

# PHILIPPINES



In the Philippines, where the ICRC has worked since 1982, the delegation assists and protects civilians displaced or otherwise affected by armed clashes between the government and insurgent groups, primarily on the southern islands of Mindanao. It acts as a neutral intermediary between opposing forces in humanitarian matters. It visits security detainees and, with the authorities, aims to improve conditions in prisons, through direct interventions and prison reform. It also works with the Philippine Red Cross, through its network of regional chapters, local branches and volunteers, to assist displaced people and vulnerable communities and promote compliance with IHL.

## EXPENDITURE (IN KCHF)

Protection	<b>3,155</b>
Assistance	<b>10,520</b>
Prevention	<b>2,468</b>
Cooperation with National Societies	<b>1,117</b>
General	-

► **17,260**

of which: Overheads **1,053**

## IMPLEMENTATION RATE

Expenditure/yearly budget	<b>85%</b>
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## PERSONNEL

Expatriates	<b>35</b>
National staff (daily workers not included)	<b>143</b>

## KEY POINTS

In 2010, the ICRC:

- with the Philippine Red Cross, conducted a final relief distribution for nearly 180,000 IDPs in Central Mindanao before redirecting assistance to livelihood support for some 56,000 vulnerable people
- improved access to safe water and sanitation for nearly 108,000 residents and IDPs in conflict-affected areas
- provided material and technical support to 6 primary health care centres, 15 hospitals and 1 physical rehabilitation centre
- visited 166 places of detention holding over 72,000 detainees, following up some 700 inmates individually
- supported the authorities' efforts to improve living conditions in prisons and reduce overcrowding, including through measures to address delays in the criminal justice system and implementation of the national tuberculosis-control programme in pilot sites
- supported the publication and distribution of the Soldier's Handbook on Human Rights and IHL

## CONTEXT

The transfer of power from President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo to Senator Benigno “Noynoy” Aquino III, elected president of the Philippines in a landslide victory in May 2010, put an end to months of pre-election turmoil and instability.

The July 2009 ceasefire between the government of the Philippines and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and the return of the Malaysian-led international monitoring team in March 2010 led to an improvement in the humanitarian situation in Central Mindanao. Several hundred thousand IDPs had returned to their home villages (leaving fewer than 30,000 displaced), even though the aftermath of the 2008–09 conflict had put a heavy strain on local infrastructure, basic services and individual livelihoods, and violence persisted, notably around land issues. However, and despite agreements reached under the aegis of the Organization of the Islamic Conference between the government of the Philippines and the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) in April 2010

and between the MNLF and the MILF the following May, the long-term outlook of the peace process remained uncertain.

The low-intensity conflict between the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the New People’s Army (NPA) continued to affect people living mainly in Eastern Mindanao, North Luzon (Cordillera region), South Luzon (Bicol region) and the Visayas (Northern Samar and Negros), also causing significant losses among the armed forces and police. Both parties nevertheless agreed for the first time since 2005 to resume peace talks in January 2011 under Norwegian auspices.

Throughout the year, confrontations between the security forces and armed elements took place on Sulu island.

In October, Super Typhoon Megi caused massive destruction and affected over 1.3 million people in North Luzon. The Philippine Red Cross played a key role in assisting the victims.

### MAIN FIGURES AND INDICATORS

#### PROTECTION

CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)			
<b>Red Cross messages</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>UAMs/SCs*</b>	
RCMs collected	1		
RCMs distributed	5		
<b>Tracing requests, including cases of missing persons</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Women</b>	<b>Minors</b>
People for whom a tracing request was newly registered	7		
People located (tracing cases closed positively)	3		
Tracing cases still being handled at 31 December 2010 (people)	28	2	2
<b>Documents</b>			
People to whom travel documents were issued	3		
PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)			
<b>ICRC visits</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Women</b>	<b>Minors</b>
Detainees visited	72,544		
Detainees visited and monitored individually	691	65	5
Detainees newly registered	218	42	5
Number of visits carried out	276		
Number of places of detention visited	166		
<b>Restoring family links</b>	<b>Total</b>		
RCMs collected	11		
RCMs distributed	4		
Detainees visited by their relatives with ICRC/National Society support	295		
People to whom a detention attestation was issued	1		

\* Unaccompanied minors/separated children

#### ASSISTANCE

CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)				
Economic security, water and habitat				
		<b>Total</b>	<b>Women</b>	<b>Children</b>
Food	Beneficiaries	252,698	15%	70%
	<i>of whom IDPs</i>	252,698		
Essential household items	Beneficiaries	257,726	15%	70%
	<i>of whom IDPs</i>	257,726		
Agricultural, veterinary and other micro-economic initiatives	Beneficiaries	72,108	15%	70%
	<i>of whom IDPs</i>	72,108		
Water and habitat activities	Beneficiaries	107,748	17%	67%
	<i>of whom IDPs</i>	102,680		

MAIN FIGURES AND INDICATORS				
ASSISTANCE				
Health		Total	Women	Children
Health centres supported	Structures	6		
Average catchment population		131,779		
Consultations	Patients	28,624		
	<i>of which curative</i>		7,641	11,601
	<i>of which ante/post-natal</i>		4,748	
Immunizations	Doses	35,728		
	<i>of which for children aged five or under</i>	33,471		
	<i>of which for women of childbearing age</i>	2,257		
Referrals to a second level of care	Patients	227		
Health education	Sessions	372		
PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)				
Economic security, water and habitat				
Essential household items	Beneficiaries	11,242		
Water and habitat activities	Beneficiaries	12,064		
WOUNDED AND SICK				
Hospitals				
Hospitals supported	Structures	15		
	<i>of which provided data</i>	10		
Admissions	Patients	70,456	33,390	21,784
	<i>of whom weapon-wounded</i>	925	58	50
	<i>(including by mines or explosive remnants of war)</i>	26		
	<i>of whom other surgical cases</i>	7,154		
	<i>of whom medical cases</i>	40,621		
	<i>of whom gynaecological/obstetric cases</i>	21,756		
Operations	Operations performed	10,510		
Outpatient consultations	Patients	152,437		
	<i>of which surgical</i>	29,035		
	<i>of which medical</i>	96,034		
	<i>of which gynaecological/obstetric</i>	27,368		
Physical rehabilitation				
Centres supported	Structures	1		
Patients receiving services	Patients	47	5	2
New patients fitted with prostheses	Patients	16	3	2
Prostheses delivered	Units	43	4	2
Crutches delivered	Units	86		
Wheelchairs delivered	Units	4		

## ICRC ACTION AND RESULTS

The ICRC worked to promote the protection of and respect for people affected by armed conflicts and other situations of violence in the Philippines through monitoring of IHL violations and other misconduct, dialogue with the conflict parties, and dissemination of IHL and humanitarian principles among weapon bearers and the civilian population.

The large-scale emergency operation carried out jointly by the Philippine Red Cross and the ICRC in Central Mindanao since 2008 ended in March. After reassessing the needs of communities affected by the 2008–09 fighting, assistance was redirected to some 56,000 people left vulnerable by loss of land and assets or high levels of individual debt, to help them recover their livelihoods. In other violence-affected areas of the country, people struggling to cope because of failed harvests or the remoteness of their communities also received food, seed and tools.

Mainly in Central Mindanao, the general health of resident and displaced populations improved thanks to the construction of

water supply and sanitation facilities and support to six primary health care centres in violence-affected areas. Sick civilians and wounded weapon bearers received medical care boosted by ICRC support to hospitals, and some weapon-wounded patients had the costs of their treatment covered.

Visits to people deprived of their freedom continued, with confidential reports containing the ICRC's findings and recommendations shared with the detaining authorities. Within the framework of the "Call for Action" process, launched in 2007, the government and the ICRC continued to mobilize the authorities and relevant government agencies at central and local level to support the allocation of more resources to improve prison facilities and tackle overcrowding in prisons. The ICRC helped organize working group sessions bringing together key actors involved in preventing and treating tuberculosis (TB) among detainees, improving sanitation conditions in poorly served detention facilities and finding practical solutions to speed up the judicial process. At a national conference convened by the ICRC, the authorities reaffirmed the need and their willingness to pursue efforts already made in these regards. The process expanded in 2010 with the extension of the

national TB programme to all prisons in three regions and the launch of local initiatives to deal with procedural delays affecting the legal cases of inmates in two prisons in Manila and Tacloban.

Building on the momentum created by the adoption of an IHL Act in late 2009, the ICRC continued to promote national implementation of IHL, its integration into the doctrine, training and operations of the AFP, and knowledge of the subject among academics. Following publication, with ICRC support, of the Soldier's Handbook on Human Rights and IHL, the AFP chief of staff issued a directive to strengthen knowledge of and respect for IHL among troops.

Targeting future decision-makers, the ICRC and National Society invited law students and lecturers to participate in IHL events, such as a national moot court competition.

The Philippine Red Cross, which played a central role in many of the above activities, strengthened its capacity to assist people affected by natural disaster, armed conflict or other situations of violence, with ICRC training and material support.

## CIVILIANS

Civilians continued to suffer the consequences of the various armed conflicts and other situations of violence in the Philippines. Wherever fighting took place, they faced casualties, loss of livelihoods and short-term displacements in regions often lacking infrastructure and essential services.

The presence of ICRC delegates in violence-affected areas and dialogue with the parties concerned and weapon bearers helped to promote protection of and respect for the civilian population. Contacts with affected people and residents, the military, armed groups, local authorities, and religious and other community leaders enabled the ICRC to gain a better understanding of humanitarian issues in those areas. Whenever possible, the relevant parties were made aware of allegations of IHL violations and other concerns so that corrective action could be taken. Dissemination sessions on IHL and humanitarian principles for weapon bearers and the civilian population, including on the risks posed by weapon contamination, contributed to these efforts.

National actors involved in the management of human remains attended the third ICRC course on Managing the Dead in Armed Conflicts and Catastrophes, held in Geneva, Switzerland. Two medico-legal officers from the National Bureau of Investigation and the Philippine National Police (PNP) benefited from practical forensic knowledge enhancing their future operational capacities.

### **Vulnerable families assisted in recovering a means of livelihood**

In the first quarter of 2010, some 179,000 IDPs (29,900 households) in Central Mindanao received a final round of food distributions and sufficient basic household items to improve their living conditions whether they remained displaced, returned to their places of origin or resettled elsewhere.

Thereafter, after jointly reassessing the needs of affected communities in Central Mindanao and finding that most IDPs had returned to their places of origin or were moving back and forth between their villages and their current safer location, the ICRC and the Philippine Red Cross redirected assistance to the remaining IDPs and struggling resident populations, left vulnerable because of loss of land and assets or high levels of individual debt, to help them recover their means of livelihood. By year-end, some 56,000 people (9,300 households) had received agricultural or fishing inputs and equipment, of whom 36,000 (5,100 households) also received food (usually a one-off ration) and 35,000 received essential household items, thus enabling them to increase their income and improve their daily living conditions.

Vulnerable people in other areas of the Philippines also coped better with adverse conditions following ICRC assistance. In North Luzon, 42,600 people (7,100 households) in communities that had suffered three consecutive failed harvests as a result of typhoons in 2009 and drought in early 2010 were helped to pull through by the distribution of food and laundry soap, while the 14,400 most affected (2,400 households) also received maize seed and fertilizer. In the Visayas, 1,620 individuals (270 households) in two isolated conflict-prone barangays in Northern Samar received vegetable seed, tools and agro training.

Some 1,000 undocumented migrant workers deported from Malaysia and housed at a processing centre in Zamboanga and 100 minors at a centre for trafficked children received hygiene parcels. The ICRC prepared to undertake basic rehabilitation work to improve living conditions at the migrant centre in 2011.

### **Civilians have better access to health care, water and sanitation**

In Central Mindanao, a catchment population of some 131,779 people, including 1,700 IDPs at year-end, had access to improved primary health care at six facilities supported by the ICRC for a second and final year. Regular donations of essential drugs, consumables and equipment and ongoing technical support, including supervisory visits and training when security conditions permitted, helped enhance the quality of the care given. In particular, local health professionals strengthened their skills in drug management, data collection, the use of clinical protocols and good immunization practices. Five of the facilities were rehabilitated, while the sixth, a damaged health post serving some 6,000 people, was rebuilt.

Access to safe drinking water and adequate sanitation facilities remained a major concern for remote rural communities and IDPs in violence-affected areas. The construction of permanent infrastructure, such as toilets, septic tanks, deep wells, reservoirs and small-scale rural water supply systems, helped improve the situation for around 108,000 residents and IDPs in Mindanao and the Visayas. One project in Indanan (Sulu), carried out with a local NGO, covered the needs of the rural population and helped residents of the nearby city of Jolo during the dry season. The projects, conducted by the ICRC in coordination with the local authorities, were community-based, and beneficiaries provided the manpower.

## PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM

On receiving allegations of conflict and violence-related arrests or learning of them from media reports, the ICRC requested immediate access to those arrested in order to ensure they were being treated with full respect for their dignity and essential judicial guarantees.

Over 166 places of detention, holding 72,500 detainees, under the responsibility of the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP), the Bureau of Corrections, the provincial authorities, the armed forces and the police received ICRC visits to monitor their treatment and living conditions. Vulnerable detainees, such as minors, women, the elderly and the mentally ill, were given particular attention. Over 11,000 detainees in 18 jails received hygiene kits and recreational materials. Following the visits, which were carried out in accordance with the ICRC's standard procedures, the authorities received confidential reports containing delegates' findings and recommendations.

Nearly 300 detainees had visits from relatives facilitated by the Philippine Red Cross and funded by the ICRC.

Detainees in 21 prisons benefited from ICRC monitoring of their general health and access to medical care. Places of detention with permanent health staff received basic medical items, potentially benefiting some 21,000 inmates.

### Causes of jail congestion addressed

The authorities and key government agencies at central and local level pursued efforts to improve prison facilities and tackle overcrowding through the allocation of more resources, mobilized within the framework of the "Call for Action" process. Three working groups, set up in 2008 as part of the process, continued to address the issues of prison infrastructure, TB in places of detention, and shortcomings, in particular procedural delays, in the criminal justice system, seen as one of the major causes of overcrowding in jails. In addition, a pilot working group, created in late 2009 with implementing agencies of the criminal justice system at the local level, met regularly to discuss, and resolve, urgent concerns stemming from procedural delays affecting the legal cases of inmates at Manila City Jail. At end-2010, a similar initiative was launched to deal with overcrowding at Tacloban City Jail in Eastern Visayas.

National stakeholders met to discuss the achievements so far and next steps at two conferences organized by the ICRC and the Supreme Court respectively. In late 2010, a BJMP-convened national summit adopted a declaration strongly calling for a more "restorative" criminal justice system and improved coordination among the agencies concerned.

### Conditions of detention improve

Some 12,000 detainees benefited from improved living conditions, in particular water and sanitation, ventilation, health infrastructure, sleeping areas and cooking facilities, thanks to projects conducted in 27 BJMP-run and 4 provincial jails with ICRC material support and expertise. In addition, 47 BJMP engineers were trained in the application of international technical standards relating to living conditions in prisons. The BJMP published a manual on national standards in prisons officially setting minimum technical standards for its detention facilities.

### Detainees receive treatment under the national TB programme

The implementation phase of the national TB programme started in seven pilot prisons, based on technical and operational guidelines adopted in 2009 with ICRC support. Monitoring by the technical working group found good adherence to the guidelines and improved management of TB cases. A year after data collection had started, the working group issued the final report on a TB-prevalence survey, which found that the disease was up to five times more frequent in detention facilities than among the general population.

After nine detention health staff received ICRC training in direct sputum smear microscopy as a diagnostic tool, four of the country's largest prisons were ready to provide directly observed treatment, short-course (DOTS) services.

Given the acceptance of the programme in the seven pilot jails, the authorities decided to expand it to all prisons within the National Capital, Central Visayas and Davao regions, thus extending access to systematic TB treatment to 50% of the total prison population. Two weeks of training in DOTS, attended by 78 health providers from 38 places of detention, initiated the process.

## WOUNDED AND SICK

Conflict victims, including 30 weapon-wounded people, benefited throughout the year from ICRC financial support to ensure they received appropriate medical and surgical care. In addition, 15 hospitals increased their capacities to care for weapon-wounded and IDP emergency cases thanks to regular ICRC assistance. Ten of these hospitals, those that provided data, were considered to be the main referral centres for cases related to violence. Using ICRC surgical and dressing materials, they performed 10,510 operations and treated 925 weapon-wounded patients over the year.

In addition, 47 amputees received specialized services at the ICRC-supported Jubilee physical rehabilitation centre in Davao, which benefited from the construction of a new gait training area and sponsorship of staff training abroad. The centre conducted outreach activities to inform people in the region about the services available.

The Philippine Red Cross, as the main provider of first aid to victims of violence, continued to treat the weapon-wounded following ICRC-supported training, the supply of first-aid kits and a review of its materials and methods. Four National Society chapters received dressing materials in case of election-related violence.

A surgeon from the AFP attended an ICRC war-surgery seminar in Geneva, Switzerland.

## AUTHORITIES

National and local authorities in the Philippines and the ICRC maintained regular contact on operational matters, helping ensure that all concerned knew about and supported the ICRC and its neutral, impartial and independent humanitarian action.

The adoption in December 2009 of an IHL Act, defining and penalizing war crimes, genocide and other crimes against humanity, delivered a major boost to interest and training in the subject. The Philippine Judicial Academy, the Supreme Court, the Commission on Human Rights and other stakeholders worked with ICRC support to broaden knowledge of IHL among members of the judiciary, State officials and academics.

The new government was encouraged to make progress in acceding to and implementing other IHL instruments, in particular to ratify Additional Protocol I and enact pending bills on protection of the emblems and IDPs. No headway was made in replacing the national IHL committee with a higher-level interministerial body. Planned ICRC seminars on IHL implementation were postponed until 2011, once the new government was more firmly established.

Eight government representatives increased their knowledge of IHL at five ICRC-supported events abroad, including the third Universal Meeting of National IHL Committees, held in Geneva, Switzerland (see *International Law and Cooperation*).

## ARMED FORCES AND OTHER BEARERS OF WEAPONS

During field dissemination sessions, members of the armed forces, the police and armed groups were reminded of the need to respect civilians and their property and to ensure the security of humanitarian workers in accordance with IHL and other international standards.

Military instructors expanded their knowledge of IHL by attending workshops organized by key military training institutions with ICRC support. The AFP Human Rights Office published the Soldier's Handbook on Human Rights and IHL, with ICRC input, and distributed it nationwide. The chief of staff issued a directive to strengthen knowledge of and respect for IHL within the armed forces using the handbook.

Four high-ranking army and police officers attended training events abroad, including the fourth Senior Workshop on International Rules governing Military Operations, held in Lucerne, Switzerland (see *International Law and Cooperation*).

Senior police officers discussed policing concepts and law enforcement practices at ICRC-supported workshops. Pocket cards and stickers for police cars containing the basic rules of law enforcement were printed and distributed by the ICRC in cooperation with the PNP Human Rights Affairs Office. Police stations countrywide received posters spelling out the rights of arrested persons.

## CIVIL SOCIETY

National and local media used ICRC materials to raise public awareness of the humanitarian effects of armed conflict and the organization's activities in the country. Around 150 journalists increased their knowledge of IHL, conflict reporting and safety in the field at five ICRC workshops held in conflict-affected areas. A nationwide Red Cross award for humanitarian reporting was launched, with the results to be announced in 2011.

In their contacts with the ICRC, members of selected think-tanks and NGOs gained greater understanding of the organization and its humanitarian concerns. Two experts from the Philippines took part in a workshop on the protection of civilians, held in Singapore (see *Kuala Lumpur*).

Political science and law students learnt more about IHL at ICRC-supported moot court and debating competitions, photo exhibitions and lectures. Academics and other experts had access to specialist material on IHL following distribution of the third volume of the *Asia-Pacific Yearbook of International Humanitarian Law* via the largest network of national bookstores.

A study aimed at analysing cultural acceptance and perceptions of the ICRC was launched in collaboration with the University of the Philippines.

## RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

The Philippine Red Cross remained a key operational partner for the ICRC, and cooperation between the two organizations enhanced both the ICRC's ability to assist conflict and violence-affected people and the National Society's emergency response capacity (see *Civilians, People deprived of their freedom and Wounded and sick*).

Joint relief operations in Central Mindanao combined with training provided opportunities to strengthen the capacities of local staff and volunteers in economic security techniques and the use and maintenance of emergency water and sanitation equipment. In addition, four water supply kits were donated for rapid deployment after natural disasters and new vehicles and VHF radios were given to chapters in violence-affected areas. Some 108 first-aiders

received training, and first-aid kits were donated. All first-aiders were prepared to respond to any conflict incidents or violence related to May's elections.

The Philippine Red Cross and ICRC worked together to review family-links needs, capacity and strategy. After nationwide staff training, the National Society was better equipped to scale up its family-links response during disasters.

As security remained a priority, National Society management, staff and volunteers attended ICRC briefings on the Safer Access approach. Disseminators, as well as members of the boards of directors at chapter level, took part in training to improve their own knowledge of the Movement and its Fundamental Principles.

Regular senior management meetings between the ICRC, International Federation and Philippine Red Cross helped ensure a common understanding of Movement coordination in emergencies and large-scale disasters.