITURE (IN KCHF)

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--------|
| Protection | 4,038 |
| Assistance | 12,442 |
| Prevention | 2,935 |
| Cooperation with National Societies | 2,119 |
| General | - |

► **21,534**

of which: Overheads 1,291

IMPLEMENTATION RATE

| | |
|---------------------------|-----|
| Expenditure/yearly budget | 92% |
|---------------------------|-----|

PERSONNEL

| |
|---|
| 50 expatriates |
| 239 national staff (daily workers not included) |

KEY POINTS

In 2007, the ICRC:

- ▶ visited detainees and provided 552 inmates in 9 Ivorian prisons with life-saving therapeutic feeding
- ▶ helped ensure the supply of clean drinking water to 1.3 million people in Côte d'Ivoire
- ▶ supported 32 health care facilities that delivered 173,768 vaccine doses to women and children in Côte d'Ivoire
- ▶ provided support for agricultural and micro-economic projects benefiting 47,928 people in Côte d'Ivoire
- ▶ assisted over 13,298 people affected by heavy flooding in Burkina Faso, with the Burkinan Red Cross Society
- ▶ provided training to the Burkinan, Ghanaian, Ivorian and Togolese Red Cross Societies to develop their tracing capacities

CONTEXT

In Côte d'Ivoire, direct negotiations between President Laurent Gbagbo and Forces Nouvelles leader Guillaume Soro, brokered by the Burkinan president, culminated in March in the signing of the Ouagadougou peace agreement, ending the conflict that began in 2002. In April, Guillaume Soro was appointed prime minister and named an all-inclusive government. President Gbagbo offered amnesty for crimes committed during the conflict other than war crimes, crimes against humanity and "economic" crimes, following which the two parties released most of their detainees.

Ceremonies took place to mark the official start of the dismantling of pro-government militias in the south and of the disarmament of Forces Nouvelles fighters in the north. Efforts got under way to identify Ivorian nationals and establish a revised voter register. In November, President Gbagbo visited Forces Nouvelles-controlled regions for the first time since the conflict began, and announced that the thrice-postponed general elections would be held by mid-2008.

There were nonetheless concerns about the slow pace of the peace process. Its fragility was made evident by an attempt to assassinate the prime minister in Bouaké in June and by confrontations within the Forces Nouvelles at the end of the year. The identification of Ivorian nationals progressed slowly. In the south, pro-government militias protested against the lack of compensation received for supporting the president.

Civilians still experienced hardship linked to intercommunal tensions, notably in the west, and to increasing criminality and racketeering countrywide. From April, the gradual deployment of joint brigades in the former Zone de Confiance enhanced security, particularly in the west. While freedom of movement improved for civilians and encouraged thousands of IDPs to return to their villages of origin, checkpoints along roads still restricted access to services including health care and education and hindered essential activities such as trade.

In Benin, Burkina Faso and Togo, the ruling parties won parliamentary elections. In Togo, where the ruling party formed a government that included no other parties, political uncertainty lingered. Benin, Ghana and Togo signed a tripartite agreement on the repatriation by UNHCR of Togolese refugees.

MAIN FIGURES AND INDICATORS

| | Total | | Total | Women | Children | | |
|---|--------|---|---|--------------------------|-----------|-------|-------|
| PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)¹ | | | CIVILIANS AND PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM² | | | | |
| Detainees visited | 20,227 | | <i>Economic security, water and habitat</i> | | | | |
| Detainees visited and monitored individually | 361 | | Food | Beneficiaries | 3,199 | 18% | 34% |
| | | <i>of whom females</i> | Essential household items | Beneficiaries | 37,942 | 39% | 45% |
| | | <i>of whom minors</i> | Agricultural inputs and micro-economic initiatives | Beneficiaries | 47,928 | 55% | 12% |
| Number of visits carried out | 408 | | Water, sanitation and habitat projects | Beneficiaries | 1,329,286 | 40% | 20% |
| Number of places of detention visited | 189 | | <i>Health</i> | | | | |
| RESTORING FAMILY LINKS | | | Health centres supported | Structures | 32 | | |
| <i>Red Cross messages (RCMs) and reunifications</i> | | | Consultations | Patients | 7,614 | | |
| RCMs collected | 1,867 | | | <i>of which curative</i> | Patients | 1,655 | 4,491 |
| RCMs distributed | 1,633 | | Immunizations | Doses | 173,768 | | |
| People reunited with their families | 3 | | | | | | |
| <i>Tracing requests, including cases of missing persons</i> | | | | | | | |
| People for whom a tracing request was newly registered | 22 | | | | | | |
| | | <i>of whom females</i> | | | | | |
| | | <i>of whom minors at the time of disappearance</i> | | | | | |
| Tracing cases closed positively (persons located) | 17 | | | | | | |
| Tracing cases still being handled at 31 December 2007 (people) | 65 | | | | | | |
| | | <i>of which for females</i> | | | | | |
| | | <i>of which for minors at the time of disappearance</i> | | | | | |
| DOCUMENTS ISSUED | | | | | | | |
| People to whom travel documents were issued | 4 | | | | | | |
| People to whom a detention attestation was issued | 96 | | | | | | |

1. Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire and Togo

2. Côte d'Ivoire only except for essential household items also distributed in Burkina Faso

ICRC ACTION

The ICRC consolidated its operations throughout Côte d'Ivoire, upgrading its office in Guiglo to a sub-delegation. It continued to monitor the situation countrywide, including any allegations of IHL or human rights breaches, particularly in sensitive regions in the west or where few other humanitarian actors operated.

In northern and north-western Côte d'Ivoire, which had borne the brunt of the conflict in economic terms, the ICRC expanded its agricultural assistance, distributing seeds and fertilizer to impoverished households to help them cultivate vegetable gardens and regain some measure of self-reliance.

In more unstable regions, such as the former Zone de Confiance and the west, the ICRC assisted residents and IDPs and remained ready to identify civilians' protection needs. It launched preventive health and sanitation programmes, resuming vaccination campaigns in areas where they had been interrupted by the conflict. The programmes also raised public awareness of malaria prevention and treatment in urban areas, and involved rural communities in hygiene and sanitation projects.

The ICRC continued supporting the national water board, SODECI, in providing safe water to over 1.3 million people in areas still controlled by the Forces Nouvelles. SODECI resumed billing citizens in the north and west for their water supply. Concerned about possible disruption to water supply to vulnerable people in urban communities, the ICRC started restoring public water fountains in the west.

ICRC delegates continued to visit detainees throughout Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire and Togo, intervening promptly when necessary to raise the authorities' awareness of inmates' detention

conditions. The organization pursued life-saving therapeutic feeding programmes for detainees in Côte d'Ivoire, keeping down prison mortality rates. As a neutral intermediary, the ICRC facilitated the release of individuals held by government forces and the Forces Nouvelles, following the declaration of amnesty.

With the majority of refugees in Côte d'Ivoire qualifying for voluntary repatriation and/or integration into local communities and with greater freedom of movement regionwide, the number of unaccompanied children monitored by the ICRC declined steadily. Because of continuing delays in the demobilization process, no new children associated with fighting forces were registered by the ICRC. The organization also restricted the RCM service to vulnerable people, in line with reduced demand.

While the number of people missing in relation to the conflict remained unknown, the ICRC maintained material and technical support to the government and the Forces Nouvelles to foster best practices in identifying and handling human remains.

The promotion of IHL remained a priority, with the focus on the authorities, armed forces, the media, universities and influential civil society sectors.

As in past years, the ICRC provided the region's National Societies with material, technical, training and other support, strengthening their capacities to assist civilians in need, to carry out tracing activities, and to promote IHL and the Movement.

CIVILIANS

Protecting civilians and restoring family links

The ICRC continued gathering allegations of IHL and human rights violations perpetrated against civilians by weapon bearers and taking them up with the relevant authorities in northern and southern Côte d'Ivoire.

The small number of unaccompanied children still monitored by the ICRC in Côte d'Ivoire received tailor-made support, including reunification with their families or integration into local communities. Three children formerly associated with fighting forces and reunited with their families continued relying on income-generating projects and financial support for their schooling as they readjusted to normal life.

In areas it controlled, the government, with ICRC technical support, created an interministerial committee to centralize information on missing persons and to inform the families. The Forces Nouvelles continued receiving support in identifying and handling human remains and, in 2007, identified and interred the remains of one person and marked the grave.

In the region, but mainly in Côte d'Ivoire:

- ▶ 1,586 RCMs collected from and 1,409 RCMs distributed to civilians, including 21 from and 16 to unaccompanied/separated children
- ▶ new tracing requests registered for 22 people (including 9 females and 4 minors at the time of disappearance); 17 people located; 65 people (including 9 females and 2 minors at the time of disappearance) still being sought
- ▶ 3 unaccompanied/separated children registered; 3 reunited with their families; 3 cases of unaccompanied/separated children still being handled
- ▶ 4 people issued with an ICRC travel document

Enhancing medical and health care

In central and western Côte d'Ivoire, children under five and women of reproductive age were vaccinated against tuberculosis, polio, diphtheria and six other diseases in a campaign implemented jointly by the National Society, health authorities and the ICRC. This contributed to a decline in various epidemics.

Around Danané in the west, an average of 700 patients were treated monthly for malaria, diarrhoea and skin ailments at 30 health posts, which received drugs and medical supplies from the ICRC and were renovated or expanded. Some 3,000 insecticide-treated mosquito nets sold to patients at subsidized prices also helped minimize the risk of malaria.

Traditional birth attendants in the former Zone de Confiance were trained in delivery techniques, with Caritas's support. This and the 2,583 delivery kits and supervision they received from the ICRC boosted maternal and child health, as evidenced by the safe birth of around 1,800 babies.

Some 180 children received treatment at the Ivorian Red Cross nutritional feeding centre in Korhogo thanks to ICRC technical, medical and material support. The centre was also renovated and expanded to accommodate convalescing children and their mothers.

Ivorian Red Cross volunteers and women's groups in Duékoué and Gagnoa attended 150 sessions on malaria prevention, organized

with the national anti-malaria programme, and received around 16,000 insecticide-impregnated nets, boosting local efforts to combat the disease.

In the 32 ICRC-supported health centres (catchment population: 134,000):

- ▶ 7,614 people attended curative consultations
- ▶ 173,768 vaccine doses administered (136,858 to children aged five or under and 36,910 to women of childbearing age)
- ▶ 219 health education sessions held

Improving access to water

SODECI, supported by the ICRC, continued running 115 pumping stations supplying water to people in northern and western Côte d'Ivoire. The stations received chemical products and equipment and water quality was tested regularly. Emergency repairs were conducted at 31 major plants with ICRC logistic backup. Additionally, impoverished people in the west were able to get drinking water at minimum cost thanks to a new project to repair public water fountains. Some 1.3 million people benefited from these initiatives.

Over 50,000 people in 40 villages around Bouaké and Guiglo benefited from programmes to improve rural hygiene and access to water, boosted by the training of 16 Red Cross volunteers in raising community awareness of basic hygiene.

- ▶ 1,325,141 people benefited from water/sanitation projects

Consolidating economic security

Côte d'Ivoire

Beneficiaries of agricultural programmes implemented in 2006 considerably improved their yields. The programmes were extended to other vulnerable households, mainly around Bouaké and Korhogo, which received crop seed, fertilizer and technical support to help them regain self-reliance. In the north and west (Ferkessedougou, Guiglo, Odienné and Touba), vulnerable households enhanced their self-reliance by developing vegetable gardens with ICRC assistance comprising seed, fertilizer, tools and technical support.

Returnees and IDPs in villages in the west also received food and material assistance.

Vulnerable people in 19 institutions in Bouaké and Man received material and technical support to run income-generating projects, while some 1,000 received food rations. The project's success and improved food security led to substantial cuts in direct ICRC food assistance at year-end to reflect the reduced need. Families left destitute by fire or natural disasters were assisted by the National Society, with ICRC support.

- ▶ 2,647 people (452 households) received food
- ▶ 24,543 people (3,038 households) received essential household items
- ▶ 47,928 people (8,752 households) benefited from agricultural/micro-economic initiatives

Burkina Faso

Some 13,300 victims (some 2,200 households) of flooding received blankets, tarpaulins, mats, buckets, soap and other support to help them cope with their circumstances.

PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM

In the countries where it visited detainees held in connection with conflict or on criminal charges, the ICRC reported its findings and made the necessary recommendations to the authorities. Discussions revolved around treatment, living conditions, the food situation, medical care and respect for judicial guarantees. Detainees were offered the opportunity to communicate with their families through the RCM network and, where necessary, were provided with basic hygiene items.

Following the declaration of amnesty in Côte d'Ivoire, individuals held by government forces and the Forces Nouvelles were released, with the ICRC acting as a neutral intermediary to facilitate the process.

In Côte d'Ivoire, an average of 552 malnourished detainees in government-controlled areas benefited from monthly supplementary food aid, with the severely malnourished also receiving medical treatment, which helped stabilize prison mortality rates. Detainees affected by outbreaks of beriberi and pellagra in Abidjan's central prison and in a southern prison improved their health after receiving nutritional supplements for three months. In Forces Nouvelles-controlled Bouaké and Korhogo, detainees relied on meals provided by an ICRC-supported local association.

The Ivorian Health and Justice Ministries and the ICRC created a working group on HIV/AIDS in prisons in the south, in response to an ICRC study to determine what inmates knew about the transmission of the disease, and agreed on ways to improve medical services in three prisons.

Over 4,000 detainees benefited from projects to rehabilitate or improve prison facilities, including the installation of water-storage systems, cookers and ovens. Detainees faced fewer health risks after the ICRC disinfected and fumigated 10 Ivorian prisons, organized sessions on hygiene and helped create hygiene committees to maintain water and sanitation facilities it had repaired or constructed. Some 100 detainees received essential household items.

In Togo, a few hundred inmates benefited from initiatives to eradicate scabies and empty septic tanks, with ICRC support. Prison health staff and directors attended an ICRC presentation on hygiene in prisons.

In Côte d'Ivoire

In government-controlled regions

- ▶ 11,873 detainees visited, of whom 203 monitored individually (including 2 females and 5 minors) and 65 newly registered (including 2 minors), during 139 visits to 64 places of detention
- ▶ 43 detention certificates issued to former detainees or their families
- ▶ 552 detainees received food

In Forces Nouvelles-controlled regions

- ▶ 1,132 detainees visited, of whom 122 monitored individually (including 5 minors) and 69 newly registered (including 7 minors), during 215 visits to 87 places of detention
- ▶ 53 detention certificates issued to former detainees or their families

In Benin

- ▶ 2,453 detainees visited, of whom 2 monitored individually, during 4 visits to 1 place of detention

In Togo

- ▶ 3,400 detainees visited, of whom 32 monitored individually (including 1 female) and 4 newly registered (including 1 female), during 49 visits to 36 places of detention

In Burkina Faso

- ▶ 1,369 detainees visited, of whom 2 monitored individually and 1 newly registered, during 1 visit to 1 place of detention

In the region

- ▶ 281 RCMs collected from and 224 RCMs distributed to detainees and 339 phone calls made to families to inform them of the whereabouts of a relative

WOUNDED AND SICK

In Côte d'Ivoire, support to hospitals in Katiola (north of Bouaké), Korhogo and Ferkessedougou shifted from drug supply to training and the renovation of vital departments. Some 60 doctors and midwives were trained in surgery and midwifery. Hospitals also benefited from the construction and/or restoration of a surgical ward, operating theatre, water supply and storage systems, water tower and sanitary blocks.

Given the relative calm in 2007, kits to treat 100 wounded people, originally kept in stock in four conflict-prone areas, were dismantled and distributed to hospitals in the north.

- ▶ 95 patients benefited from water/sanitation/habitat projects

AUTHORITIES

The region's national authorities and the ICRC pursued discussions on the need for countries to ratify IHL treaties and incorporate their provisions into national legislation. The authorities, including those of Burkina Faso who were revising the military code of justice, received the necessary legal expertise and documents to support their initiatives.

- ▶ the Ivorian authorities organized 3 meetings on IHL implementation
- ▶ representatives of Côte d'Ivoire and Togo attended the ICRC's Second Universal Meeting of National IHL Committees in Geneva, Switzerland
- ▶ representatives of Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire and Togo attended the launch in Paris, France, of the French-language version of the ICRC study on customary IHL
- ▶ the Ivorian authorities drafted a law on the protection of IDPs
- ▶ the International Coalition for the International Criminal Court organized a conference in Côte d'Ivoire, with the participation of the ICRC, on the punishment of war crimes
- ▶ the African Parliamentary Union received IHL reference materials
- ▶ Côte d'Ivoire passed a Chemical Weapons Convention Act
- ▶ representatives of the region's authorities attended an IHL seminar co-organized by the ICRC and the Economic Community of West African States in Abuja, Nigeria

ARMED FORCES AND OTHER BEARERS OF WEAPONS

The armed and security forces continued to work with the ICRC on integrating IHL, human rights law and humanitarian principles into their training, doctrine and practice and improving their knowledge of the ICRC.

- ▶ 90 Ivorian police officers familiarized with IHL principles and human rights law at workshops organized by officers in charge of police training, the *gendarmérie* and the ICRC
- ▶ 3,400 Ivorian and international military and security personnel and Forces Nouvelles members attended sessions on IHL and the ICRC
- ▶ 6,000 Togolese military and security personnel trained in IHL and human rights law ahead of legislative elections and the arrival of a UN peacekeeping mission in Côte d'Ivoire
- ▶ IHL training manuals for instructors and commanding officers produced by the Ivorian military with the ICRC
- ▶ IHL sessions organized for military units in Togo and Benin and for officer cadets in Ghana

CIVIL SOCIETY

Academics and the public learned about IHL, humanitarian principles, the ICRC and the Movement through various initiatives, some involving the media.

- ▶ over 11,000 members of Ivorian civil society attended briefings on IHL and the Movement
- ▶ 55 media representatives in Benin and Togo attended sessions on the ICRC and the Red Cross ahead of legislative elections
- ▶ 19 Ivorian media representatives briefed on the relevance of IHL in conflict situations and the ICRC
- ▶ the Ivorian public acquainted with IHL, the ICRC and the Movement through television and radio broadcasts, a documentary and an album, *Je dis "respecte"*, co-produced with local musicians

Ivorian academic authorities and the ICRC maintained contact, facilitating the organization of IHL courses for 135 lecturers from universities and other higher education institutions and UNESCO representatives. Students and researchers working on IHL topics received reference documents. Burkinan student magistrates attended a presentation on IHL and the ICRC. In Benin, participants from 14 francophone countries attended an ICRC module on IHL at UNESCO's annual regional human rights session.

The Ivorian education authorities continued to introduce the Exploring Humanitarian Law programme in the curricula of secondary schools and primary teacher-training institutions, and trained 500 teachers. An assessment of the level of integration of the programme got under way in Côte d'Ivoire.

RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

The region's National Societies continued to receive ICRC material, technical, training and other support, strengthening their capacities to provide relief to civilians in need, to carry out tracing work and to promote IHL and the Red Cross.

Providing relief and assistance

With ICRC support:

- ▶ 100 Ivorian Red Cross first-aid brigades created and given first-aid kits
- ▶ destitute households received essential household items
- ▶ over 100 Ivorian Red Cross volunteers enhanced their skills and knowledge of humanitarian work through involvement in ICRC operations
- ▶ 13 Ivorian Red Cross branches developed community initiatives on sanitation
- ▶ 45 Burkinan and Togolese volunteers trained in emergency preparedness
- ▶ 2 joint Ivorian Red Cross/ICRC field missions conducted; 24 local branches attended a workshop on security
- ▶ Sipilou branch headquarters in western Côte d'Ivoire renovated and Guiglo branch headquarters under construction
- ▶ Bouaké branch's first-aid programme for weapon bearers reoriented to concentrate on rural hygiene and sanitation
- ▶ 300 Ivorian households attended first-aid sessions

Restoring family links

With the recruitment and training of a national tracing coordinator, the Ivorian Red Cross improved the supervision of RCM distribution and the monitoring and evaluation of tracing volunteers. It held monthly discussions with the ICRC on the implementation of the Ivorian Red Cross programme on the restoration of family links and the management of resources received from the ICRC.

With ICRC support:

- ▶ over 20 staff, trainers and leaders of the Burkinan, Ghanaian, Ivorian and Togolese Red Cross Societies attended a workshop on tracing
- ▶ 30 Ivorian tracing volunteers trained in restoring family links

Promoting humanitarian values and principles

With ICRC support, the Ivorian Red Cross:

- ▶ trained 7 coordinators of Exploring Humanitarian Law clubs and organized sessions on the programme for 873 out-of-school adolescents
- ▶ trained 14 new volunteers on Red Cross principles and activities
- ▶ gave sessions on IHL, the Movement, HIV/AIDS and hygiene to some 3,000 volunteers, college students and other audiences
- ▶ held press conferences to mark World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day (8 May)
- ▶ held a session on misuse of the emblem for 42 private health facilities, resulting in them changing their logos

The Burkinan and Togolese Red Cross Societies published and distributed IHL materials with ICRC support.

Coordination of Movement activities

Movement partners and the ICRC regularly shared information on their operations and security matters. With the support and participation of the ICRC, the International Federation organized a meeting on regional development strategies and efforts to revitalize the Red Cross of Benin and a workshop in Abidjan on disaster prevention and management for some 20 African National Societies.