

# BURUNDI



ICRC / AR, 2012  
 + ICRC delegation    + ICRC-supported prosthetic/orthotic centre

## EXPENDITURE (IN KCHF)

Protection	1,651
Assistance	2,225
Prevention	320
Cooperation with National Societies	567
General	-

► **4,764**

of which: Overheads 291

## IMPLEMENTATION RATE

Expenditure/yearly budget	95%
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## PERSONNEL

Expatriates	14
National staff (daily workers not included)	54

## KEY POINTS

### In 2012, the ICRC:

- worked with the authorities to help reduce overcrowding in some places of detention, resulting in the release of a number of inmates after the review of the case files of several hundred detainees
- with the penitentiary directorate and the Belgian development cooperation agency, organized a seminar on detainees' treatment and living conditions, leading to a three-month coaching programme for penitentiary staff
- contributed to the transitional justice process by providing forensic expertise to the authorities in examining a mass gravesite
- helped disabled people from a wider geographical area gain access to Saint Kizito's physical rehabilitation services by enabling the opening of a new dormitory offering them accommodation
- together with Burundian IHL instructors, conducted pre-deployment briefings for 4 Burundian contingents participating in the African Union Mission in Somalia
- provided financial, material and technical support to the Burundi Red Cross, enabling it to collect and distribute RCMs autonomously in all of the country's 17 provinces

The ICRC has been present in Burundi since 1962, opening its delegation there in 1992 to help people overcome the worst consequences of armed conflict. Owing to the progress in the peace process, ICRC assistance activities have been scaled down and now focus mainly on working with the prison authorities to ensure that detainees are treated according to internationally recognized standards. The ICRC also reinforces physical rehabilitation services, bolsters the Burundi Red Cross, notably its efforts to restore links between separated family members, and supports the armed forces' efforts to train their members in IHL.

## CONTEXT

Tensions and security incidents significantly decreased throughout the year. However, sporadic violence, mainly clashes between security forces and other weapon bearers, persisted, especially in the area bordering the Democratic Republic of the Congo (hereafter DRC).

The establishment of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission as part of the transitional justice process was postponed, as the authorities sought more time to consult with the population and increase its awareness of the matter.

Burundi remained highly reliant on international support and continued to suffer from poverty and underdevelopment. Rising prices of essential commodities led to a national strike in April. Rapid population growth, driven by high birth rates and the return of former refugees from neighbouring countries, including the United Republic of Tanzania (hereafter Tanzania), continued to fuel disputes over access to land. Owing to past and current conflicts in the region, Burundi hosted a number of refugees, mainly from the DRC.

The Burundian armed forces continued to contribute troops to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM).

## ICRC ACTION AND RESULTS

In Burundi, the ICRC continued to concentrate on helping the authorities improve the conditions of detainees. To this end, delegates visited nearly 11,500 detainees in 32 places of permanent and temporary detention to monitor their treatment and living conditions, sharing their findings and any recommendations confidentially with the authorities concerned. Discussions with the Justice and Public Security Ministries focused on improving detainees' treatment and respect for their judicial guarantees. As a result, the authorities reviewed the files of several hundred detainees, speeding up the judicial process and enabling the release of some of them, thus relieving overcrowding in some places of detention. At the same time, the ICRC intervened in a more general way across the penitentiary system, providing financial, material and technical assistance to help improve inmates' living conditions. For example, with the relevant authorities, it rehabilitated/constructed prison infrastructure and carried out disinfection campaigns and a hygiene-promotion programme. The ICRC also facilitated detainees' access to health care by covering most of the costs of medicines in prison dispensaries and donating

Main figures and indicators	PROTECTION		Total
<b>CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)</b>			
<b>Red Cross messages (RCMs)</b>			
		UAMs/SCs*	
RCMs collected	1,641	4	
RCMs distributed	1,738	12	
Phone calls facilitated between family members	76		
<b>Reunifications, transfers and repatriations</b>			
People reunited with their families	5		
	<i>including people registered by another delegation</i>		2
<b>Tracing requests, including cases of missing persons</b>			
		Women	Minors
People for whom a tracing request was newly registered	78	18	34
People located (tracing cases closed positively)	31		
	<i>including people for whom tracing requests were registered by another delegation</i>		7
Tracing cases still being handled at the end of the reporting period (people)	66	16	34
<b>UAMs/SCs*, including unaccompanied demobilized child soldiers</b>			
		Girls	Demobilized children
UAMs/SCs newly registered by the ICRC/National Society	2		
UAMs/SCs reunited with their families by the ICRC/National Society	3	1	
	<i>including UAMs/SCs registered by another delegation</i>		2
UAM/SC cases still being handled by the ICRC/National Society at the end of the reporting period	3		
<b>PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)</b>			
<b>ICRC visits</b>			
		Women	Minors
Detainees visited	11,469		
Detainees visited and monitored individually	643	11	17
Detainees newly registered	247	5	8
Number of visits carried out	129		
Number of places of detention visited	32		
<b>Restoring family links</b>			
RCMs collected	4		
RCMs distributed	7		
People to whom a detention attestation was issued	31		

\* Unaccompanied minors/separated children

such items to health centres treating inmates. A two-day seminar organized with the penitentiary directorate and the Belgian development cooperation agency aimed to improve detainees' conditions and led to the initiation of a three-month coaching/monitoring programme for penitentiary staff.

While the creation of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission was postponed, the ICRC provided ad hoc forensic expertise to the national authorities and helped examine a newly discovered mass grave.

With ICRC support, the Burundi Red Cross increased its capacity to provide family-links services, collecting and distributing RCMs in all of the country's 17 provinces. It took over from the ICRC the task of exchanging these between Burundians and their relatives detained in Tanzania. The National Society also strengthened its capacities in the fields of emergency preparedness, water and sanitation, and promotion of the Movement's Fundamental Principles. For example, it created six new emergency response brigades and initiated three new water and sanitation projects. It carried out the emergency rehabilitation of a water facility in a transit camp, enabling over 33,000 Burundian returnees repatriated from Tanzania to access clean water.

Within the framework of a multi-year plan of action, the Saint Kizito physical rehabilitation centre and the ICRC continued to work together to provide quality services to disabled people, including demobilized weapon bearers injured during past fighting. The centre worked to ensure its long-term financial sustainability, for example through an internal solidarity fund for the

cost recovery of services, while the ICRC provided training and mentoring to staff.

To strengthen understanding of humanitarian principles and IHL and garner support for the Movement, the ICRC pursued dialogue with the authorities, the armed forces and regional/international organizations. It provided technical guidance to the government and the armed forces in integrating IHL into national legislation and military doctrine and training respectively. These efforts contributed to Burundi's accession to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons. ICRC-trained Burundian instructors briefed four Burundian contingents on IHL prior to their deployment with AMISOM.

Movement partners met regularly to exchange views and coordinate activities.

## CIVILIANS

### Separated relatives restore contact

Family members dispersed while fleeing past fighting in Burundi or neighbouring countries, including Burundian refugees in or returning from Tanzania and Congolese and Rwandan refugees in Burundi, restored contact through tracing and RCM services run by the Burundi Red Cross and the ICRC.

With an increased capacity to provide family-links services, the National Society continued to collect and distribute RCMs autonomously in all of the country's 17 provinces. From the start of the year, it took over from the ICRC the task of exchanging RCMs between Burundians and their relatives detained in Tanzania.

Main figures and indicators	ASSISTANCE <sup>1</sup>	Total	Women	Children
<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	21,190		
Water and habitat activities	Beneficiaries	11,249		
<b>WOUNDED AND SICK</b>				
<b>Physical rehabilitation</b>				
Centres supported	Structures	1		
Patients receiving services	Patients	2,310	202	1,876
New patients fitted with prostheses	Patients	7	1	3
Prostheses delivered	Units	10	2	4
New patients fitted with orthoses	Patients	296	7	259
Orthoses delivered	Units	435	12	388
Number of patients receiving physiotherapy	Patients	1,580	103	1,331
Crutches delivered	Units	63		
Wheelchairs delivered	Units	56		

1. Owing to operational and management constraints, figures presented in this table and in the narrative part of this report may not reflect all activities carried out during the reporting period

While 31 people being traced were located, three unaccompanied children rejoined their families, including one in the DRC and one in Rwanda, according to their wishes. Upon reunification with his/her family in Burundi, the third child received an assistance kit, and another one to facilitate his/her reintegration into the family unit.

To help them run family-links services, the 17 National Society provincial relays and 66 community relays benefited from training and support for information management and basic equipment such as bicycles, shirts and bags. For future planning, the National Society and the ICRC carried out an extended joint assessment of needs and reviewed existing capacities at the end of the year.

### Families of missing persons benefit from ICRC expertise

Following the postponement of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's establishment as part of the transitional justice process in Burundi, ICRC plans to provide technical support and forensic expertise to the Burundian authorities in dealing with the issue of missing persons were placed on hold. Nevertheless, the authorities accepted an offer from the ICRC to provide ad hoc forensic expertise in the management of a mass grave found in the path of road construction in Kivyuka, Bubanza province. This offer included assistance in managing human remains, hands-on forensic training of Burundian officials and the drawing up of a national protocol for the administration of such graves. This led to a first forensic assessment of the site concerned.

As the Truth and Reconciliation Commission had not yet been established, no seminars were held to raise awareness of the needs of families of missing persons and the proper handling of human remains.

### PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM

Nearly 11,500 detainees in 32 places of permanent and temporary detention received ICRC visits, conducted in accordance with the organization's standard procedures, to monitor their treatment and living conditions in relation to internationally recognized standards. Around 640 security detainees were individually followed up, with particular attention being paid to vulnerable inmates, such as minors, women and foreigners. Some inmates used RCMs to restore/maintain contact with relatives in Burundi or abroad.

Following such visits, the relevant authorities received confidential feedback and, as necessary, recommendations for improvements. Discussions with the Justice and Public Security Ministries aimed to help improve detainees' treatment and living conditions and respect for their judicial guarantees in places of detention under these ministries' jurisdiction. As a result, the authorities reviewed the files of several hundred detainees, speeding up the judicial process and enabling the release of a number of them, thus helping reduce overcrowding in some places of detention. Moreover, the judiciary departments of Ngozi and Ruyigi prisons improved their management of penal files. Acting on ICRC recommendations, the relevant authorities released some minors under 15 and provided those remaining in detention facilities with separate accommodation, helping reduce alleged harassment.

To help advance the implementation of the 2011–15 justice sector policy, at the invitation of the General Directorate of Penitentiary Affairs, the ICRC co-chaired the working group in charge of conditions of detention, comprising representatives of the authorities concerned and financial and technical partners. At a two-day seminar organized with the directorate and the Belgian development cooperation agency, penitentiary officials and non-governmental stakeholders exchanged best practices and set practical objectives for improving detainees' living conditions and treatment, including respect for their judicial guarantees. This led to the initiation of a three-month coaching/monitoring programme for penitentiary staff, followed by a first round of visits to the country's 11 prisons carried out by a technical team of the directorate.

### Detainees enjoy better health and living conditions

While reminding the relevant authorities of the need to increase the budget for prison services and for the administration of places of temporary detention, the ICRC provided direct support to help improve detainees' health and living conditions. Inmates continued to access quality health care through prison dispensaries, for which the ICRC covered 80% of the costs of basic medicines. Similarly, people held in four places of temporary detention received medical attention in nearby public health centres thanks to donated medicines. With technical, material and financial support, the prison authorities provided health care to 171 detainees through local TB and HIV/AIDS support services.

Some 11,250 detainees in 20 places of detention enhanced their personal hygiene with soap and cleaning materials. They included over 10,600 inmates in 11 prisons who enjoyed a healthier environment as a result of disinfection campaigns and a hygiene-promotion programme carried out with the penitentiary directorate. Some 3,300 detainees in seven places of permanent and temporary detention benefited from improved facilities following the rehabilitation/construction of sanitation and water systems, living quarters, kitchens and/or food stores. Moreover, some detainees received educational and recreational materials, helping enhance their well-being.

### WOUNDED AND SICK

Patients at the Saint Kizito physical rehabilitation centre in Bujumbura enjoyed better quality services following measures implemented with ICRC support within the framework of a multi-year plan of action agreed upon in 2010. Some 2,310 people with disabilities (including 202 women and 1,876 children) benefited from the centre's services, including the provision of orthopaedic devices and mobility aids. Since the centre began providing services for outpatients and implementing treatment protocols and technical guidelines, access to quality treatment for those in need had improved. Disabled people from a wider geographical area gained access to the centre's services thanks to the opening of a dormitory where they could be accommodated, as well as the construction of a cooking and laundry area self-financed by the programme. Within the framework of an agreement signed in July between the centre and the national commission in charge of the reintegration of demobilized armed groups, some 25 demobilized weapon bearers injured during past fighting were fitted with orthoses.

To help the centre boost its capacity to treat disabled patients and improve the quality of care, the centre's prosthetic/orthotic and physiotherapy personnel benefited from on-the-job training and mentoring. Moreover, one student received sponsorship to attend a three-year physiotherapy course in Benin.

To ensure its long-term financial sustainability, the centre created an internal solidarity fund for the cost recovery of services provided to destitute beneficiaries (30% of patients). This and other steps taken to maximize its efficiency led to a positive financial balance within only a few months of their implementation.

### AUTHORITIES

Meetings with the authorities, including the Ministry of External Relations, and regional/international organizations in Burundi aimed to garner support for the Movement and its emblems. They provided opportunities to discuss humanitarian issues of common concern, including those covered by the Health Care in Danger project. In particular, dialogue with the Interior Ministry focused on issues related to missing persons and the management of human remains (see *Civilians*).

During a presentation, members of the secretariat of the International Conference of the Great Lakes Region familiarized themselves with neutral, impartial and independent humanitarian action and exchanged views on this and related topics.

Dialogue with the authorities also served to encourage the ratification of outstanding IHL treaties, such as the African Union Convention on IDPs, Additional Protocol III and the Convention on Cluster Munitions, and the incorporation of their provisions

into domestic law. Drawing on National Society/ICRC input, the Defence, External Relations and Public Security Ministries took steps resulting in Burundi becoming party to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, following its accession to Protocols II and V of this convention. With National Society support, the Ministry of External Relations completed the revision of a law recognizing the Burundi Red Cross's status and protecting the emblem.

### ARMED FORCES AND OTHER BEARERS OF WEAPONS

Contacts with the armed forces aimed to heighten their understanding of humanitarian principles, IHL and the Movement's work.

As part of a joint plan of action agreed upon in 2010, the Defence Ministry continued to benefit from ICRC support in integrating relevant IHL provisions into all aspects of Burundi's military training and operations. The ministry had yet to appoint a team in charge of revising the military doctrine. With respect to training, the ministry and the ICRC assessed the state of IHL instruction and the needs of instructors in all military regions; based on this assessment, they decided to focus teaching programmes on heads of army units and students of the academy of military commanders. In addition, working alongside delegates, ICRC-trained Burundian instructors briefed four Burundian contingents (307 officers, 1,900 soldiers) on basic IHL principles, including the need to respect medical personnel/infrastructure, prior to their deployment with AMISOM. During three dissemination sessions, 68 officers from three military regions learnt more about the ICRC, particularly its work for people deprived of their freedom. A senior Burundian military officer boosted his IHL expertise at the 2012 Senior Workshop on International Rules Governing Military Operations (see *International law and cooperation*).

### RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

With ICRC financial, material and technical support, the Burundi Red Cross strengthened its capacities in the fields of emergency preparedness, family links (see *Civilians*), water and sanitation, and promotion of the Movement's Fundamental Principles. It worked to widen its network of volunteers countrywide as part of its goal to become the main humanitarian actor in Burundi.

Six new emergency response brigades comprising a total of 120 volunteers underwent training and became familiar with the Safer Access approach, bringing to 72 the number of trained emergency response brigades nationwide, staffed with 360 volunteers. After receiving the necessary modules, the National Society conducted such training independently, with 12 instructors training others.

The Burundi Red Cross water and sanitation department monitored activities supported by partner National Societies and designed new projects of its own, initiating three of them. For example, following the emergency rehabilitation of a water facility in a transit camp, over 33,000 Burundian returnees repatriated from Tanzania gained access to clean water.

The training of volunteers in hygiene/sanitation helped increase their capacities to respond to emergencies. For instance, together with the relevant authorities, National Society teams helped vulnerable people (300 households) weather a cholera outbreak by providing them with safe drinking water and hygiene kits. While conducting disinfection campaigns, they organized awareness-raising sessions on cholera prevention.

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National Society teams continued to promote both humanitarian principles and life-saving techniques in schools in rural areas. To this end, over 140 grassroots disseminators underwent training and 34 focal points refreshed their skills at four courses. Through role-play, students learnt more about topics such as child abuse, land conflict and problem-solving attitudes when facing violence at school or within the community.

The National Society regularly reported on its activities through its bilingual website, biannual magazine and weekly radio broadcasts. It also participated in statutory meetings.

Movement partners met regularly to exchange views and coordinate activities.