



# burundi

For 37 years until 1999, the ICRC monitored the situation in Burundi and took action on an ad hoc basis. Since then, it has been continuously present in the country, focusing on helping people to overcome the worst consequences of conflict. It works with the prison authorities to ensure that detainees receive better treatment and have access to health care and safe water. It improves health care for victims of sexual violence and pregnant women and rehabilitates water and sanitation systems for vulnerable groups. It reunites unaccompanied children with their families and restores family links. The ICRC supports training in IHL for the armed and security forces.

⊕ ICRC delegation ⊕ ICRC sub-delegation

## EXPENDITURE (IN CHF ,000)

Protection	1,912
Assistance	5,199
Prevention	836
Cooperation with National Societies	311
General	-

► **8,258**

of which: Overheads 504

## IMPLEMENTATION RATE

Expenditure/yearly budget	<b>89.5%</b>
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## PERSONNEL

<b>22</b> expatriates
<b>137</b> national staff (daily workers not included)

## KEY POINTS

### In 2005, the ICRC:

- ▶ conducted more than 250 visits to over 120 places of detention holding more than 9,700 detainees and contributed to improvements in the treatment and health of inmates;
- ▶ helped separated family members re-establish and maintain contact through the RCM service and reunited unaccompanied children with their families;
- ▶ ensured access to safe water for around 90,000 people in both urban and rural areas;
- ▶ trained traditional birth attendants and community workers active in the prevention of sexual violence and ensured that a number of victims of sexual violence received appropriate care and treatment from existing health facilities;
- ▶ gave instruction in IHL to members of the integrated forces on the basis of agreements reached with the National Defence Force and the National Police;
- ▶ after a countrywide evaluation carried out with the Ministry of Education, adapted the Exploring Humanitarian Law programme.

## CONTEXT

In spite of some outbreaks of violence, Burundi completed its transition period with the first democratic elections since the conflict began in 1993. The constitution was approved by 90% of the electorate in a vote in February, which was followed later in the year by parliamentary and presidential elections. The former armed group, the Conseil National pour la Défense de la Démocratie-Forces pour la Défense de la Démocratie (CNDD-FDD), won a landslide victory in June, and its leader, Pierre Nkurunziza, sole candidate in the presidential elections, was voted in as president in August. Turnout was high, and the polls triggered few violent incidents. The new government began its term in office by launching a number of popular initiatives, such as anti-corruption measures and a drive for free education.

The second part of the year was marred by an escalation of violence between government forces and the last remaining armed group, the National Liberation Forces (FNL). The FNL, led by Agathon Rwaswa, was mainly active in the Bujumbura Rural and Bubanza provinces. Peace moves appeared to be making headway in May, when both sides agreed to begin negotiations on a definitive end to hostilities. The ceasefire, however, was never respected and fighting resumed. Many civilians left their homes to escape looting, incidents of summary justice and levies of local taxes. The hostilities led to a marked increase in the number of arrests of FNL fighters and suspected collaborators.

In November, government forces captured a member of the Democratic Liberation Forces of Rwanda, found in the company of FNL fighters. The incident highlighted possible ties between the region's armed groups. Burundi therefore joined the so-called tripartite agreement concluded by Rwanda, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Uganda with the aim of putting an end to the activities of these armed groups.

The authorities faced other destabilizing factors besides the FNL. A large number of weapons remained in circulation and officials had yet to find a way to enforce a presidential decree calling for the disarmament of the civilian population. Ambushes, theft, armed robbery, murder and rape were commonplace, and the recourse on occasion to popular justice suggested that official law-enforcement structures were not functioning properly.

The United Nations Operation in Burundi, which had been set up in 2004 to support the transition process, announced that, at the request of the newly elected government, it was to scale down its activities in 2006.

## MAIN FIGURES AND INDICATORS

PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)		CIVILIANS AND PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM		
Detainees visited	9,764	<i>Economic security, water and habitat</i>		
Detainees visited and monitored individually	747	Food	Beneficiaries	8,750
Number of visits carried out	256	Agricultural inputs and micro-economic initiatives	Beneficiaries	13,955
Number of places of detention visited	123	Water-supply schemes and sanitation systems (completed projects)	Beneficiaries	90,000
RESTORING FAMILY LINKS				
<i>Red Cross messages (RCMs) and reunifications</i>				
RCMs collected	3,144			
RCMs distributed	3,609			
People reunited with their families	9			
<i>Tracing requests, including cases of missing persons</i>				
People for whom a tracing request was newly registered	233			
Tracing requests closed positively (persons located)	72			
Tracing requests still being handled at 31 December 2005	75			
<i>Unaccompanied minors (UAMs) and separated children (SCs), including unaccompanied demobilized child soldiers</i>				
UAMs/SCs newly registered by the ICRC	31			
UAMs/SCs reunited with their families by the ICRC	9			
UAMs/SCs cases still being handled at 31 December 2005	62			

## ICRC ACTION

The generally improved security situation enabled the ICRC to access most parts of the country, although some constraints remained.

Years of conflict had restricted water supplies, and IDPs and returning refugees had swelled the population in some areas, putting a strain on already overstretched systems. The ICRC therefore worked with urban and rural water authorities to supply thousands of people with safe water. Five rural projects were completed, while two urban and four rural projects were still in progress.

In 2005, no new agricultural projects were launched. Owing to the long-term follow-up needed to make such projects viable, the ICRC chose instead to focus on consolidating existing schemes.

The delegation worked with the National Programme of Reproductive Health to improve health care. The emphasis was on safe childbirth, the care and treatment of victims of sexual violence, and community work aimed at preventing this abuse.

The ICRC kept stocks at the ready in order to provide protection and assistance in the event of a new humanitarian emergency.

With the prospect of peace prompting more refugees to return to Burundi, finding the families of the remaining 230 unaccompanied children in the camps became even more pressing. The ICRC continued to work

to restore and maintain family contacts through the RCM network and, when possible, reunited children with their families. The RCM network was extended to Burundian refugees in Tanzania to enable them to correspond with family members in Burundi.

The ICRC monitored the treatment and living conditions of detainees and worked with the prison administration to improve these where necessary. The delegation coordinated limited assistance programmes for inmates and provided support to the authorities in enhancing prison management.

In a bid to protect civilians from violations of IHL during armed clashes, the ICRC took advantage of the peace to increase knowledge and application of the law by the authorities and the armed forces. It lobbied to have IHL included as a compulsory subject in military training schools. It continued to support the teaching of IHL in universities and to consolidate implementation of the Exploring Humanitarian Law programme in State secondary schools.

The ICRC lent its expertise in the restructuring of the Burundi Red Cross. It also worked with other partners in the Movement to help the National Society respond to emergencies and meet the needs of the most vulnerable members of society.

## CIVILIANS

### Protecting civilians

In areas where clashes occurred, the civilian population continued to be subjected to violations of IHL, allegedly committed by the FNL, the army and the new police force. The ICRC continued to remind them of their obligations under IHL and to monitor their treatment of the civilian population, making representations where necessary.

### Restoring family links

The ICRC continued to offer its RCM service to enable Burundian refugees and other nationals who had taken refuge in Burundi to re-establish contact with their families. Refugees in camps in Tanzania were able to communicate with family members in Burundi for the first time since 1993. In October, following a feasibility study, the RCM service was extended to cover the entire country with the exception of a few areas which were off-limits owing to security concerns.

Refugees from the DRC who had fled to Burundi continued to have access to the RCM service to keep in touch with relatives back home. Small tracing posts were set up in two camps to help volunteers better organize the RCM service and facilitate the follow-up of unaccompanied children. The ICRC coordinated with UNHCR, Germany's State development agency (GTZ) and the national committee for the return and reintegration of IDPs and refugees, the CNRS, to ensure that children being sent home received an assistance package and repatriation documents. In addition, the ICRC

and the International Rescue Committee worked together to monitor the children's reintegration into the community.

The ICRC produced a series of radio broadcasts aimed at helping to identify unaccompanied children who were separated from their families at a young age and were thus unable to give precise details as to their relatives' whereabouts.

- ▶ 3,542 RCMs distributed and 3,092 RCMs collected from civilians
- ▶ 72 people located at their families' request
- ▶ 31 unaccompanied/separated children registered; the cases of 62 unaccompanied/separated children were still being handled at the end of 2005
- ▶ 9 people reunited with their families, including 9 unaccompanied/separated children
- ▶ tracing continues for 75 persons, including for 24 people who were minors at the time of their disappearance

#### **Providing pregnant women and victims of sexual violence with access to care**

The ICRC, in collaboration with the National Programme of Reproductive Health, ran a "women and violence" programme to provide victims of sexual violence in the northern districts of Bujumbura with appropriate medical and psychological care. Medical staff also received training in mother and child health care. The ICRC launched an identical programme in Bururi – a rural region near conflict areas. A manual on caring for victims of sexual violence, developed by the ICRC in cooperation with the Ministry of Health, was distributed to health workers and used as a teaching aid for paramedical courses.

- ▶ 56 traditional birth attendants trained in north Bujumbura, 60 traditional health attendants and 5 health centre workers trained in Bururi province
- ▶ 500 boxes of information cards on the problem of sexual violence printed and distributed

#### **Ensuring clean water for residents and IDPs**

The ICRC, working closely with the Regideso urban water and electricity board, completed a project supplying clean water to 22,000 people in Kayanza and continued with the construction of a drinking-water system in Rumonge which, when completed, would provide more than 15 litres per person per day. In the meantime, the ICRC maintained two temporary facilities supplying 6,000 people. Feasibility studies

for rehabilitation and development projects in Mabanda and Gatumba were conducted.

The ICRC also worked with Burundi's rural water board, the DGHHER, to repair essential infrastructure damaged in the conflict. Five projects were completed in 2005 and four were still in progress at the end of the year. The delegation followed up each project with a training scheme for local committees in charge of maintaining the installations once completed.

- ▶ water systems completed in Busiga, Itaba (supplying a health centre and a 600-pupil school), Rwisabi, Ryansoro and Showe; 75,000 civilians were supplied with clean water

Construction of drinking water systems was under way in Bugendana, Marangara and Buyengero to supply, while inhabitants were set to benefit from a pumping station being built at Mwumba. In total more than 200,000 people will benefit from ongoing water projects.

#### **Economic assistance to residents and IDPs**

The ICRC limited the number of new initiatives in order to focus better on existing schemes after an in-depth assessment revealed that the population lacked the training and infrastructure to ensure the longevity of the ICRC projects launched in 2004 to boost household incomes in Gitega, Kayanza and Ngozi provinces. The only new project begun in 2005 was the renovation of the Burundi Red Cross reception centre for street children in Gitega.

The delegation equipped three mills with motors and provided training and supervision to ensure the facilities would be well maintained. Two mills were handed over to the local authorities and the community began operating the third with no outside assistance. Three seed production centres set up by the ICRC in 2004 and provided with technical and material support throughout 2005 were also able to operate independently by the end of the year.

The ICRC continued to develop two marshland projects initiated in 2004 that had so far increased the surface area of cultivable land in Mwumba and Buraza by 20–25%. An agricultural engineer was hired to give advice on rice farming in Mwumba and the project was turned over to the local community. The ICRC carried out more work on the Buraza marsh and trained farmers in irrigation and maintenance of the reclaimed cropland.

The ICRC maintained an emergency supply of non-food items for 1,000 families for immediate distribution in case fighting resumed.

## **PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM**

### **Ensuring adequate standards of detention**

A number of FNL fighters and members were arrested throughout Burundi in the second half of the year. The ICRC visited and registered these detainees in places of temporary detention and monitored them until they were either released or transferred to prison. When necessary, the delegation made representations to the authorities regarding the living conditions and treatment of detainees both in places of temporary detention and prisons.

Cooperation with the Direction Générale des Affaires Pénitentiaires (DGAP) progressed well. The ICRC financed two events: a coordination meeting attended by all actors in the prison sector and the annual seminar for prison directors.

- ▶ 9,764 people visited, including 711 newly registered and 747 monitored individually (including 13 women and 80 minors) during 256 visits to 123 places of detention
- ▶ 67 RCMs delivered to and 52 collected from detainees

### **Health care for detainees**

The ICRC continued to support health care at Burundi's six largest prisons, holding a total of 7,850 detainees, or 80% of the prison population. The delegation:

- ▶ stocked prison dispensaries with medicines to treat prevalent diseases;
- ▶ held a seminar attended by prison medical staff and directors, mainly to foster coordination between officials responsible for health care in places of detention, but also to discuss the ICRC's plans for its continuing support to prison health programmes;
- ▶ made contact with Burundi's National Council for HIV/AIDS and several local organizations conducting AIDS programmes to make sure detainees were included on their lists of target populations;
- ▶ contacted groups working on disease prevention to arrange for the distribution of mosquito nets to reduce the number of cases of malaria, the most prevalent disease in prisons.

### Improving hygiene in prisons

The ICRC worked to improve hygiene conditions and provide clean water in prisons. To this end, it supplied jerrycans, soap and cleaning materials, plus plastic sheeting for bedding. It also teamed up with the DGAP to conduct a pest-control programme and made recommendations for much-needed repairs.

- 15,000 detainees provided with clean water
- renovation of Rumonge Prison's water supply completed and its kitchen rebuilt
- water delivered to Mpimba Prison, Burundi's largest, in an area of town with frequent water supply problems
- new ovens installed in the kitchens of Rutana and Bururi prisons
- Gitega Prison renovated (toilets installed in cells, guttering repaired and kitchen chimneys provided)
- a monthly soap ration provided to each detainee

### WOUNDED AND SICK

A complete surgical kit to treat 100 war-wounded (including anaesthetic equipment and all the necessary surgical tools) was stored at the delegation in Bujumbura. It could be dispatched to anywhere in the country in a matter of hours. The ICRC could also rush additional supplies from Nairobi at short notice, if necessary.

### AUTHORITIES

The ICRC systematically met representatives of the political authorities at national, provincial and communal levels to keep them informed of humanitarian issues and its operations in Burundi.

### ARMED FORCES AND OTHER BEARERS OF WEAPONS

#### Integration of IHL into the training and doctrine of the armed forces

In March, the chief of general staff of the National Defence Force (FDN) agreed an action plan to train army personnel in IHL during 2005. In addition, the ICRC:

- organized 4 IHL training sessions with the FDN for 80 officers and IHL dissemination sessions for 1,000 army personnel;
- continued to support a team of 5 officers in finalizing the regulations for the armed forces, which included integrating IHL into all levels of military instruction;

- sponsored 3 FDN officers to attend an IHL course in San Remo.

#### Integration of IHL into the training and doctrine of the armed forces

In order to make sure the police and detention authorities understood its mandate, its procedures for visiting detention facilities and IHL, the ICRC:

- held awareness sessions on the ICRC's mandate and detention activities, attended by more than 3,000 officers of the National Police;
- conducted a training module using its *To serve and to protect* pack for 100 commanders of the former police corps enlisted in the National Police;
- ran a ten-day train-the-trainer course for 24 police officers with command responsibilities.

#### Safety guarantees from armed opposition forces

With the exception of the FNL, all members of former armed movements were either demobilized, in the process of being disbanded, or incorporated into the FDN or the National Police. The delegation had discussions with the FNL to obtain the necessary guarantees for ICRC personnel to work safely in Bujumbura Rural province.

### CIVIL SOCIETY

#### Promoting IHL and the ICRC among the media

The ICRC explained its role and the principles of IHL at meetings attended by humanitarian organizations and human rights groups. Frequent media coverage helped raise the public's awareness of the ICRC and reinforced its image as a neutral and impartial organization and the main reference on humanitarian matters and IHL.

#### Teaching of IHL in secondary schools

The ICRC helped monitor the quality of teaching of its Exploring Humanitarian Law (EHL) programme, which was included in the secondary-school curriculum for the 2004–05 academic year.

Teams made up of ICRC and Ministry of Education officials toured four secondary schools in various parts of Burundi. As a result of the visits, the ICRC changed strategy to concentrate on encouraging the teaching of the EHL programme in State schools instead of widening its scope to include private institutions and children

not attending school. Recommendations of the evaluation included raising awareness of the programme among educational authorities, drawing up a specialized teaching guide and the training of additional teachers.

- an information day on EHL attended by 48 education officials
- 22 EHL teaching packs handed out to 18 provincial directors and to 4 regional teaching inspectors

#### Promoting IHL at university level

Five private universities had made IHL a compulsory subject in their law degree, while the University of Burundi had included it as an optional module.

- 2 junior lecturers sponsored to attend the second pan-African course on IHL in Yaoundé, Cameroon (see *Yaoundé*)
- 6 IHL sessions held for 600 students
- IHL library set up in 6 private universities

### RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

The Burundi Red Cross, with the support of the ICRC and the International Federation, had been working towards restructuring and the holding of elections, at first at the local level. This process culminated in a general assembly on 7 and 8 May. To assist the National Society, the ICRC financed radio and television spots, as well as the organization of dissemination sessions. General assembly participants re-elected the president and elected a new national committee and executive board. The ICRC, the International Federation and the German and Spanish Red Cross Societies attended the meeting. A committee in charge of revising the statutes was set up.

Movement partners had been working with the Burundi Red Cross on a strategic plan to develop its skills and activities. The ICRC helped train new staff members and provided financial and technical support for the creation of the National Society's dissemination and disaster-preparedness departments. Also with the support of the Movement, the National Society began some small-scale projects, including the collection and distribution of food for vulnerable families and refresher first-aid courses.