



⊕ ICRC delegation ⊕ ICRC-supported prosthetic/orthotic centre

yemen

In Yemen, the ICRC carries out activities for detainees, including vulnerable groups such as women and the mentally ill. In cooperation with the Yemen Red Crescent Society, it spreads knowledge of IHL and the Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement among a range of audiences. In particular, it supports the national IHL committee and promotes the incorporation of IHL into school and university curricula and into the training programmes of the armed and police forces. Supporting the care of the physically disabled and restoring links between family members separated by conflict or detention are other key activities. The ICRC has been working in Yemen since the outbreak of the civil war in 1962.

EXPENDITURE IN CHF

Protection

346,894

Assistance

780,164

Preventive action

614,139

Cooperation with National Societies

343,618

General

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▶ **2,084,816**

of which: Overheads **127,242**

PERSONNEL

4 expatriates

15 national staff

KEY POINTS IN 2004

- ▶ The ICRC's tracing and RCM service helped restore contact between Yemeni families and relatives deprived of their freedom abroad and between mainly African refugees and family members in their home countries.
- ▶ ICRC travel documents facilitated the resettlement of refugees in third countries or their family reunification; certificates of detention were issued to former detainees and prisoners of war seeking refugee status in Yemen and to Yemeni nationals imprisoned during the country's 1994 civil war.
- ▶ The ICRC extended its medical care and vocational training for women detainees from three to five central prisons; an assistance programme for mentally ill detainees was handed over to the health authorities.
- ▶ ICRC expertise helped to upgrade the skills of technicians at two physical rehabilitation centres using ICRC technology and materials to produce artificial limbs and other orthopaedic appliances for the disabled.
- ▶ Material and technical support and training strengthened the operational capacity of the National Society and its ability to promote IHL.
- ▶ ICRC relief supplies were distributed by the Yemeni Red Crescent to families displaced by the fighting in north Yemen.

CONTEXT

In 2004 Yemen continued on its course to modernize its economic, social and health structures. The authorities also pursued efforts to contain Islamic militancy, including promoting dialogue with radical Islamic groups. In April the government declared that 90% of the al-Qaeda network in the country had been dismantled.

Six militants suspected of involvement in the bombing of the *USS Cole* in 2000 were brought to trial in July and convicted in September. Another 15 men began prison sentences in August after being convicted of criminal offences, including the bombing of a French oil tanker in 2002, a series of bomb explosions in Sana'a, planned attacks on Western embassies and a plot to kill the US ambassador in Yemen.

In June the Yemeni armed forces were deployed in force in the northern region of Saada to arrest a tribal and religious leader accused of forming an extremist movement and spreading inflammatory anti-government and anti-Western propaganda. After weeks of intense fighting that left hundreds of dead and wounded and many families displaced, the government announced in September that the rebel leader had been killed.

Yemen and Saudi Arabia settled a dispute over a security barrier that the Saudis had started to build to prevent the alleged flow of militants and weapons into Saudi Arabia. Both countries agreed to reinforce border controls after Saudi Arabia accepted Yemeni demands to dismantle the barrier.

A steady flow of refugees fleeing conflict, mostly from Somalia and other countries in the Horn of Africa, continued to enter Yemen which remained host to the Arabian Peninsula's largest non-Palestinian refugee population.

ICRC ACTION

Although the ICRC was unable to gain access to the conflict zone in the Saada region of north Yemen during the most intensive phase of the hostilities (June–September), it managed to distribute limited emergency relief to families displaced by the fighting through the Yemeni Red Crescent.

The ICRC pursued a dialogue with the authorities aimed at gaining regular access to all places of detention in Yemen, including to persons held by the Political Security department in connection with activities perceived as endangering State security.

Medical care and vocational training was arranged for women detainees and the ICRC sponsored specialized care in the psychiatric sections of three central prisons. The programme, designed to break the isolation of women detainees and to enhance their prospects for social re-insertion upon release, was extended to two more central prisons.

ICRC tracing and Red Cross message (RCM) services enabled families in Yemen to restore contact with relatives detained/interned abroad and helped refugees in Yemen to locate family members in conflict-affected countries, mainly in the Horn of Africa. Travel documents were issued to assist the resettlement of refugees in third countries, and certificates of detention were provided to former detainees of various nationalities seeking refugee status in Yemen.

Ongoing training by ICRC ortho-prosthetists helped to upgrade the skills of technicians at two physical rehabilitation centres using ICRC technology and materials to produce artificial limbs and other orthopaedic appliances for the disabled.

The ICRC took steps to accelerate the integration of international humanitarian law (IHL) into national legislation, the education system and the training programmes of the Yemeni armed forces.

The ICRC also provided material and technical support and training to develop the operational capacity of the National Society and its ability to promote international humanitarian law (IHL).

CIVILIANS

The ICRC offered its services to help meet the needs of the civilian population affected by the armed conflict that intensified

sharply in the Saada region of north Yemen in June. In September the Yemeni Red Crescent was able to enter the conflict zone for the first time since the escalation of the fighting there. The National Society distributed essential household items supplied by the ICRC to displaced families. Later, in mid-December, the ICRC and the Yemeni Red Crescent carried out joint field missions to the region to assess potential needs.

Refugees in Yemen, mainly from countries in the Horn of Africa, were able to restore and maintain contact with family members in their home countries through the RCM service. Most of the refugees concerned were located in community centres in Sana'a and Al-Mukalla and at the UNHCR refugee camp in Kharaz (Aden). Persons without valid identification papers were issued with ICRC travel documents to facilitate resettlement in third countries or family reunification. Certificates of detention were obtained from ICRC delegations abroad for former detainees seeking refugee status in Yemen, and were also issued to Yemeni nationals who had previously been imprisoned during Yemen's internal conflict.

- ▶ some 200 families displaced by the hostilities in northern Yemen received essential household items

PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM

As a priority, the ICRC pursued discussions with the Yemeni detaining authorities with a view to regaining regular access to all places of detention in the country in accordance with its standard procedures.

Two ad hoc visits were made to a Yemeni national detained by the Political Security department following his repatriation under ICRC auspices from Iraq where he had been held as a prisoner of war. In July the ICRC conducted another ad hoc visit to a former internee of the Guantanamo Bay Naval Station detained by the Political Security department after his release from US custody.

The ICRC's assistance programme for women detainees in the three central prisons of Hodeida, Dhamar and Al-Mahwit was extended to the central prisons of Amran and Aden. Initiated in 2001 and run in conjunction with the Yemeni Red Crescent, the programme continued to provide women detainees with vocational training in the form of literacy and sewing courses, as well as improved medical care for them and

their children. Hygiene products were supplied to the five prisons benefiting from this programme.

Financial support and training were also maintained for a programme to provide suitable care and acceptable conditions of detention for inmates of the psychiatric sections of three central prisons. Red Crescent volunteers involved in the programme received specialized training in psychiatric care through courses sponsored by the ICRC, in cooperation with the Yemeni Mental Health Association, the Amin Nasher Institute for Health Science and the Salam Psychiatric Hospital. Responsibility for this programme was handed over to the health authorities at the end of April.

Families in Yemen were able to restore and maintain contact with relatives interned/detained abroad through the RCM network. In addition, parcels from families in Yemen were sent to their loved ones held in Iraq.

WOUNDED AND SICK

On-the-job training by two ICRC ortho-prosthetists helped to upgrade the skills of technicians at the physical rehabilitation centres in Sana'a and Al-Mukalla. As part of the training programme, the ICRC also sponsored the participation of two local technicians in a 30-month course on prosthetics and orthotics in Bangalore, India.

The Yemeni president and minister of health visited the Sana'a centre in July and expressed their gratitude to the ICRC for its support for efforts to provide artificial-limb fittings for amputees in the country.

- ▶ 363 prostheses and 1,469 orthoses produced at two ICRC-assisted physical rehabilitation centres

AUTHORITIES

Together with the Supreme Institute of Justice, the ICRC held a workshop on IHL for judges and public prosecutors as part of ongoing activities to promote greater knowledge and understanding of IHL and speed up its incorporation into national legislation. Another workshop on IHL, organized jointly with Yemen's parliamentary commission on constitutional and legal affairs, was held for members of parliament. The 1998 Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court was a promi-

ment topic in both workshops. A draft law to adopt its provisions was still being debated by parliament. Parliament approved a draft law on the prohibition of the use, stockpiling, production, and transfer of anti-personnel mines.

Two members of the national IHL committee participated in the third meeting of Arab government experts on IHL implementation mechanisms in February (see *Egypt*).

- 44 judges and public prosecutors attended a workshop on IHL
- a workshop on IHL held for members of parliament

ARMED FORCES AND OTHER BEARERS OF WEAPONS

The ICRC continued to promote the sustainability of IHL training programmes for the armed forces, which over the years have become increasingly autonomous.

Excerpts from the ICRC reference manual on the law of armed conflict entitled *Fight it Right* were published in the monthly armed forces magazine *Al-Jaish* distributed free of charge to Yemeni armed forces personnel and Yemeni embassies worldwide. ICRC publications on IHL-related issues were also provided to the government's Moral Guidance Department.

CIVIL SOCIETY

The ICRC developed contacts with the Yemeni media and academic circles to spread knowledge and understanding of the provisions of IHL applicable in armed conflicts and other situations of violence.

Progress was made towards the integration of the ICRC's Exploring Humanitarian Law programme into secondary-school curricula. The programme, intended to familiarize young people with the basic principles of IHL, was piloted in 16 schools in Yemen's main cities and was conducted by 32 teachers previously trained in the programme by the ICRC. In October a further 16 secondary-school teachers were trained in the subject.

Towards the end of the year the Ministry of Education forwarded a formal instruction to the pilot schools in the eight governorates concerned to continue teaching the Exploring Humanitarian Law programme during the 2004–05 academic year. Schools in sev-

eral other regions were also expected to join the programme during the academic year.

Officials from the Ministry of Education participated in the third regional meeting on the implementation of Exploring Humanitarian Law in Cairo in November (see *Egypt*).

The ICRC delegation in Yemen held a seminar on IHL, the Movement and the ICRC for a group of mainly women journalists, organized in conjunction with the Yemeni NGO Women's Development Centre for Culture against Violence.

NATIONAL SOCIETY

In September the Yemen Red Crescent Society distributed supplies donated by the ICRC, including mattresses, blankets and kitchen equipment, to some 200 families displaced by the armed conflict in the Saada region.

The ICRC and the Yemeni Red Crescent conducted a field mission to the Saada region in mid-December to identify the most urgent needs. They visited many villages in the areas of Majazeen, Al-Jamima, Khamis Marran and Razeah and collected information on the effects of the hostilities on the civilian population and their most pressing needs.

The National Society continued to be actively involved in relaying RCMs between people in Yemen and family members deprived of their freedom abroad, and between refugees and relatives in their home countries, mostly in the Horn of Africa. National Society volunteers were also trained in restoring family links.

In November the ICRC took part in a disaster management training camp organized by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and the Yemeni Red Crescent.

The ICRC and the Yemeni Red Crescent continued to work together to provide vocational training for women detainees and better care for detainees suffering psychiatric problems (see *People deprived of their freedom*). In order to promote the sustainability of the programme for mentally ill detainees after it was handed over to the health authorities, the ICRC sponsored the participation of 21 Red Crescent volunteers in a one-year nursing course at the national health institute to qualify them for psychiatric care work in central prisons.

IHL training materials were provided to the National Society and a workshop was held in July to familiarize its staff with a new ICRC dissemination kit for use in the branches. ICRC-trained Red Crescent volunteers ran several dissemination sessions for a range of audiences, including many students, in various governorates.

The ICRC donated 30 medical kits to the Yemeni Red Crescent, and further stocks were ordered for distribution to National Society branches. It also continued to provide ad hoc financial and technical support to enable the National Society's headquarters and branch offices to produce activity reports.