



Congo, democratic republic of the

The ICRC opened a permanent delegation in Zaire, now the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in 1978. It promotes respect for the basic rules of IHL and human rights law by the authorities in their treatment of civilians and detainees. It ensures that displaced people and residents affected by armed conflict and violence have the means to survive and become self-sufficient and that the wounded and sick receive adequate health care. It works to restore contact between separated family members – where necessary and possible reuniting children with their families – and supports the development of the National Society.

EXPENDITURE (IN KCHF)

Protection	8,385
Assistance	18,305
Prevention	2,705
Cooperation with National Societies	3,127
General	-

► **32,522**

of which: *Overheads* 1,978

IMPLEMENTATION RATE

Expenditure/yearly budget	110%
---------------------------	------

PERSONNEL

49 expatriates
483 national staff (daily workers not included)

KEY POINTS

In 2006, the ICRC:

- ensured that the basic needs of hundreds of thousands of civilians were met through water supply projects, support to health facilities and the distribution of essential household items and agricultural inputs;
- continued to address the problem of sexual violence in South Kivu and extended the project, comprising prevention, awareness-raising and medical and psychosocial support, to North Kivu;
- through its operational partnership with the Red Cross of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, helped to restore family links through the RCM network and reunited 382 unaccompanied children and 259 children demobilized from armed groups and forces with their families;
- visited and monitored security detainees in both prisons and places of temporary detention;
- held numerous IHL familiarization sessions for weapon bearers, magistrates and opinion-leaders.

CONTEXT

The transition process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), laid out in the Sun City peace accords, ended officially in May 2006. In December 2006, Joseph Kabila was elected president, following the Supreme Court's confirmation of his victory in polls in July and October. Despite tensions over the course of the elections, Jean-Pierre Bemba, runner-up in the polls, publicly accepted the Court's decision. The political coalition that backed President Kabila during his campaign won the majority of parliamentary seats. Antoine Gizenga was appointed prime minister at the end of the year.

The UN Security Council authorized the temporary deployment of a European Union force to support the UN Mission in the DRC (MONUC) over the period of the elections and extended MONUC's mandate into 2007. In January, nine Guatemalan peacekeepers were killed in the north of Province Orientale.

In the first half of the year, the national army (FARDC) continued to conduct military operations against Mai Mai groups in central Katanga, causing large-scale population displacements. In May, the leader of one of the most active of these armed groups surrendered to MONUC.

The FARDC and MONUC stepped up joint operations against militias and foreign armed groups in Ituri and North and South Kivu early in the year. Towards the end of the year, hostilities again broke out in Ituri and North Kivu, with MONUC providing military support to FARDC operations around Goma. Many civilians were displaced by the fighting, and looting, rape and the burning of villages were widespread.

Public services, in particular health and education, were in crisis, and the majority of the population continued to live in severe poverty. Many people, especially those in conflict-affected areas, remained dependent on outside aid.

MAIN FIGURES AND INDICATORS

PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)		CIVILIANS AND PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM		
Detainees visited	5,771	<i>Economic security, water and habitat</i>		
Detainees visited and monitored individually	536	Food	Beneficiaries	909
Number of visits carried out	162	Essential household items	Beneficiaries	114,983
Number of places of detention visited	33	Agricultural inputs and micro-economic initiatives	Beneficiaries	83,817
RESTORING FAMILY LINKS		Water supply schemes and sanitation systems (completed projects)	Beneficiaries	268,000
<i>Red Cross messages (RCMs) and reunifications</i>		Habitat structures	Beneficiaries	635
RCMs collected	90,263	Health		
RCMs distributed	81,020	Health centres supported	Structures	11
People reunited with their families	641	Consultations	Patients	38,439
<i>Tracing requests, including cases of missing persons</i>		Immunizations	Activities	19,231
People for whom a tracing request was newly registered	656	WOUNDED AND SICK		
Tracing requests closed positively (persons located)	546	Hospitals supported	Structures	18
Tracing requests still being handled at 31 December 2006	558	Admissions	Patients	24,807
<i>Unaccompanied minors (UAMs) and separated children (SCs), including unaccompanied demobilized child soldiers</i>		Operations	Operations performed	4,732
UAMs/SCs newly registered by the ICRC	770	Physical rehabilitation		
UAMs/SCs reunited with their families by the ICRC	641	Patients receiving services	Patients	1,130
UAMs/SCs cases still being handled at 31 December 2006	551	Prostheses delivered	Pieces	941
DOCUMENTS ISSUED		Orthoses delivered	Pieces	381
People to whom a detention attestation was issued	55			

ICRC ACTION

The ICRC maintained its presence in the field to assess and respond to the needs of the civilian population. It concentrated its operations in the volatile North and South Kivu provinces and in parts of Katanga, and to a lesser extent in Maniema and Province Orientale. Following a security review, it began to access some new areas, but Ituri, where six of its staff members were killed in 2001, remained off-limits.

For people affected by conflict in Katanga and North and South Kivu, including those displaced by renewed outbreaks of fighting in North Kivu mid-year and at the end of the year, the ICRC carried out a range of assistance and protection activities. These included evacuating the wounded, supporting hospitals and health posts, distributing essential household items, briefing weapon bearers on IHL and reminding parties to conflict of their obligations towards the civilian population.

The ICRC and the Red Cross of the DRC helped family members separated by conflict stay in touch through the RCM service and made the tracing network, comprising more than 300 Red Cross volunteers, available to people seeking relatives with whom they had lost contact. The network was also used to locate the families of children who had been demobilized from armed groups or the armed forces, so that they could be reunited where desired and feasible.

For victims of sexual violence, the ICRC extended its multidisciplinary programme of medical and psychological support from South to North Kivu. To reduce the incidence of rape and lift the stigma and discrimination which victims often faced, it made confidential representations to the relevant authorities and ran community awareness campaigns, in addition to providing medical treatment and counselling.

As well as providing regular support to health centres and hospitals in conflict-affected areas, the ICRC was one of the few international organizations involved in ensuring that victims of conflict in need of physical rehabilitation had access to treatment. It provided five centres in Bukavu, Goma, Kinshasa and Mbuji Mayi with materials, training and technical supervision.

In regions where the security situation had stabilized, water supply projects and agricultural and fishing programmes were undertaken to improve the population's living conditions. In coordination with the authorities, the ICRC provided structural support to such projects, with a view to handing them over to development organizations.

Delegates followed the individual cases of security detainees and monitored conditions in places of detention more generally. The ICRC stepped in with additional food rations when nutritional levels fell particularly low, and supplied medicines and hygiene items in certain prisons.

The ICRC continued to work closely with the Red Cross of the DRC and to provide it with material, technical and financial support. Cooperation included the drafting of a national emergency preparedness plan, which was put into action twice during the year.

The ICRC coordinated with other humanitarian agencies operating locally, including those participating in the emerging UN cluster system, in order to strengthen complementarity and avoid duplication or gaps in protecting and assisting those most in need.

CIVILIANS

Protecting civilians

Fighting in the Kivu provinces, northern Katanga and the Ituri district drove tens of thousands of people from their homes. Hundreds of civilians were killed and many suffered other forms of violence.

In May, the leader of a major Mai Mai group turned himself in to MONUC forces. Ninety children who were formerly associated with such groups in Katanga and who were taken into custody received protection and support from the ICRC.

The ICRC reminded the FARDC and armed groups of their obligation to stop the recruitment of minors, to ensure the security of IDPs and to spare civilians not directly involved in the hostilities.

Addressing sexual violence

In North and South Kivu, the multidisciplinary programme for victims of sexual violence continued. Interviews with victims and documented cases were used to prepare a representation for submission to the relevant authorities. Victims of sexual violence were treated in health centres and counselled. A course of antiretroviral drugs was given as post-exposure prophylaxis to those who reached the centres within three days of being assaulted.

- 592 victims of sexual violence treated in ICRC-supported health centres, of whom 81 received post-exposure prophylaxis
- 1,317 victims of sexual violence counselled by ICRC-trained volunteers
- 75 Red Cross volunteers and 46 counsellors/health team personnel participated in 5 training sessions on psychological support to victims of sexual violence
- 7,170 people in the Ruzizi plain, South Kivu, attended 5 plays about sexual violence

Restoring family links

As communications improved, the RCM service was directed at people without other means of communicating with relatives.

Unaccompanied and vulnerable children were reunited with their families, where appropriate, and centres caring for them provided with assistance. When children were found unaccompanied in the immediate aftermath of population displacements in North Kivu, the ICRC and the National Society accelerated the search for their families, mostly still on the move, by posting lists of the children's names in public places.

Child refugees from the DRC were reunited with their families in eastern DRC by the ICRC, in line with an agreement concluded between the DRC, the United Republic of Tanzania and UNHCR in 2005.

Children formerly associated with armed groups were put back in touch and, where appropriate, reunited with their families, in cooperation with the National Demobilization and Reintegration Commission and child protection agencies.

- 83,189 RCMs collected from and 75,864 RCMs distributed to civilians, including 1,026 from and 850 to unaccompanied/separated children

- new tracing requests registered for 656 people (315 female, 423 minors at the time of disappearance); 546 people located; 558 people (251 females, 401 minors at the time of disappearance) still being sought
- 442 unaccompanied/separated children (including 328 demobilized child soldiers) registered; 641 children reunited with their families (including 259 demobilized child soldiers); 551 cases of unaccompanied/separated children (including 106 demobilized child soldiers) still being handled

Strengthening health care

Health services continued to suffer from an acute lack of medicines and materials, especially in areas affected by fighting.

Eleven health centres received regular and ad hoc assistance, enabling them to meet increased needs arising from population movements.

In North Kivu, after a four-month break owing to insecurity, the ICRC resumed support to the Machumbi health centre, now a referral structure offering major surgery. In February, a health centre in Kibirizi received one-off assistance to meet IDPs' needs.

In South Kivu, renovation of the Rungu health centre was completed. Two other centres, in Sange and Bwegera, were assisted by the ICRC, and a system linking subsidies to service quality was introduced.

Training to prevent malaria and HIV/AIDS was conducted in ICRC-supported centres in North and South Kivu, and new treatments were made available from May onwards.

The delegation worked to strengthen the community network caring for victims of sexual violence (see above).

In ICRC-supported centres:

- 38,439 consultations (15,099 ante- and postnatal, 23,340 curative) given;
- 19,231 vaccine doses administered (15,829 to children aged 5 or under, 3,402 to women of child-bearing age);
- 324 health education sessions held;
- 1 rural health centre serving about 7,500 people renovated.

Improving water supply

Two water treatment plants in the Maniema region and a pumping station and water supply network in Katanga were renovated

and upgraded, in collaboration with Regideso (the urban water board). Construction of a pumping station in North Kivu and a water treatment plant in South Kivu began.

Seven water supply systems were installed in North and South Kivu in collaboration with the Service National d'Hydraulique Rurale. Three well- and borehole-construction projects were under way in villages in Katanga. Two well-construction and spring-improvement projects were completed in Province Orientale with the National Society.

Regideso benefited from training jointly conducted by the Société Nationale de Distribution d'Eau in Brazzaville, Congo, and the ICRC.

- 140,000 urban and 128,000 rural residents gained an improved water supply; 647,900 people, including some 500,000 in Goma, set to benefit from ongoing projects

Assisting conflict-affected populations

The security situation in North and South Kivu and the northern districts of Katanga worsened in the first five months of the year, and the rural population suffered looting, rape, the destruction of villages and other violence.

IDPs received essential household items, including blankets, cooking sets, buckets, clothing, hoes and soap and in some cases tarpaulins. In rural communities, the ICRC provided material assistance and training to farmers' and fishermen's associations and developed projects with the State agricultural and fishery services. In South Kivu, the renovation of a State-run fishery was completed, and the regional unit of the Ministry of Agriculture received laboratory equipment.

- 110,175 people (22,034 households) received essential household items
- 59,016 people (10,953 households), including 10,000 returnees in Katanga and more than 35,000 people grouped in 211 farmers' associations, provided with seeds/cuttings and tools
- 24,060 people (4,812 households) benefited from fish-farming inputs, and 155 fishermen's associations provided with training

PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM

Security detainees were visited and followed individually by ICRC delegates. The conditions of detention and treatment of the general prison population were also monitored. Where necessary, recommendations were made to improve conditions of detention, and the authorities were reminded of their obligation to respect detainees' judicial guarantees. The ICRC gained access to some detention facilities that it had previously been unable to visit.

- ▶ 5,771 detainees visited, 536 of them monitored individually (15 females, 6 minors), including 143 newly registered (12 women, 3 minors), during 162 visits to 33 places of detention
- ▶ 7,074 RCMs collected from and 5,156 RCMs distributed to detainees
- ▶ 55 detention certificates issued to former detainees or their families

Given the limited resources, living conditions in many prisons remained unsatisfactory. Inmates' needs were generally covered by charities and religious organizations, but in certain instances the ICRC stepped in to ensure they received adequate nutrition. A nutritional survey was performed in seven prisons, and support maintained for kitchen garden projects.

- ▶ 909 detainees received supplementary food rations during the year
- ▶ 741 detainees in 3 places of detention received seeds and tools as part of prison kitchen garden projects to improve standards of nutrition

Detainees also benefited from ICRC interventions to improve the provision of health care, hygiene and sanitation in prisons. The dispensary in Bukavu central prison, wrecked during riots, was rebuilt, and Goma prison's water and sanitation systems were renovated. In Kisangani and Bukavu central prisons, three new nurses were appointed, and detainees' access to health care was improved. Access to HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis programmes was facilitated through cooperation between provincial health partners and the ICRC.

- ▶ 4,808 detainees provided with essential household items
- ▶ 7 prisons housing approximately 5,000 detainees provided with medical supplies every three months
- ▶ 635 detainees in prisons in Goma and Bukavu benefited from completed water and habitat projects

WOUNDED AND SICK

Hospitals in North and South Kivu were supplied with medicines and materials, including kits to treat weapon wounds.

Weapon-wounded patients in Katanga, North Kivu and South Kivu were treated in ICRC-supported hospitals. Nine weapon-wounded and 50 malnourished children were flown to hospital by the ICRC. Weapon-wounded patients in hospitals in Kinshasa, North Kivu and South Kivu received improved treatment from Congolese surgical teams thanks to the support of an ICRC surgeon.

In South Kivu, the ICRC continued to provide hospitals in Lemera, Mubumbano, Panzi and Uvira with medicines and medical and laboratory materials. Renovation of the Mubumbano referral hospital was completed. The Uvira hospital was assessed by ICRC technical staff and received management support. Twenty-five hospital and provincial health authority staff attended a three-day workshop.

In North Kivu, assistance to the Pinga hospital was suspended twice owing to the security situation. A new building at Kirumba hospital improved the delivery of health services.

In total, 18 hospitals were supplied with medicines and materials (including one-off distributions of kits to treat weapon-wounded patients). Two hospitals, covering the health needs of more than 180,000 people, were renovated.

HIV/AIDS treatment for victims of sexual violence was improved through seven training sessions.

In hospitals receiving regular support:

- ▶ 24,807 patients (13,891 women and 7,896 children) admitted: 544 weapon-wounded (50 women, 14 children); 4,726 other surgical cases; 4,859 medical, 7,581 gynaecological/obstetric, and 7,097 paediatric patients;
- ▶ 4,732 surgical operations performed;
- ▶ 41,334 outpatient consultations given.

Civilian and military conflict victims in need of physical rehabilitation had access to treatment, reimbursed by the ICRC, in five centres in Kinshasa, Mbuji Mayi, Goma and Bukavu. An ICRC specialist helped to upgrade the quality of services provided. Three Congolese prosthetic/orthotic technicians attended a refresher course in Addis Ababa.

- ▶ 1,130 patients (140 women, 73 children) received services at 5 ICRC-supported centres
- ▶ 856 new patients (106 women and 55 children) fitted with prostheses and 235 (29 women and 16 children) with orthoses
- ▶ 941 prostheses (115 for women and 68 for children; 143 for mine victims), 381 orthoses (51 for women and 29 for children; 44 for mine victims), 1,366 crutches and 12 wheelchairs delivered

AUTHORITIES

The ICRC continued to urge the authorities to accede to all IHL treaties.

Working relations were established with the International Conference on the Great Lakes. The delegation maintained contact with diplomats, especially representatives of countries exerting influence in the region, and international organizations.

The delegation actively participated in the International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action organized by the UN Mine Action Coordination Centre.

National and local authorities attended information sessions on IHL.

- ▶ over 1,000 people (representatives of political, administrative and local authorities and magistrates) attended information sessions on IHL in 6 provinces
- ▶ over 80 MONUC officials in 2 provinces attended sessions on IHL and the ICRC and its mandate

ARMED FORCES AND OTHER BEARERS OF WEAPONS

Delegates conducted regular information sessions for Congolese army and police officers.

In line with a directive issued by the Defence Ministry regarding the integration of IHL into the training of the DRC's new armed forces, the command and general staff colleges and the ICRC strengthened their cooperation. Delegates participated in training for future battalion/brigade commanders and instructors at camps integrating former members of armed groups into the new national army.

The Unité de Police Intégrée, which was in charge of security during elections, participated in a four-month course on IHL/human rights run by the ICRC in coordination with the European Union Police Mission in the DRC.

The delegation established contacts with leaders of some armed groups in North and South Kivu. Members of armed groups were given educational material aimed at ending sexual violence against women.

- ▶ 53 IHL refresher courses held for military instructors at army integration camps
- ▶ over 4,000 officers and troops of the FARDC attended IHL sessions in army integration camps and 2,000 elsewhere
- ▶ 2,000 police officers in 6 provinces briefed on IHL and the ICRC and its mandate
- ▶ 200 other bearers of weapons attended information sessions on IHL and the ICRC and its mandate

CIVIL SOCIETY

The ICRC maintained contact with the media, development NGOs and academic circles to gain their support for its activities.

- ▶ 17 information sessions on IHL and the ICRC held for over 900 civilians
- ▶ 29 press releases and 3 information bulletins distributed and 11 radio/TV spots broadcast
- ▶ 166 NGO staff members attended information sessions in 3 provinces
- ▶ 280 students from 3 universities attended 4 information sessions on IHL
- ▶ 204 journalists participated in 6 workshops on IHL and the ICRC
- ▶ an IHL lecturer sponsored to attend the pan-African course on IHL in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso (see *Abidjan*)
- ▶ over 390 magistrates attended 3 IHL lectures in 3 provinces
- ▶ an album “Peace Boyz” on the rights of the child during armed conflict recorded and launched
- ▶ posters and a special bulletin released as part of the “victims of sexual violence” programme
- ▶ a video and audio campaign launched during the football world cup comparing the need for respect for the rules of football with the respect required for the rules applicable in armed conflict

RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

The annual cooperation agreements between the Red Cross of the DRC and the ICRC provided a framework within which to reinforce the National Society’s activities in the areas of tracing, assistance and dissemination of IHL and the Fundamental Principles. In addition to the provision of logistics support and various training sessions, the salaries of certain staff members were paid.

- ▶ up to 360 volunteers dealt with RCMs, tracing requests and family reunifications; management capacity to provide the tracing service at the provincial and national level enhanced, and salaries of 3 key tracing staff paid
- ▶ 86 dissemination sessions for internal and external audiences held in 11 provinces and 20,000 copies of the Red Cross quarterly gazette *Echos de la Croix-rouge* published and distributed; vehicles and audiovisual materials provided, as well as support for meetings, training courses, publications and World Red Cross Day celebrations across the country
- ▶ 1,233 first-aiders trained; 3,000 copies of a first-aid training manual and 10,000 copies of a practical guide to first aid published
- ▶ central database for micro-projects installed at National Society headquarters; some 95,000 people covered by 28 micro-projects in 10 provinces

Eleven provincial assemblies, two sessions of the central committee and the general assembly of the Red Cross of the DRC were supported logistically and financially by the ICRC. On 1 December, the National Society elected a new president and a new central committee.

In its role as lead agency in this context, the ICRC facilitated regular meetings of the Movement in Kinshasa as well as in the provinces. Security advice was given, and logistical support (including ICRC flights) provided to the National Society, the International Federation and partner National Societies, including the Belgian, German and Spanish Red Cross Societies.