

# GEORGIA



## EXPENDITURE (IN KCHF)

Protection	2,242
Assistance	5,669
Prevention	1,657
Cooperation with National Societies	761
General	-

► **10,329**  
of which: Overheads 630

## IMPLEMENTATION RATE

Expenditure/yearly budget	102%
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## PERSONNEL

Expatriates	16
National staff (daily workers not included)	113

## KEY POINTS

In 2012, the ICRC:

- ▶ as a neutral intermediary, facilitated crossings of the administrative boundary lines, including urgent medical evacuations for 59 patients and 18 reunifications of families separated by armed conflict
- ▶ in the framework of the existing coordination mechanisms for clarifying the fate of missing persons, supported the authorities in the exhumation of 11 sets of human remains, of which 5 were identified and returned to the families
- ▶ with the National Society, assisted over 5,600 particularly vulnerable people (more than 1,800 households) in sustaining themselves and/or regaining self-sufficiency
- ▶ placed greater focus on monitoring the treatment and living conditions of detainees in Georgian prisons, submitting a confidential report to the authorities and supporting their efforts to reform the penitentiary health system
- ▶ discontinued its visits to detainees in Abkhazia owing to lack of agreement on its standard procedures, while maintaining coordination with the *de facto* authorities regarding the whereabouts of persons believed to be detained

The ICRC has been present in Georgia since 1992. It supports the families of missing persons and works to protect and assist displaced people and other vulnerable groups in conflict-affected regions. It visits detainees throughout Georgia, including in 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. The ICRC helps strengthen the capacities of the Red Cross Society of Georgia.

## CONTEXT

The demarcation and reinforcement of the Abkhaz and South Ossetian administrative boundary lines continued, affecting the freedom of movement of residents nearby. Meanwhile, civilians continued to suffer the lingering effects of past conflicts, exacerbated by socio-economic uncertainty. Arrests for attempting to cross the boundaries were still reported, and family links and livelihoods were also affected.

Bidzina Ivanishvili won the parliamentary elections in Georgia in October. Abkhazia also elected a new *de facto* parliament, and after the judicial annulment of earlier polls and a rerun, a new *de facto* president of South Ossetia was sworn in.

In September, protests took place in Georgia following the leaking of video footage allegedly showing ill-treatment of detainees in a Tbilisi prison.

Internationally mediated peace negotiations (the "Geneva Talks") dealing with the 1992–93 and 2008 hostilities continued among representatives of Georgia, the Russian Federation, Abkhazia and South Ossetia. The Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism helped address humanitarian issues by keeping communication channels open between the parties.

## ICRC ACTION AND RESULTS

Acting as a neutral intermediary, the ICRC facilitated urgent medical evacuations across the administrative boundaries and helped reunite family members separated by conflict. It discussed the concerns of civilians living near the boundary lines, particularly with regard to restrictions on movement, with the authorities and *de facto* authorities.

The ICRC also acted as a neutral intermediary in, and chaired meetings of, the two coordination mechanisms working on the issue of missing persons from past conflicts. In the framework of these mechanisms, 11 sets of human remains were exhumed, five of which were identified and returned to the relatives. The families of those identified received psychological support under the "accompaniment" project, which also extended legal and economic assistance to families whose relatives were still missing. The collection of ante-mortem data from such families started in Georgia and continued in Abkhazia.

To help address the economic needs of vulnerable people, including IDPs and returnees, households that had lost their breadwinners,

Main figures and indicators	PROTECTION	Total		
<b>CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)</b>				
<b>Red Cross messages (RCMs)</b>				
RCMs collected		476	UAMs/SCs*	
RCMs distributed		353		
<b>Reunifications, transfers and repatriations</b>				
People reunited with their families		18		
People transferred/repatriated		201		
Human remains transferred/repatriated		3		
<b>Tracing requests, including cases of missing persons<sup>1</sup></b>				
People for whom a tracing request was newly registered		61	Women	Minors
People located (tracing cases closed positively)		29		
Tracing cases still being handled at the end of the reporting period (people)		81	13	12
<b>Documents</b>				
Official documents relayed between family members across borders/front lines		35		
<b>PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)</b>				
<b>ICRC visits</b>				
Detainees visited		7,891	Women	Minors
Detainees visited and monitored individually		164	15	
Detainees newly registered		95	11	
Number of visits carried out		130		
Number of places of detention visited		30		
<b>Restoring family links</b>				
RCMs collected		133		
RCMs distributed		91		
Detainees visited by their relatives with ICRC/National Society support		20		
Detainees released and transferred/repatriated by/via the ICRC		1		
People to whom a detention attestation was issued		2		

\* Unaccompanied minors/separated children

1. not including people missing as a consequence of the 1992-1993 Georgian-Abkhaz conflict and 1991-1992 Georgian-Ossetian conflict

and victims of mines or explosive remnants of war (ERW), the ICRC distributed food and other essential items. At the same time, it supported them in rebuilding or improving their sources of livelihood through micro-economic initiatives and agricultural/material support. A review of its micro-economic initiatives in Georgia, including South Ossetia, helped the ICRC adapt its approach to better address specific needs expressed by the beneficiaries themselves and to ensure the sustainability of such projects.

In support of the *de facto* local authorities, the ICRC assisted South Ossetians affected by a severe hailstorm. It helped renovate collective centres where large numbers of IDP families were staying, improving their living conditions and safety. In cooperation with the authorities, it upgraded/constructed water supply systems on both sides of the South Ossetian administrative boundary and provided training to improve the technical capacity of the Georgian water board.

The National Society's collection of data on the needs of mine/ERW victims and their families continued, with the aim of gaining a comprehensive picture of those needs and formulating an effective response. The ICRC referred patients in need of assistive devices, including people injured by mines/ERW, to partner institutions in Georgia or the Russian Federation and paid for their treatment. Through dialogue with the authorities, the ICRC monitored the situation in health care facilities across Georgia, offering technical and, in some cases, material support.

The ICRC continued to help detainees maintain contact with their families by delivering RCMs or parcels and facilitating family visits. For the first time, long family visits were allowed in South Ossetia. Delegates monitored the treatment and living conditions of security detainees and provided the authorities with confidential feedback and recommendations. After failing to reach an

agreement with the *de facto* authorities on its standard procedures for visits, the ICRC stopped visiting detainees in Abkhazia but maintained coordination with the *de facto* authorities in order to provide families with information on the whereabouts of their relatives who were believed to be in custody. It increased its support to the implementation of the primary health care programme, which was extended to five more places of detention in addition to the two pilot facilities.

Pursuing longstanding efforts to promote IHL and other applicable norms in the country, the ICRC facilitated the first meeting of Georgia's national IHL committee and advised the armed forces on the review of their training manuals and doctrine. It supported university lecturers in developing a Georgian-language IHL teaching manual, facilitated student participation in IHL competitions and conducted an IHL summer school for South Ossetian school-children. Contacts with the media facilitated broad and accurate coverage of humanitarian issues and ICRC action.

The ICRC kept up its organizational, technical and financial support to the Red Cross Society of Georgia, in coordination with other Movement partners, and helped the "Red Cross in Abkhazia" complete its second large-scale project.

## CIVILIANS

### Civilians access health care and reunite with their families across boundary lines

The concerns of people living near the boundary lines, especially regarding movement restrictions, were shared with the authorities and relevant stakeholders. As a neutral intermediary and with the authorities' permission, the ICRC helped people cross administrative boundaries, including 59 for medical treatment. In addition, five people were fitted with prostheses at an ICRC-assisted physical rehabilitation centre in Vladikavkaz, Russian Federation (see *Moscow*), and received follow-up care upon their return.

Main figures and indicators	ASSISTANCE	Total	Women	Children
<b>CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)</b>				
<b>Economic security, water and habitat (in some cases provided within a protection or cooperation programme)</b>				
Food commodities	Beneficiaries	1,109	40%	17%
	<i>of whom IDPs</i>	9		
Essential household items	Beneficiaries	656	35%	19%
	<i>of whom IDPs</i>	5		
Productive inputs	Beneficiaries	419	45%	12%
Cash	Beneficiaries	2,893	44%	22%
	<i>of whom IDPs</i>	1,569		
Work, services and training	Beneficiaries	600	50%	10%
Water and habitat activities	Beneficiaries	10,202	41%	19%
	<i>of whom IDPs</i>	824		
<b>PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)</b>				
<b>Economic security, water and habitat (in some cases provided within a protection programme)</b>				
Essential household items	Beneficiaries	10		
Productive inputs	Beneficiaries	4		

Sustained dialogue with the *de facto* health authorities in South Ossetia allowed the ICRC to monitor the situation in health facilities, offering technical support and expertise, as well as medicines and other supplies as needed. At the *de facto* authorities' request, the ICRC built one medical point in rural South Ossetia and helped send one doctor to Moscow, Russian Federation, for further training.

In coordination with the authorities, 18 people reunited with their families and three families received their relatives' remains from across the boundary lines. A Ukrainian citizen in Abkhazia returned to his country of origin using official documents relayed through the ICRC, while four Georgian sailors who had been stranded for almost a year in a ship off the coast of Abkhazia finally returned home. Individuals who needed official documents from the other side of the boundary or medicines that were otherwise unavailable obtained these with ICRC assistance.

### Families of missing persons and authorities benefit from ICRC expertise

In the framework of the bipartite coordination mechanism working on the issue of missing persons from the 1992–93 conflict and after, Abkhaz and Georgian representatives met under ICRC auspices. Following the first exhumation in Abkhazia, local and ICRC forensic specialists conducted anthropological analyses of two sets of human remains and collected samples for DNA testing. In cooperation with Georgian experts, DNA samples were also collected from families of missing persons in Georgia to facilitate identification.

Similarly, Georgian, Russian and South Ossetian participants in the tripartite coordination mechanism dealing with the 2008 and earlier conflicts discussed further efforts to resolve cases of missing persons. Out of nine sets of exhumed remains, five were identified and returned to the families for proper burial, including two across administrative boundaries. Efforts to identify the other exhumed remains continued. Family members who needed psychological support received assistance from staff of an ICRC partner NGO who had been trained to provide counselling under the “accompaniment” project (see below).

Following training, 16 Georgian Red Cross volunteers started collecting ante-mortem data from families of missing persons in Georgia, while ICRC-trained staff deployed by the *de facto* authorities continued to do so in Abkhazia. All authorities concerned had discussions with the ICRC on the use of and requirements for DNA analysis.

Families of the missing continued to receive psychological/social support and legal assistance from partner NGOs under the “accompaniment” project. More than 200 families joined the project during the year, bringing the total beneficiaries to around 600 families. Aiming to further adapt the project to the specific needs expressed by the families, the ICRC renewed its agreements with the partner NGOs and provided them with further training and coaching. Throughout Georgia, including Abkhazia and South Ossetia, over 600 families of missing persons attended events to mark the International Day of the Disappeared co-organized by the ICRC with the authorities and local NGOs.

### Vulnerable households meet their basic needs and regain self-sufficiency

On both sides of the administrative boundaries, vulnerable people received relief items for sustenance and re-established or enhanced their sources of livelihood with agricultural/material support, grants and basic business training from the National Society/ICRC. Following a review of its micro-economic initiatives, the ICRC adapted its approach to better address needs expressed by the beneficiaries themselves and to improve the projects' sustainability. As a result, initial objectives were modified and some target figures revised downwards.

More than 160 vulnerable people (83 households) in Abkhazia's remote Kodori Gorge met their basic needs with ICRC-provided food and hygiene kits. In South Ossetia, over 900 elderly and destitute people (339 households) survived through monthly food distributions until they managed to secure access to staple commodities, and more than 120 vulnerable persons (67 households) received essential household items. Other needy individuals in South Ossetia were given clothing and bedding, while 14 elderly and/or disabled persons received help during regular home visits. In a very remote area of South Ossetia, 28 schoolchildren received bicycles, enabling them to go to school in Georgia without having to walk for an hour and a half.

Following a severe hailstorm in South Ossetia, 150 households (367 people) who had lost their entire harvests coped with their immediate needs using essential household items from the ICRC. During winter, essential food supplies reached around 200 families (600 persons) in remote mountainous areas through ICRC food trucking.

More than 560 households (over 2,200 people) in central and western Georgia and Abkhazia, including IDPs, families whose

breadwinners were missing and economically vulnerable mine/ERW victims, started income-generating projects such as live-stock rearing, beekeeping or craft ventures. Vulnerable families in South Ossetia did likewise, with 58 households (187 persons) getting cash grants and 28 households (76 persons) receiving tools/materials, while 95 farming households (347 people) increased their crop production with the help of tractors.

### Communities and IDPs enjoy better water supply, sanitation and housing

More than 6,300 people in eight Georgian villages near the South Ossetian administrative boundary benefited from the improvement of their water supply network, carried out by the Georgian water board with ICRC-supplied pipes and pumps. In two other villages, the construction of boreholes fitted with pumps increased the drinking water supply for around 2,400 people. Staff of the water board improved their technical skills at an ICRC training course on computer-assisted water network design.

On the other side of the boundary line, approximately 1,400 people in two South Ossetian villages gained access to sufficient and safe water through infrastructure built by the ICRC in cooperation with the *de facto* local authorities. In another nine villages, with about 1,300 residents in all, community members constructed/improved water supply systems with materials and technical advice provided by the ICRC.

Four collective centres in central and western Georgia became warmer and drier for some 600 IDPs living there, following the replacement of old, leaking roofs with new, sturdier ones. Over 200 IDPs enjoyed better hygiene conditions after sanitation facilities in another temporary accommodation centre were repaired. In South Ossetia, 12 IDPs benefited from the renovation of their temporary dwellings, and the living conditions of 15 elderly, destitute people vastly improved after the ICRC rehabilitated their houses. Almost 500 vulnerable people (150 households) used funds from the ICRC-supported shelter-improvement project of the Georgian Red Cross to repair their homes.

### Mine/ERW-injured people receive treatment and assistance

With ICRC support, data collection by the National Society continued in Georgia, including Abkhazia, to assess the socio-economic needs of mine/ERW victims and ensure an appropriate response. A Georgian Red Cross staff member was trained to input information into the mine-action database.

The collected data helped identify individuals in need of prostheses/orthoses, who were then referred to the Georgian Foundation for Prosthetic Orthopaedic Rehabilitation. Aside from receiving assistive devices, 85 mine/ERW victims had their transportation, food and housing costs during treatment covered by the ICRC.

### PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM

The treatment and living conditions of security detainees across Georgia, including people held in connection with armed conflicts or protests, for crossing the administrative boundary lines, or on charges of spying, “terrorism” or the formation of armed groups, were monitored by the ICRC. Among them, 164 were followed up individually, while others were interviewed by the ICRC at their own or their families’ request. The authorities received confidential feedback and recommendations.

Visits to people held in Abkhazia resumed but later stopped because agreement could not be reached with the *de facto* authorities on the ICRC’s standard procedures for such visits. The *de facto* authorities agreed to continue providing the ICRC with information on the whereabouts of individuals believed to be detained, upon their families’ request.

Detainees in South Ossetia received new bedding and hygiene kits, while clothes and additional hygiene items were provided to those without family support. Rehabilitation of the heating system in Tskhinvali/Tskhinval prison ensured detainees had adequate living conditions during winter.

Detainees throughout Georgia used RCMs to stay in touch with relatives, including those who lived across administrative boundaries or outside Georgia. Some received parcels and/or visits from their families. Long family visits took place for the first time; two detainees spent 24 hours with family members.

At their own request, two former internees from the US internment facility at Guantanamo Bay naval station in Cuba who had been resettled in Georgia were repatriated with their families to their countries of origin. Another former Guantanamo internee remaining in Tbilisi maintained contact with his family with the ICRC’s help; his health was also monitored.

PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM	GEORGIA	ABKHAZIA	SOUTH OSSETIA
<b>ICRC visits</b>			
Detainees visited	7,392	389	110
Detainees visited and monitored individually	141	3	20
	<i>of whom women</i>	12	2
Detainees newly registered	81	1	13
	<i>of whom women</i>	10	1
Number of visits carried out	86	21	23
Number of places of detention visited	16	10	4
<b>Restoring family links</b>			
RCMs collected	93	14	26
RCMs distributed	64	4	23
Detainees visited by their relatives with ICRC/National Society support	16		4
Detainees released and transferred/repatriated by the ICRC		1	
People to whom a detention attestation was issued	2		

## Georgian authorities improve primary health care in detention facilities

To ensure adequate health care for all detainees, the Georgian authorities made the primary health care pilot programme permanent in two places of detention and extended it to five others. Health staff in all seven facilities benefited from training in mental health, pharmacology and international classification of diseases, while the ICRC continued to monitor the programme's implementation and provide technical expertise and medical equipment. After video footage allegedly showing ill-treatment of detainees in a Georgian prison was leaked, the ICRC scaled up its support to the penitentiary health system to ensure that medical staff could practise in accordance with internationally accepted standards of medical ethics.

## AUTHORITIES

Discussions with the authorities and *de facto* authorities focused on their responsibilities under IHL and other relevant norms and on ICRC operations, particularly on its role as a neutral intermediary. The Abkhaz *de facto* Ministry of Foreign Affairs engaged in dialogue with the ICRC on the issue of missing persons, including the need for relevant legislation, and on finding durable solutions to the difficulties faced by IDPs. Its legal department received a library of reference books on IHL. Following the presidential elections in South Ossetia, contacts with the new *de facto* authorities expanded and improved, thereby increasing understanding and acceptance of ICRC activities.

Georgia's national IHL committee held its first working meeting and, with ICRC support, initiated peer-to-peer cooperation with its counterpart in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. However, dialogue had yet to resume after major changes following the elections, which led to a pause in the committee's work.

Meetings with international actors provided opportunities to explain the ICRC's role and activities and to mobilize support for its neutral, impartial and independent humanitarian action.

## ARMED FORCES AND OTHER BEARERS OF WEAPONS

In line with the working plan agreed upon with the Georgian armed forces, Defence Ministry personnel and senior military officers, including members of the working group responsible for redrafting military manuals, underwent IHL training. The review of military doctrine and the redrafting of operational texts continued, with the ICRC providing technical advice. Members of the Georgian Special Forces, police and military police learnt about ICRC activities and basic humanitarian principles through dissemination sessions in the Shida Kartli region, and Georgian troops deploying abroad attended a briefing on IHL and other applicable norms.

At an ICRC workshop in Abkhazia, senior officers of the *de facto* Defence Ministry, customs personnel, militia members and border guards enhanced their understanding of IHL concepts relevant to military decision-making.

In South Ossetia, IHL dissemination to military and security officers did not take place owing to the elections and internal reforms but was set to resume in 2013.

## CIVIL SOCIETY

Journalists across Georgia used ICRC-provided resources to report accurately on humanitarian issues and ICRC activities, particularly those benefiting detainees and families of missing persons. They also got up-to-date information on ICRC operations during five round-tables.

The public in South Ossetia learnt about IHL and the ICRC through a series of radio programmes, which reached an audience of some 5,000 people. Schoolchildren from Tskhinvali/Tskhinval and rural areas were introduced to IHL basics and the ICRC's history and work through the first IHL summer school, while South Ossetian youth and NGO/media representatives learnt about ICRC activities through information sessions and a photo exhibition.

To harmonize IHL teaching, university lecturers started work on an instructors' manual in Georgian and agreed to share academic resources. They also received relevant training and updated information, including Georgian translations of scholarly articles on current IHL developments, contributing to the effectiveness of IHL teaching and research. Students from Georgian and Abkhaz universities participated in national and international IHL competitions, while the training centre of Georgia's Ministry of Justice co-organized a national moot court competition.

## RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

In line with the Movement coordination agreement signed in 2011, Movement partners continued to meet regularly with the Georgian Red Cross, with the goal of strengthening its capacity to deliver humanitarian services. To that end, the National Society reinforced links between its headquarters and branches through its biannual strategic and operational discussions.

To achieve formal first-aid certification, the National Society kept in touch with the European Reference Centre for First Aid Education and integrated new guidelines into its training curriculum. It trained more than 4,000 community leaders in seven regions and further promoted its first-aid programme by offering training sessions to various institutions.

In addition to activities carried out with the ICRC (see *Civilians*), the National Society regularly assisted nearly 2,000 elderly people through its social welfare programme and provided information on social benefits and related concerns to other vulnerable individuals.

The Georgian Red Cross elected a new leadership and started reviewing its policies, including its communication strategy and security regulations. With the ICRC, it carried out a joint assessment of its family-links services, with resulting recommendations to form the basis for future improvements.

With ICRC support, the "Red Cross in Abkhazia" distributed winter clothing to over 400 beneficiaries.