



haiti

The ICRC opened a fully-fledged delegation in Haiti in 2004. It responds to acute humanitarian situations in prisons and supports national authorities in improving respect for judicial guarantees. It seeks to mitigate the effects of social unrest throughout the country and in violence-prone shanty towns in Port-au-Prince. It also supports security forces in integrating human rights norms applicable to the use of force into their doctrine, training and operations. With other Movement partners, the ICRC helps strengthen the emergency response capacity of the National Society.

EXPENDITURE (IN KCHF)

Protection	1,180
Assistance	2,787
Prevention	837
Cooperation with National Societies	495
General	-

► **5,298**

of which: Overheads 323

IMPLEMENTATION RATE

Expenditure/yearly budget	84%
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PERSONNEL

11	expatriates
58	national staff (daily workers not included)

KEY POINTS

In 2009, the ICRC:

- ▶ as part of its efforts to upgrade the living conditions of Haiti's prison population, shared a report with the authorities on the negative effects of prolonged detention without trial
- ▶ stepped up its dialogue with weapon bearers regarding the appropriate use of force in law enforcement and the need to respect civilians and medical services
- ▶ supported the Haitian National Red Cross Society in developing its community-based activities in Cité Soleil and Martissant
- ▶ assisted the water board in supplying water to 207,000 inhabitants of Cité Soleil
- ▶ with its Movement and other partners, worked to enhance coordination of emergency response efforts in case of natural disaster

CONTEXT

In October 2009, Haiti's prime minister, Michèle Pierre-Louis, was ousted by the senate after one year in office and replaced by another member of her government, Jean-Max Bellerive. This led to a ministerial reshuffle. The provisional electoral council was restructured and tasked with organizing legislative elections in February/March 2010.

Haiti was still suffering from the devastating effects of tropical storms in 2008. Despite international efforts, the necessary funds for reconstruction and economic revival were slow to materialize.

The security situation improved as Haitian police backed by the UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) maintained a strong presence in violence-prone shantytowns. However, violent demonstrations against poor social and economic conditions were on the rise.

MAIN FIGURES AND INDICATORS

	Total		Total	Women	Children
PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)		CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)			
Detainees visited	9,363	<i>Economic security, water and habitat</i>			
Detainees visited and monitored individually	316	Water and habitat activities	Beneficiaries	207,000	35%
					32%
		PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM			
		<i>Economic security, water and habitat</i>			
		Essential household items	Beneficiaries	6,960	
		Water and habitat activities	Beneficiaries	4,836	
RESTORING FAMILY LINKS					
<i>Red Cross messages (RCMs) and reunifications</i>					
RCMs collected	4				

ICRC ACTION AND RESULTS

Improving detainees' treatment and living conditions in Haiti's overcrowded prisons remained a major concern, which the ICRC addressed by mobilizing and supporting and, where necessary, substituting the national authorities. Its projects to upgrade water supply and shelter focused on Port-au-Prince's central prison, which held half the country's detainee population. These projects were accompanied by efforts to support the authorities in improving medical and social assistance available to detainees and reforming the judiciary so as to limit protracted preliminary detention, one of the main factors contributing to overcrowding. To this end, the ICRC provided the authorities with a report on the consequences of prolonged detention without trial. It also stepped up contacts with Canadian and other international stakeholders, with whom it shared expertise on detention-related issues.

The ICRC strengthened its confidential dialogue with Haiti's national police. The police authorities were receptive to an ICRC report on arrest and detention practices and recommendations presented to them at the end of the year and expressed their willingness to discuss these matters.

As a matter of priority, the ICRC kept a close eye on the situation and helped the Haitian National Red Cross Society consolidate its presence in the violence-prone Cité Soleil and Martissant neighbourhoods of Port-au-Prince. By intensifying its dialogue with community leaders, weapon bearers and humanitarian and development organizations, the ICRC worked to make the Red Cross and its neutral, impartial and independent approach widely known and accepted. This dialogue also enabled the ICRC to deepen its understanding of the dynamics and trends of the violence and the needs of shantytown residents. Consequently, the ICRC reviewed its strategy, broadening it from supporting the Haitian Red Cross's first-aid and ambulance services in Cité Soleil and Martissant to helping the National Society develop community-based activities from its first-aid posts in the two neighbourhoods. This included training volunteers in popular drama techniques to raise awareness of sexual violence, organizing related events and briefing local health staff on the treatment and referral of victims of sexual violence and on other health issues. In this endeavour, it maintained close cooperation with Médecins du Monde and Médecins Sans Frontières.

The ICRC continued to monitor the use of force by members of the Haitian police and MINUSTAH and to brief them on IHL, international human rights law, the ICRC's mandate and the Fundamental Principles.

The ICRC maintained its assistance to the city water board, thereby ensuring a regular supply of water for Cité Soleil, and contributed to building the capacity of the local water management committee.

To improve Movement response and coordination in case of natural disaster, the ICRC financed two training courses for Haitian Red Cross volunteers on first aid and restoring family links. It participated in drafting a memorandum of understanding defining the responsibilities of the ICRC, the International Federation and other organizations in such situations.

CIVILIANS

Communities alerted to effects of sexual violence and taught ways of helping victims

Although the security situation had significantly improved, the residents of the violence-prone Cité Soleil and Martissant shantytowns continued to face poverty and limited access to basic services. In view of the past violence, the ICRC kept a close eye on developments, strengthened cooperation with the Haitian Red Cross and engaged in dialogue with weapon bearers, including gang members in Martissant, to whom it explained basic humanitarian principles and the Movement's neutral, impartial and independent humanitarian action. It also reinforced its network of contacts within the community and with the national and international NGOs active in the shantytowns, with which it shared information on the situation of vulnerable groups, particularly women and children, who were often targets of crime and sexual violence.

After assessing medical needs in the two neighbourhoods, the ICRC reoriented its approach. Instead of supporting medical facilities, it decided to concentrate on working with the existing network of Red Cross volunteers and traditional birth attendants to address sexual violence and other community health issues in Cité Soleil and Martissant. Consequently, with ICRC technical and financial back-up, the Haitian Red Cross recruited a coordinator to develop community-based activities, organized first-aid refresher training for 40 volunteers and coached another 109 in the use of popular drama techniques to raise awareness of sexual violence and where to get help.

Meanwhile, 130 specially trained volunteers continued to operate the ICRC-supported Haitian Red Cross first-aid and ambulance services in Cité Soleil and Martissant. People with minor injuries were treated at the two first-aid posts, while those requiring further care were transported to medical facilities. Women had better access to care during pregnancy and childbirth at the local hospital in Cité Soleil, where the ICRC built and equipped an emergency room and provided training to 20 traditional community birth attendants.

Red Cross workers, staff of the local hospital and birth attendants were briefed on sexual violence and HIV/AIDS by Médecins du Monde in conjunction with the ICRC, which enabled them to refer victims to the appropriate services for help.

During a visit to Haiti, the ICRC Special Fund for the Disabled donated materials, via the ICRC, to the prosthetic/orthotic centre of the Healing Hands for Haiti Foundation.

► 699 people transferred to hospitals and 3,440 dressings provided

Residents of Cité Soleil have a safe water supply

Residents of Cité Soleil enjoyed a regular supply of drinking water ensured by the city water board and the local water management committee, which strengthened their capacities and recruited new staff with ICRC technical assistance and salary support. This enabled them to maintain the water distribution network (on one occasion with fuel provided by the ICRC to keep a pumping station going), to repair a water reservoir and 24 communal fountains, and to refurbish the building housing the water committee and a National Society first-aid post.

► 207,000 people benefited from water and sanitation projects

Families learn the fate of relatives missing after tropical storms

As every year, the tropical storm season left many people uncertain of the fate of family members. To be able to deal with cases where only remains of the missing relatives could be found, the officer in charge of the National Society family-links service attended human remains management training in Geneva, Switzerland. This in turn enabled some 30 volunteers to be trained locally by the Haitian Red Cross.

A number of civilians used the RCM service to contact family members.

► 4 RCMs collected from civilians

PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM

People detained in prisons and police stations continued to be visited by the ICRC, according to its standard working procedures, to check that their treatment and living conditions conformed to internationally recognized standards. The authorities were informed, in confidence, of the ICRC's findings and recommendations.

As part of their confidential dialogue with the ICRC, Haiti's national police authorities received two reports detailing observations and recommendations regarding arrest and detention-related matters. Dialogue on these topics also started with the six regional police directorates, with which the ICRC shared its observations in working notes. The authorities of Port-au-Prince's central prison were briefed

on humanitarian principles, as were prison guards. The prison's social and legal services discussed the special needs of vulnerable inmates at two round-tables organized by the ICRC. As a result, the prison authorities began to work with the ICRC on improving social services, for example in the form of family visits for detainees.

Overcrowding remained the main problem in Haiti's poorly resourced prisons and was mainly due to the large number of detainees – approximately 80% of the prison population – still awaiting trial. The judiciary and detaining authorities discussed the issue and possible solutions in meetings with the ICRC. To advance these efforts, the authorities were given a report outlining the physical and psychological effects of protracted preliminary detention on inmates of Port-au-Prince's central prison, some of whom had been held without trial since 2004. With the agreement of the authorities, the report was also shared with international stakeholders involved in penitentiary reform, such as UNDP, and with MINUSTAH.

► 9,363 detainees visited, of whom 316 monitored individually (10 women; 119 minors) and 218 newly registered (4 women; 112 minors), during 77 visits to 31 places of detention

Detainees live in healthier surroundings

Inmates of Port-au-Prince's central prison (average detainee population: 4,300) lived in more salubrious conditions thanks to a number of projects carried out by the ICRC. These included the installation of a submersible pump and a better kitchen ventilation system, and the creation of a new space for incoming detainees to have medical consultations. At the end of the year, as part of a series of measures launched to improve conditions in prison cells, detainees were provided with bench beds. With ICRC technical and material support, the prison administration was able to tackle water distribution and disposal problems through emergency water-trucking and wastewater evacuation.

Detainees held in the Gonaïves and Petit-Goâve police stations also benefited from water and habitat improvements. These included the addition of a centrifugal pump and the refurbishment of latrines and shower facilities in Gonaïves, and improvements to the water supply and disposal systems and installation of a new kitchen in Petit-Goâve.

To reduce health risks stemming from poor hygiene resulting from overcrowding, more than 13,000 detainees in 17 places of detention were given personal hygiene and cleaning products. They also received recreational and writing materials.

Detainees suffering from tuberculosis (TB), HIV/AIDS and other transmissible diseases had hopes of better access to health care as prison authorities began to tackle these health problems at both the national and individual prison levels, with the ICRC's encouragement and technical support. In Port-au-Prince's central prison, the authorities recruited 23 nurses and doctors in October, in addition to the 7 health staff already hired and salaried by the ICRC. The newly recruited health workers received technical coaching from the ICRC, while the penitentiary medical department benefited from expertise provided by the ICRC during regular meetings. The Ministries of Health and Justice concerted their efforts, signing a protocol paving the way for a pilot project to address TB and HIV/AIDS in Port-au-Prince's central prison. Detainees had access to consultations and treatment at the prison dispensary, or were hospitalized if necessary, and diagnosis was improved through the use of

laboratory exams. More than 6,000 consultations and over 1,300 laboratory exams were carried out. The national TB programme decided to include the prison population in its five-year action plan and budget, partly owing to the ICRC's persistent awareness-raising efforts. The ICRC also fostered contact with international stakeholders working to improve conditions in Haiti's prisons. For example, the Canadian Stabilization and Reconstruction Task Force took on board recommendations regarding a prison-building project.

- ▶ 4,836 detainees benefited from water/sanitation/habitat projects in Port-au-Prince's central prison and 2 police stations
- ▶ 6,960 detainees received hygiene kits and recreational materials

WOUNDED AND SICK

Wounded and sick people in Cité Soleil and Martissant benefited from better access to health care thanks to the services provided by the National Society, with ICRC support (see *Civilians*).

AUTHORITIES

National authorities and representatives of the international community were encouraged to support reform of the penitentiary system, particularly in terms of health care and living conditions (see *People deprived of their freedom*). Their attention was drawn to residents' needs in the shantytowns, where the ICRC sought to coordinate Red Cross activities with those of other organizations.

With political circles focusing on senate elections and other issues, IHL implementation was not a priority for Haiti's parliament.

ARMED FORCES AND OTHER BEARERS OF WEAPONS

Haiti's police, backed by MINUSTAH, were involved in crime-fighting and operations to restore public order. They continued to be briefed by the ICRC on the activities of the Movement, international human rights norms, the appropriate use of force in policing, and humanitarian principles. MINUSTAH units that had expressed an interest attended a special presentation on IHL.

Some 700 cadets of Port-au-Prince's police academy were informed about ICRC protection activities. Police from a newly opened commissariat in Cité Soleil were briefed on the ICRC's work for detainees and the organization's standard procedures for visits.

Armed gangs in Martissant were engaged in continuous dialogue by the ICRC, which facilitated obtaining safety assurances for the ambulance service operated by Haitian Red Cross volunteers in the neighbourhood.

CIVIL SOCIETY

Haitian artists played an increasing role in campaigning against violence. Some began to cooperate with the ICRC on promoting humanitarian principles. This resulted in the production of 2,000 copies of a music album titled "Limanite an premye" (Humanity First), songs from which were to be broadcast to a wide audience via the media. The same artists played at a concert to mark the launch of the "Our world. Your move." communication campaign, to which national and international organizations working in Cité Soleil and Martissant also contributed material. The campaign afforded international journalists based in Haiti a deeper insight into the plight of victims of the violent recent past of Port-au-Prince's shantytowns and the devastating damage inflicted by tropical storms.

The law faculty of Haiti State University maintained contact with the ICRC with a view to integrating IHL into its syllabus, once current reforms had been completed.

RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

The Haitian Red Cross continued to enjoy a positive image among the population, partly thanks to its ambulance services in Cité Soleil and Martissant (see *Civilians*). It was encouraged to start work on emblem legislation.

Ahead of the tropical storm season, Movement partners worked with the National Society to strengthen its emergency response capacities. In high-risk areas, 360 volunteers were coached in first aid and restoring family links during two ICRC training courses and equipped with ICRC financial support. The Haitian Red Cross set up contingency stocks of essential household items with the support of the International Federation and the ICRC. Movement partners drafted a memorandum of understanding aimed at enhancing coordination among them and with other organizations, particularly UNHCR, in case of natural disaster.