

AZERBAIJAN



EXPENDITURE (IN KCHF)

Protection	2,808
Assistance	2,255
Prevention	710
Cooperation with National Societies	263
General	-

► **6,036**

of which: Overheads 368

IMPLEMENTATION RATE

Expenditure/yearly budget	92%
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PERSONNEL

Expatriates	9
National staff (daily workers not included)	72

KEY POINTS

In 2010, the ICRC:

- visited detainees held under the authority of the Interior, Justice and National Security Ministries, including people held in relation to the Nagorny Karabakh conflict, to monitor their treatment, living conditions and improve the treatment of tuberculosis
- acted as a neutral intermediary during the return of POWs, civilian internees and human remains
- monitored the situation of civilians living along the Line of Contact and the international border with Armenia, discussing any concerns with the authorities
- improved living conditions for conflict-affected communities through the rehabilitation of 7 water supply systems and 2 school premises
- identified the specific psychological needs of families of missing persons, their coping mechanisms and the capacities of local NGOs to meet these needs, with a view to developing appropriate programmes with local partners
- with Azerbaijan's Ministry of Culture and Tourism, co-organized a conference on the protection of cultural property during armed conflict

The ICRC has been working in Azerbaijan since 1992 in relation to the Nagorny Karabakh armed conflict. It focuses on the issue of missing persons and on detainees held for conflict-related or security reasons, supports health-related initiatives in places of detention, particularly tuberculosis control; and works to protect and assist communities living along the Line of Contact and the international border with Armenia. It promotes implementation of IHL and its integration into armed and security forces' training and into academic curricula. The ICRC works in partnership with and aims to strengthen the capacities of the Red Crescent Society of Azerbaijan.

CONTEXT

Despite several high-level meetings between Armenia and Azerbaijan, mediated by the three co-chairs of the Minsk Group of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, and meetings mediated by the Russian Federation, little progress

was made in finding a peaceful solution to the Nagorny Karabakh conflict. Incidents along the international border with Armenia and the Line of Contact and the presence of mines/explosive remnants of war (ERW) continued to affect the lives of the local civilian population, causing both military and civilian casualties and exacerbating political tensions between the two countries.

MAIN FIGURES AND INDICATORS			
PROTECTION			
CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)			
Red Cross messages		Total	UAMs/SCs*
RCMs collected		73	
RCMs distributed		33	
Phone calls facilitated between family members		69	
Reunifications, transfers and repatriations		Total	
Human remains transferred/repatriated		4	
Tracing requests, including cases of missing persons		Total	Women
People for whom a tracing request was newly registered		37	5
People located (tracing cases closed positively)		18	
Tracing cases still being handled at 31 December 2010 (people)		4,160	338
Documents			
People to whom travel documents were issued		53	
PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)			
ICRC visits		Total	Women
Detainees visited		10,179	
Detainees visited and monitored individually		72	1
Detainees newly registered		17	1
Number of visits carried out		51	
Number of places of detention visited		27	
Restoring family links		Total	
RCMs collected		46	
RCMs distributed		58	
Phone calls made to families to inform them of the whereabouts of a detained relative		42	
People to whom a detention attestation was issued		4	

* Unaccompanied minors/separated children

ASSISTANCE					
CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)					
Economic security, water and habitat			Total	Women	Children
Food	Beneficiaries		850	85%	
	<i>of whom IDPs</i>	Beneficiaries	85		
Essential household items	Beneficiaries		850	85%	
	<i>of whom IDPs</i>	Beneficiaries	85		
Water and habitat activities	Beneficiaries		24,203	39%	27%
	<i>of whom IDPs</i>	Beneficiaries	3,630		
Health					
Health centres supported	Structures		70		
Average catchment population			47,463		
Consultations	Patients		125,637		
	<i>of which curative</i>	Patients		41,676	40,850
	<i>of which ante/post-natal</i>	Patients		6,711	
Health education	Sessions		1,433		
PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)					
Economic security, water and habitat					
Water and habitat activities	Beneficiaries		970		

ICRC ACTION AND RESULTS

The ICRC in Azerbaijan continued to tackle the humanitarian consequences of the unresolved Nagorny Karabakh conflict, acting as a neutral intermediary during the return of civilian internees, POWs and human remains. During field visits to communities living near the Line of Contact and the international border with Armenia, ICRC delegates monitored civilians' needs and concerns, raising these with the authorities when necessary.

To improve access to clean drinking water and education for several communities along the front line, the ICRC rehabilitated seven water networks and two schools, providing furniture and teaching equipment to a third school for displaced children. The completion of a household survey into the economic and other needs of residents, IDPs and families of the missing living in conflict-affected areas enabled the ICRC to make recommendations to the authorities and plan activities for 2011.

In line with an agreement concluded with the Azerbaijani authorities in 2008, the ICRC and the Red Crescent Society of Azerbaijan collected further ante-mortem data from the families of persons missing in connection with the Nagorny Karabakh conflict. The delegation arranged for families of missing persons to meet, facilitating contacts between them and resulting in the creation of a family association. The psychological needs and traditional coping mechanisms of families of the missing were further assessed, as were the capacities of local organizations providing psychological support, so that the ICRC could develop culturally appropriate psychological and social support programmes for implementation in 2011. The ICRC provided advice to the authorities on a draft law on missing persons. In Nagorny Karabakh, too, it collected ante-mortem data, raised awareness of the needs of families of the missing, and used an assessment of such families' needs undertaken in 2009 to submit recommendations to the *de facto* authorities.

ICRC delegates monitored the treatment and living conditions of people deprived of their freedom, including those interned in connection with the Nagorny Karabakh conflict, providing confidential feedback to the authorities. The treatment of multi-drug-resistant tuberculosis (MDR TB) continued to improve in Azerbaijan's prisons, with the ICRC providing materials and expert advice to support the authorities in their efforts to combat both TB and MDR TB and encouraging the Health and Justice Ministries to coordinate their activities, particularly in the follow-up of released detainees undergoing treatment for the disease. These efforts were complemented by ICRC technical assistance, training and management support to the national reference laboratory and the rehabilitation of a prison hospital.

The ICRC encouraged the authorities to accede to and implement IHL treaties, providing input to and documentation for a government conference on the protection of cultural property during armed conflict. It also pursued discussions with the relevant authorities on the integration of IHL into the training of the military and interior troops. It strengthened contacts with the media to heighten public awareness of humanitarian issues and

ICRC activities, particularly the ante-mortem data-collection project and the ICRC's role as a neutral intermediary. Delegates continued to assist the education authorities in integrating IHL into secondary school curricula and to discuss further IHL training with universities.

The ICRC kept up support to the Azerbaijani Red Crescent in strengthening its tracing and dissemination capacities and its cooperation with others involved in mine action. With the help of the ICRC and other Movement partners, the National Society constructed additional safe play areas for children in conflict-affected villages and continued collecting data on mine-related incidents. After assessing the needs of families who had lost breadwinners in mine incidents, the National Society provided 13 families with livestock, with ICRC support.

CIVILIANS

Conflict-affected civilians better able to cope

Civilians living on both sides of the Line of Contact and along the international border with Armenia, including refugees and IDPs, faced continuous insecurity because of cross-border fire and the presence of mines/ERW. They were able to raise their concerns with the ICRC during its regular field trips to these areas and, through its intercession, bring them to the attention of the national and local authorities, who were reminded of their obligations towards civilians.

A household survey carried out in villages along the Line of Contact confirmed that the prevailing insecurity was impeding residents' access to means of livelihood, particularly in terms of land and water for irrigation, as well as to public services and adequate housing. Based on these findings, the ICRC made recommendations for corrective measures to the authorities and planned activities for 2011. Meanwhile, civilians, including IDPs, from seven communities near the Line of Control faced fewer health risks thanks to the rehabilitation of water supply systems by the ICRC. Teaching at a school for displaced children was aided by ICRC-donated furniture and equipment (including desks, blackboards and bookshelves) and at two other schools by ICRC-funded structural repairs.

In Nagorny Karabakh, 125,637 people living in conflict-affected districts, including the elderly, IDPs, returnees and families of the missing, attended consultations at 70 village health centres, which received regular ICRC deliveries of essential drugs. While the ICRC remained ready to provide medical support for the wounded in case of an emergency, such intervention was not required. However, children were better protected against intestinal worms thanks to ad hoc ICRC donations of medicines to the epidemiological services, and communities learnt good hygiene practices during 1,433 education sessions conducted by ICRC-supported health workers.

Ahead of a planned handover of ICRC-supported primary health care programmes in 2011, and to help them with the recentralization

of health services, the *de facto* health authorities took part in all ICRC field trips, and regular meetings were held with both central and district health officers. They also received training in drug management, and drug-management forms were printed instead of hygiene-education materials.

Meanwhile, the most vulnerable citizens within Nagorny Karabakh's urban population, namely the elderly, invalids and some families of missing persons, relied on humanitarian assistance to meet their nutritional needs, with 850 people receiving ICRC food rations and hygiene kits.

Families of the missing supported in their quest for answers

As a result of the Nagorny Karabakh conflict, 4,571 people were still unaccounted for, with 4,160 of the cases being handled by the National Society/ICRC in Azerbaijan. The Azerbaijani authorities were reminded of their responsibilities towards, and the needs of, the families of the missing. They received updated lists of missing persons and discussed the humanitarian nature of the issue and support to the families with the ICRC, which provided input for a draft law on the subject (see *Authorities*).

In line with agreements concluded in 2008 with the State Commission on Prisoners of War, Hostages and Missing Persons and the Azerbaijani Red Crescent, the collection of ante-mortem data from the families of missing persons continued. The families received psychological support during the process from ICRC-trained National Society volunteers, who themselves received psychological support and further training in data-collection techniques. By mid-December, 1,249 families living in the Baku area, 819 families in western Azerbaijan and 931 families in central and southern Azerbaijan had completed questionnaires and provided other documents.

Families of missing persons were better placed to provide mutual support and advocate with the authorities on their own behalf when the first association of such families in Azerbaijan was established in May. Their specific psychological needs and traditional coping mechanisms were identified and the capacities of local organizations providing psychological support were assessed to enable implementation of appropriate programmes, through appropriate organizations, in 2011. Meanwhile, families accessed advice via a National Society helpline and a network of legal NGOs, with the ICRC covering transport costs when necessary. In parallel, public campaigns raised awareness of the issue of missing persons and the plight of their families (see *Civil society*).

Difficulties in identifying relevant forensic practitioners prevented the ICRC from providing any of them with training, including in the handling of human remains, but ICRC forensic publications were translated into Azeri and given to the Ministries of Defence and Health.

With the ICRC acting as a neutral intermediary, four families in Azerbaijan received the remains of dead relatives, of which two were transferred from Nagorny Karabakh and two were

repatriated from Armenia, while one family in Armenia and one family in Nagorny Karabakh received the remains of their relatives respectively repatriated and transferred from Azerbaijan.

In Nagorny Karabakh, the *de facto* authorities were assisted in strengthening the capacity of the working group on data collection and consolidation. Some 200 families of missing persons provided ante-mortem data to the ICRC, and the results of a survey conducted in 2009 to assess their economic vulnerability and needs were presented in a report to the *de facto* authorities to raise awareness of the families' plight and make recommendations.

Relatives separated by conflict receive support

RCMs and satellite phone calls remained the only means for some family members separated by the conflict to communicate with one another. Three such families living in Azerbaijan, including Nagorny Karabakh, benefited from reunions in Tbilisi, facilitated and financed by the ICRC.

Meanwhile, 53 refugees and asylum seekers were issued with ICRC travel documents, in coordination with the UNHCR, to facilitate family reunification or their resettlement in third countries.

PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM

Detainees better able to cope with incarceration

On both sides of the Line of Contact of Nagorny Karabakh and the international border between Azerbaijan and Armenia, people continued to be captured, albeit in small numbers. Detainees held under the authority of Azerbaijan's Interior, Justice and National Security Ministries, including six POWs and six civilian internees held in relation to the Nagorny Karabakh conflict, were visited by the ICRC according to its standard procedures. Particular attention was paid to vulnerable inmates, including POWs, civilian internees, security detainees, women, minors and foreigners. In Nagorny Karabakh, people held in detention facilities under the responsibility of the *de facto* Ministry of Justice received similar visits. At all times, detainees' treatment and living conditions were assessed, and delegates' findings and any recommendations were shared confidentially with the relevant authorities.

Inmates corresponded with their families via RCMs, while families in Nagorny Karabakh received financial support to visit their relatives in prison. At the request of all parties, one POW and one civilian internee were repatriated from Armenia to Azerbaijan, with the ICRC acting as a neutral intermediary. A person of Azerbaijani origin, formerly held in the US internment facility at Guantanamo Bay Naval Station in Cuba and resettled in a third country, received an ICRC-funded family visit.

Living conditions improved for detainees in Nagorny Karabakh thanks to ICRC-donated furniture. Vulnerable foreign detainees received clothing and personal items, female detainees were given personal hygiene items and, in a bid to break the monotony of their incarceration, detainees received ad hoc supplies of books and games and gained access to two computers. Visits from ICRC

delegates and donations of schoolbooks helped the families of some civilian internees to better cope with their circumstances.

Detainees with TB and other health problems receive treatment

The Justice Ministry assumed greater responsibility for efforts to tackle the MDR TB epidemic in prisons, with ICRC technical and financial advice, including on the implementation of a directly observed treatment, short course (DOTS)-plus pilot project, with a view to the handover of the ICRC's TB programme by mid-2011. The programme's success had led to the number of TB-related deaths at the country's Special Treatment Institution for detainees near Baku falling from 285 in 1999 to 20 in 2009.

Through a national working group, the Health and Justice Ministries cooperated to develop joint policies to address MDR TB throughout society. Thanks to these efforts, 472 detainees began DOTS treatment, 102 detainees began DOTS-plus treatment and 384 detainees completed DOTS treatment. The Justice Ministry screened detainees using the hospital laboratory, providing treatment where necessary, while detainees and health personnel at Justice Ministry-run detention facilities received protective masks and examination gloves to prevent infection.

Following the signing of a memorandum of understanding in 2009, the Health and Justice Ministries and the ICRC continued to follow up 39 detainees with MDR TB after their release, providing them with medical treatment and subsidizing their transport to health facilities.

To ensure the programme's long-term sustainability, the national reference laboratory increased its capacity, with ICRC technical, material and training support, including in training laboratory technicians in Azerbaijan. Sanitary conditions in the prison TB hospital in Baku improved after the garbage-disposal area was rehabilitated, sterile areas were created on the wards, and doors and windows in three wards were replaced.

Meanwhile, a donation of medical equipment and the sponsorship of a detention nurse's attendance at a "TB in detention" course

in Yerevan, Armenia, aimed to improve the health care of people held under the responsibility of the *de facto* Interior Ministry in Nagorny Karabakh.

Three disabled detainees were fitted with prostheses, with ICRC support, at the Prosthetic Orthopaedic Rehabilitation Centre in Baku.

AUTHORITIES

Although Azerbaijan was not yet party to several key IHL instruments, the authorities continued to discuss with the ICRC the rules contained in the Additional Protocols to the 1949 Geneva Conventions, the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, the Mine Ban Convention and the Rome Statute.

The Culture and Tourism Ministry organized a conference on the protection of cultural property during armed conflict, attended by State officials and members of the national commission on the implementation of the Hague Convention on Cultural Property, with ICRC input. The ministry subsequently began drafting a new plan of action to implement the convention.

Meanwhile, the Azerbaijani parliament started work on the first draft of a law on missing persons and their families, with the ICRC providing input for a round-table on the subject (see *Civil society*).

The State's understanding of IHL implementation and the role of national IHL committees improved when representatives of the Defence, Foreign Affairs and Justice Ministries attended the third Universal Meeting of National IHL Committees, held in Geneva, Switzerland (see *International Law and Cooperation*). Officials also shared experiences with counterparts at the third Regional Seminar on the Implementation of IHL, held in Minsk, Belarus (see *Moscow*).

During all contacts with the authorities, the ICRC emphasized the need to protect civilians and people deprived of their freedom and to facilitate ICRC access to conflict-affected populations.

PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM	AZERBAIJAN	IN AZERBAIJAN, IN RELATION TO THE NAGORNY KARABAKH CONFLICT	IN NAGORNY KARABAKH
ICRC visits			
Detainees visited	10,167	12	
Detainees visited and monitored individually	60	12	
	<i>of whom women</i>	1	
	<i>of whom minors</i>	3	
Detainees newly registered	11	6	
	<i>of whom women</i>	1	
	<i>of whom minors</i>	3	
Number of visits carried out	41	8	2
Number of places of detention visited	24	1	2
Restoring family links			
RCMs collected	43	3	
RCMs distributed	55	3	
Phone calls made to families to inform them of the whereabouts of a detained relative	25	17	
People to whom a detention attestation was issued	2	2	

ARMED FORCES AND OTHER BEARERS OF WEAPONS

With IHL not fully integrated into the armed forces' doctrine, training, operations and sanctions, the military authorities in Azerbaijan and the ICRC discussed progress made in this regard, as well as their duties under IHL to protect civilians and detainees and to ensure ICRC access to vulnerable populations. Representatives of the Defence Ministry learnt more about IHL at an international seminar in Switzerland (see *Authorities*). To better understand how humanitarian principles could be integrated into staff work, 47 senior officers, including from the land and air forces and working at the Azerbaijan Higher Military School and the Defence Ministry's training and education centre, participated in three IHL courses.

Senior staff of the interior troops, under the responsibility of the Interior Ministry and of the military school, kept up dialogue with the ICRC on training in IHL and international human rights law. IHL continued to be taught to military staff within the interior troops, with ICRC advice, and to sustain efforts made, some 25 senior officers and trainers of operational officers explored international policing standards and their applicability to their work at a workshop-style seminar.

In Nagorny Karabakh, 14 officers of the *de facto* security forces increased their knowledge of IHL during an ICRC course.

CIVIL SOCIETY

The media continued to play a key role in raising public awareness of humanitarian issues, drawing on press releases, briefings, newsletters and courses when reporting on National Society/ICRC activities, particularly those on behalf of detainees, internees and missing persons. Journalists covering the conflict better understood their rights and ICRC activities after attending a regional workshop.

NGOs working with families of missing persons cooperated with the ICRC to increase awareness of the issue during a round-table discussion also attended by a member of parliament and representatives of the families. In Nagorny Karabakh, leaflets listing potential sources of advice were produced and distributed by the ICRC in cooperation with the local family association.

Education Ministry representatives continued integrating IHL into new secondary school textbooks. The content of an ICRC CD-ROM on teaching IHL was uploaded to the ministry's education network and made accessible to secondary school students and teachers.

Azerbaijani institutes of higher education also continued to discuss cooperation on IHL teaching. A lecturer from Baku State University tested his knowledge at an IHL summer course abroad while students of international law and international relations learnt about IHL at various presentations. Law and journalism students from Nagorny Karabakh attended three ICRC seminars/lectures and, for the first time, applied their new knowledge at a moot court competition.

Meanwhile, trainee judges learnt about sanctions for IHL violations at ICRC presentations.

RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

The National Society continued to respond to the needs of people affected by conflict, including the families of missing persons (see *Civilians*). Meetings between the National Society, the International Federation and the ICRC increased the efficiency of joint activities.

Drawing on ICRC expertise, the National Society continued its support to mine victims. It conducted a household survey of the needs of 13 families whose breadwinners had been killed in mine incidents and consequently provided them with livestock to kick-start income generation. It also trained personnel in mine-incident data collection and, with funding from Movement partners, constructed seven safe playgrounds in mine-affected villages near the Line of Contact.

In accordance with the National Society's mandate, ICRC-trained volunteers dealt with non-conflict-related tracing cases.

Volunteers refreshed their knowledge of the Movement and its Fundamental Principles, basic IHL, the emblem and the Safer Access approach at ICRC-funded workshops, and relayed the relevant information to the general public.