



guinea

The ICRC has worked in Guinea since 1970 and opened its operational delegation in Conakry in 2001. Since then, the ICRC has been extensively involved in protection activities, particularly restoring family links, visiting detainees and advising the penal authorities. At the same time, it promotes IHL among the armed and security forces, political authorities, the media and the public. It works with the Red Cross Society of Guinea to strengthen its capacities to respond to emergencies and restore family links.

⊕ ICRC delegation ⊕ ICRC sub-delegation

EXPENDITURE (IN KCHF)

Protection	3,873
Assistance	1,075
Prevention	1,250
Cooperation with National Societies	1,598
General	-

▶ **7,795**

of which: Overheads 476

IMPLEMENTATION RATE

Expenditure/yearly budget	91%
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PERSONNEL

25 expatriates
148 national staff (daily workers not included)

KEY POINTS

In 2006, the ICRC:

- ▶ monitored 165 detainees individually during 103 visits to 38 prisons and continued negotiations on access to security detainees held in other locations; provided ad hoc emergency assistance to address malnutrition among prison inmates and completed water and sanitation projects in 14 prisons;
- ▶ completed the rehabilitation of the Yalenzu water treatment plant;
- ▶ organized the 2nd IHL moot court competition for participants from Guinea's 3 main universities;
- ▶ continued cooperation activities with the National Society, including providing it with material support and training, helping it assist casualties of social unrest and supporting the construction of its national headquarters;
- ▶ supported a campaign by the Security Ministry's IHL and Human Rights Bureau during which 1,200 security force members were trained in IHL and relevant human rights principles.

CONTEXT

Guinea's economy remained grim. The job market and the public service sector continued to perform dismally. Inflation stayed very high, while shortages of basic commodities persisted and fuel costs surged, driving up prices of basic goods and essential services. All this, compounded by inadequate salary adjustments, only impoverished the population further.

Guineans responded by staging massive protests and general strikes demanding price reductions and improved infrastructure and public services. The strikes were organized by two major trade unions in February–March and June. The demonstrations turned violent as the year wore on, resulting in heavy casualties, material damage and arrests, particularly in Conakry and other urban centres. The social unrest looked set to continue as the unions announced a "final" strike for early 2007.

Concerns about President Lansana Conté's health and the issue of his succession intensified. Political tensions rose, culminating in April in the sacking of the prime minister – largely seen as the driving force behind reforms – and his inner circle, and the reshuffling of key government posts. This did not ease the tensions, however, as the political elite jockeyed for position with President Conté's succession in mind.

Major donor countries and the European Union (EU) pledged humanitarian and development aid, albeit linked to reforms, which in 2006 included improved political dialogue between the government and the opposition and liberalization of the air waves. Despite the Guinean authorities' annual meeting with the Bretton Woods institutions in Washington, no funds were disbursed or pledged to Guinea, nor did the country qualify for debt relief. However, the signing by the EU of the 9th European Development Fund in December was a major breakthrough, with a large proportion of the funds allocated to the repair of major roadways in Guinea.

Guinea and Sierra Leone continued to seek a diplomatic solution to the lingering dispute over Guinean forces' occupation of Yenga and more recent infringements of Sierra Leonean territory by Guinean troops.

While the outbreak of yellow fever in Guinea's maritime region was brought under control, meningitis in Haute Guinée and cholera in Guinée Forestière and Conakry claimed a number of lives.

MAIN FIGURES AND INDICATORS

PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)		CIVILIANS AND PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM		
Detainees visited	2,550	<i>Economic security, water and habitat</i>		
Detainees visited and monitored individually	165	Water supply schemes and sanitation systems (completed projects)	Beneficiaries	10,000
Number of visits carried out	103	Habitat structures	Beneficiaries	4,134
Number of places of detention visited	38			
RESTORING FAMILY LINKS				
<i>Red Cross messages (RCMs) and reunifications</i>				
RCMs collected	2,454			
RCMs distributed	2,916			
People reunited with their families	42			
<i>Tracing requests, including cases of missing persons</i>				
People for whom a tracing request was newly registered	13			
Tracing requests closed positively (persons located)	45			
Tracing requests still being handled at 31 December 2006	57			
<i>Unaccompanied minors (UAMs) and separated children (SCs), including unaccompanied demobilized child soldiers</i>				
UAMs/SCs newly registered by the ICRC	14			
UAMs/SCs reunited with their families by the ICRC	41			
UAMs/SCs cases still being handled at 31 December 2006	104			
DOCUMENTS ISSUED				
People to whom travel documents were issued	32			

ICRC ACTION

By late 2006, a significant number of Liberian refugees, notably in the Kissidougou region, had returned to Liberia. The ICRC carried on trying to trace the families of Liberian and Sierra Leonean children still separated from their families. The emphasis was on finding durable solutions for children whose families had not been located despite years of tracing efforts. With the arrival of its child protection adviser for the sub-region, the ICRC's capacity to address other child protection issues was enhanced. For instance, former child soldiers received better support in integrating into local communities. The ICRC coordinated its activities with other organizations involved in child protection in the sub-region.

With the closure of refugee camps in the Kissidougou area and the sharp drop in the number of children separated from their families needing family-links services, the ICRC closed its sub-delegation in Kissidougou, transferring responsibility for this region to the delegation in Conakry. In April, the sub-delegation in Kankan was also closed.

Prisoners under the authority of the Justice Ministry and in a number of temporary detention centres continued to receive ICRC visits. Detainees were assisted through several emergency nutritional programmes implemented to alleviate the problem of chronically inadequate food and health care in certain prisons. Following an assessment

of its detention programme, the ICRC scaled down its planned prison visits in 2007–08. This was to encourage the national penitentiary authorities to assume their rightful role in bringing prison conditions and the treatment of detainees in line with internationally recognized standards. The ICRC also increased its contacts with local partners working in prisons to help intensify their efforts.

Individuals arrested during demonstrations were visited and closely monitored. However, sustained efforts to obtain access to security detainees not under the authority of the Justice Ministry were fruitless in spite of an agreement signed with the government in 1999 granting the ICRC unfettered access to all detainees.

In light of the improved situation along Guinea's southern and eastern borders, the ICRC phased out its remaining assistance programmes, with the authorities assuming the running of the newly rehabilitated Yalenzou water treatment plant. The completed renovation significantly increased the water supply to the 300,000 people in N'Zérékoré. The ICRC duly informed the authorities and development agencies of the programme's conclusion.

The ICRC transferred part of its contingency stock, previously maintained in Guinea, to bolster its emergency response operations on the border between Senegal and Guinea-Bissau. Local medical and social institutions received part of the

contingency stock previously maintained in Kissidougou, while the rest was transferred to N'Zérékoré.

The national authorities, military and security forces, students, the media and traditional and religious leaders remained crucial partners of and audiences for the ICRC in its efforts to promote IHL and the Movement.

The Red Cross Society of Guinea, the International Federation and the ICRC met regularly to coordinate their activities. Continued cooperation between the National Society and the ICRC enabled the former to construct its national headquarters and enhance its operational and emergency response capacities. The ICRC strengthened the National Society's response capacity by installing a VHF radio network linking the six first-aid posts in Conakry.

CIVILIANS

With the situation in the border region calming down, civilians' main problems were linked to the economy and development. Accordingly, the ICRC no longer planned to monitor the population's security situation.

The positive political developments in Sierra Leone and Liberia removed the need to identify vulnerable villages in the Guinée Forestière region bordering the two countries. Moreover, since the situation in Guinea and the border region no longer called for relief support to civilians, there

was no further need for the contingency stocks of essential household supplies pre-positioned in Guinea for 20,000 people. The ICRC therefore transferred 1,000 tarpaulins and 600 kitchen sets to its Dakar regional delegation for its operation in Guinea-Bissau and the Casamance region of Senegal, along with three vehicles.

With political stability taking hold in the sub-region, most refugees were returning home gradually or establishing new communication patterns, thereby reducing their reliance on the tracing and RCM network. Even so, the overall population of about 50,000 refugees still in Guinea continued to depend on the network to stay in touch with their families. Refugees in camps were provided with these services by the ICRC, while the Guinean Red Cross cooperated with the ICRC to ensure that refugees living outside the camps had access to similar services.

The welfare of children affected by conflict remained a focus of ICRC activities. The creation of the new position of regional child protection adviser was in line with the organization's efforts to streamline its response to the plight of children affected by conflicts in the sub-region and to enhance cooperation with the authorities and other agencies active in this field. The result was that girls and children formerly associated with fighting forces received individual follow-up and counselling.

The ICRC assessed individually the situation of people it had registered, and often approached other organizations better placed to provide them with specialized assistance. This made it possible for refugees being repatriated by the ICRC to receive assistance packages ordinarily reserved for Liberian refugees being transported home by UNHCR.

Coordination with other organizations offering specialized support to refugees was an important aspect of assistance to civilians. The ICRC made a point of being present at the departure of UNHCR repatriation convoys. This enabled 59 potentially vulnerable people who had opted to be repatriated to Liberia and 8 to Sierra Leone to be registered and their well-being monitored by the ICRC after they had arrived in their home countries.

- ▶ 2,206 RCMs collected from and 2,769 RCMs distributed to civilians, including 187 from and 243 to unaccompanied/separated children

- ▶ new tracing requests registered for 13 people (7 females, 7 minors at the time of disappearance); 45 people located; 57 people (31 females, 32 minors at the time of disappearance) still being sought
- ▶ 42 people reunited with their families, including 35 unaccompanied/separated children and 6 demobilized children reunited with their families mainly in Sierra Leone and Liberia
- ▶ 14 unaccompanied/separated children (including 1 demobilized child) registered; 104 cases of such children (including 3 demobilized children) still being handled
- ▶ 32 people issued with ICRC travel documents

Improving access to water and sanitation

With the production capacity of the Yalenzu water treatment plant considerably increased once rehabilitation work was completed at the end of 2006, 280,000 inhabitants were assured of a minimum of 5 litres of water per person per day.

Red Cross volunteers received training in the use of emergency water kits, which had the capacity to supply water to 10,000 people for three months in the event of an influx of IDPs or refugees.

In Guinée Forestière, along the border with Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia and Sierra Leone, the water committees, created during previous ICRC rural projects, had started receiving training to improve the management and hygiene of 82 water points. Approximately 72,000 people relied on these water points for their water supply.

PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM

Supporting the authorities in improving detainee treatment and detention conditions

The ICRC continued visits to places of detention under the jurisdiction of the Ministries of Justice and Security to assess inmates' conditions of detention and treatment. It made oral and written representations to the authorities concerned, notably with regard to the food situation, the treatment of detainees and respect for basic judicial guarantees. It also made repeated calls on the authorities to grant it access to detainees held for reasons of State security.

In September, the Justice Ministry convened a national seminar focusing primarily on

detention, a signal of its intention to reform the justice system. The seminar, attended by the judicial and penitentiary authorities from Guinea's 34 prefectures, made recommendations stressing the need to respect national legislation on arrest, investigation and pre-trial detention. The prevailing poor prison conditions also came up for discussion, and pledges were made to improve them.

Following mid-year assessments of the food situation in 4 of the country's 34 main prisons carried out with the national prison administration, emergency nutritional programmes were set up and implemented by prison medical officers. An in-depth assessment of malnutrition at the central prison in Conakry was also carried out by the ICRC in June–July on behalf of the authorities. These actions contributed to: identifying the root causes of malnutrition in prisons; a better understanding of the structural and functional causes of the phenomenon and possible solutions, such as facilitating family visits; the running of nutritional programmes; and coordination with other relevant ministries.

The Ministries of Public Health and Justice received material support from the ICRC to organize a three-day seminar aimed at involving all prison medical personnel in: assessing health problems in prisons; drafting their job descriptions; designing basic plans of action concerning the referral system; and setting up an early warning system in prisons. The two ministries continued to receive ICRC support in the drafting of guidelines on medical care in prisons, including reporting tools. This was expected to enhance coordination between the ministries and help motivate prison medical personnel.

The prison administration received a vehicle to help it step up visits to the 34 main prisons in order to monitor conditions there more regularly. The local authorities were given ICRC support for a variety of initiatives, including organizing round-tables on detention to share experiences and promote pragmatic solutions to identified problems.

Safeguarding detainee welfare

In all, 16 shelter, water and sanitation projects were implemented in 14 prisons (4,134 detainees) in 2006. The projects mainly involved constructing or repairing kitchens, toilets, septic tanks, cells and roofs and improving water supply by drilling boreholes equipped with hand pumps in three prisons, constructing rainwater collection systems in three prisons and connecting eight prisons to urban water supply networks.

Personal and collective hygiene in prisons improved in regions served by the water and sanitation projects as evidenced by the reduction in the reported incidence of scabies and the absence of cholera outbreaks in prisons in 2006, despite a number of such outbreaks among the general population in urban areas during the year.

- 2,550 detainees visited, 165 monitored individually (4 females, 7 minors), including 44 newly registered ones (1 female, 5 minors), during 103 visits to 38 places of detention under the Ministries of Justice and of Security and the *gendarmerie*
- 248 RCMs collected from and 147 RCMs distributed to vulnerable detainees
- 178 detainees suffering from severe malnutrition in 6 prisons received food aid
- detainees provided with training in basic hygiene and material assistance (wheelbarrows, buckets, water containers, brooms, plastic mats, blankets, hoes, shovels, gloves, boots, soap, cleaning products and recreational items) by the ICRC together with the authorities and local partners

WOUNDED AND SICK

A contingency stock of medical supplies for the treatment and hospitalization of 100 wounded people and the treatment of 500 people with minor wounds was maintained.

The Donka Teaching Hospital received a first-aid kit for the treatment of 50 wounded following the strike in June.

During the demonstrations in Fria, 30 civilians and weapon bearers received first aid from the Guinean Red Cross and the ICRC, which transferred some casualties to medical facilities, mostly the Hôpital Préfectoral, which had received some first-aid material from the ICRC.

AUTHORITIES

The Guinean government was assisted in its efforts to incorporate IHL into domestic legislation and ratify IHL treaties through the ICRC's renewed support for the creation of a national IHL committee.

The national, regional and local authorities, foreign government representatives and

UN agencies continued to receive information and briefings on the ICRC's mandate and activities.

ARMED FORCES AND OTHER BEARERS OF WEAPONS

Some 2,350 soldiers, officers and elite troops attended information sessions on IHL and the ICRC's mandate and activities. The sessions covered topics including ICRC operational needs, notably access to detainees under the authority of the Ministries of Defence and Security.

The army's IHL Bureau made progress in producing its own *Soldier's Handbook*.

The Security Ministry conducted sessions on human rights and humanitarian principles for police and security forces. Its IHL and Human Rights Bureau conducted a countrywide campaign to familiarize police officers with IHL and human rights.

- 2 army officers participated in an IHL course in San Remo

CIVIL SOCIETY

Hundreds of people countrywide, in particular traditional, religious and community leaders, were familiarized with IHL, the ICRC, its mandate and activities. The media reported widely on ICRC activities in Guinea.

Representatives of academic circles and the ICRC organized the 2nd national IHL moot court competition, attracting 150 participants from Guinea's 3 main universities. Kankan University integrated IHL into its curriculum.

- 2 university lecturers attended a regional IHL course in Burkina Faso

RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

Strengthening the National Society's capacities

The Guinean Red Cross received substantial technical, material and financial support from the ICRC, its principal partner, to strengthen its capacity to respond to emergencies, restore family links and promote the Fundamental Principles. The National Society also built and inaugurated its national headquarters with ICRC support. The construction of a regional

headquarters in Guinée Forestière brought to nine the number of regional headquarters built with ICRC support in conflict-prone areas since 2002.

Throughout the year, the National Society responded efficiently to emergency situations. During the various demonstrations and strikes, it promptly deployed first-aid volunteers to assist wounded civilians, in coordination with State medical services. The public, authorities and armed and security forces all accepted the work of the National Society and the ICRC during the civil unrest and facilitated their access to civilians in need of assistance. The National Society's contingency plan was updated.

- some 100 people wounded during unrest treated and evacuated to Labé, N'Zérékoré or Conakry
- the Guinean Red Cross's communication network strengthened through the supply of new radio equipment and the training of 1,040 volunteers in first aid and the Safer Access approach
- the National Society's president attended the regional tracing conference in November, in Nairobi, Kenya
- 1,033 volunteers supported national tracing activities, including collecting and distributing RCMs, monitoring 46 children separated from their families and actively supporting the ICRC's tracing poster campaigns
- 188 volunteers trained as trainers in humanitarian values
- activities organized countrywide to mark World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day on 8 May and choose the best first-aid brigades (6 brigades selected)
- 425 primary and secondary school teachers trained in humanitarian values and the Fundamental Principles and 250 parents and pupils attended 2 sessions on the Red Cross and young people as part of the Red Cross youth programme
- National Society staff participated in sessions on IHL/human rights law organized by the ICRC throughout the country for the Islamic League

Guinean Red Cross volunteers reported 361 cases of misuse of the red cross emblem throughout the country. They presented their recommendations to the multisectoral committee whose task was to combat misuse of the emblem. The committee organized seven regional meetings on the issue, funded by the ICRC.

Coordination within the Movement

The International Federation and the ICRC closely coordinated support to the Guinean Red Cross's organizational development. The focus was on enhancing the National Society's financial management and familiarizing its staff with its statutes.

The national capacity of the Guinean Red Cross was assessed as part of its strategic development plan for 2007–10, launched by the International Federation with the ICRC's active involvement.

- ▶ 38 local branch leaders attended 4 ICRC-funded workshops on the National Society's statutes and rules of procedure
- ▶ 2 Guinean Red Cross representatives attended the 29th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent