

LIBERIA



ICRC delegation ICRC sub-delegation

EXPENDITURE (IN KCHF)

Protection	1,364
Assistance	2,494
Prevention	1,104
Cooperation with National Societies	1,966
General	-

► **6,928**
of which: Overheads 423

IMPLEMENTATION RATE

Expenditure/yearly budget	105%
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PERSONNEL

Expatriates	13
National staff (daily workers not included)	118

KEY POINTS

In 2012, the ICRC:

- ▶ with Movement partners and the authorities and organizations concerned, facilitated the reunification of 104 Ivorian refugee children with their families, mainly in Côte d'Ivoire
- ▶ helped over 18,000 Ivorian refugees living in host communities along the Liberia-Côte d'Ivoire border cope with their situation by providing them with essential household items
- ▶ visited, according to its standard procedures, 131 internees/detainees held in connection with the Ivorian conflict, advising the authorities on international norms on internment and helping transfer those released to refugee camps
- ▶ supported the prison and health authorities in their efforts to establish a functioning health care system in all 15 prisons in Liberia, in line with the new national health policy
- ▶ following material and capacity-building support to the local authorities and farmers in Lofa county, handed over to them full responsibility for managing previously supported health clinics and palm-oil projects respectively
- ▶ supported the Liberia National Red Cross Society's efforts to strengthen its governance and management by assisting it in holding its general assembly and national elections

The ICRC has worked in Liberia since 1970, opening its delegation in 1990. Following intense fighting early in 2003 and the subsequent signing of a peace agreement, the ICRC stepped up its operations. Since 2005, it has focused on protecting and assisting returnees (former IDPs and refugees) and residents, the wounded and sick, detainees, and children separated from their families, winding down these activities as the situation has become more stable. The ICRC supports the Liberia National Red Cross Society and runs programmes to promote IHL among armed forces present in the country.

CONTEXT

In 2012, the situation in Liberia was by and large peaceful, with a low level of political violence. Porous borders, however, facilitated occasional cross-border activity by weapon bearers, including violent incidents along the border with Côte d'Ivoire during the second half of the year, leading to increased tensions. Consequently, the security forces and UN peacekeeping missions in both countries strengthened cooperation. Although well over half of the refugees from Côte d'Ivoire (see *Abidjan*) had gone home by mid-year, these incidents slowed down their return; thus, an estimated 65,000 refugees remained in camps and with host families along the border areas in eastern Liberia, placing a significant strain on communities' limited resources. The humanitarian and security consequences of hosting refugees continued to be a concern for Liberia, as were widespread poverty and unemployment that caused many Liberians to struggle for access to basic utilities and health care.

As part of its planned withdrawal over the next three years, the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) began the progressive reduction of its peacekeeping forces, posing a challenge for Liberia's nascent police and security forces.

Although the Special Court for Sierra Leone found former Liberian president Charles Taylor guilty in May, the verdict reportedly had no impact on security.

ICRC ACTION AND RESULTS

Working with the Liberia National Red Cross Society, the ICRC continued to address needs arising from the influx of refugees from Côte d'Ivoire, while meeting the enduring needs of civilians elsewhere in the country, particularly by building the capacities of local partners.

In coordination with the authorities, UN agencies and other humanitarian actors, the National Society/ICRC continued to provide family-links services to refugees wishing to restore or maintain contact with relatives, focusing on reuniting separated children with their families. National Society/ICRC teams also distributed essential household items to refugees who had settled in host communities along the border. In accordance with its standard procedures, the ICRC visited people detained/interned in connection with the Ivorian conflict and advised the Liberian authorities on international standards applicable to internment and IHL. It provided vulnerable internees at Wainsue internment camp with food for at least six weeks and, following the camp's closure, helped released internees transfer to refugee camps.

Main figures and indicators	PROTECTION	Total		
CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)				
Red Cross messages (RCMs)				
RCMs collected		728	UAMs/SCs*	168
RCMs distributed		503		81
Phone calls facilitated between family members		1,453		
Names published in the media		8		
Reunifications, transfers and repatriations				
People reunited with their families		128		
	<i>including people registered by another delegation</i>	7		
Tracing requests, including cases of missing persons				
People for whom a tracing request was newly registered		34	Women	8
People located (tracing cases closed positively)		38		14
	<i>including people for whom tracing requests were registered by another delegation</i>	17		
Tracing cases still being handled at the end of the reporting period (people)		56		20
UAMs/SCs*, including unaccompanied demobilized child soldiers				
UAMs/SCs newly registered by the ICRC/National Society		120	Girls	58
UAMs/SCs reunited with their families by the ICRC/National Society		104		53
	<i>including UAMs/SCs registered by another delegation</i>	2		
UAM/SC cases still being handled by the ICRC/National Society at the end of the reporting period		99		42
Documents				
People to whom travel documents were issued		118		
PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)				
ICRC visits				
Detainees visited		2,702	Women	
Detainees visited and monitored individually		181		21
Detainees newly registered		50		15
Number of visits carried out		70		
Number of places of detention visited		25		
Restoring family links				
RCMs collected		110		
RCMs distributed		122		
Phone calls made to families to inform them of the whereabouts of a detained relative		5		

* Unaccompanied minors/separated children

Continued visits to other detainees in Liberia held by the Justice Ministry were also conducted according to the ICRC's standard procedures, allowing delegates to monitor detainees' treatment and living conditions and to provide confidential reports to the detaining authorities based on their findings. The ICRC worked closely with the authorities concerned, providing material input, advice and specialized training to help them strengthen their capacities to ensure the well-being of inmates. As a result, detainees in some prisons received improved health care, such as disease monitoring and control, within the new national prison health service. On the basis of nutritional surveys, a number of improvements were made to the provision of food to detainees, including the most severely malnourished, who benefited from a supplementary feeding programme. Repair work on water and sanitation infrastructure and the regular provision of soap and hygiene items also contributed to a healthier environment.

Outside of prisons, National Society/ICRC teams, together with the authorities and/or community members in a number of counties, constructed or repaired water points and latrines, improving access to clean water and reducing exposure to water-borne diseases. ICRC-trained National Society volunteers trained community pump mechanics to undertake routine maintenance and promoted good hygiene practices to community members.

Alone or with the National Society, the ICRC also provided training, material and/or logistical support to local partners such as health workers and farmers, including those hosting refugees, to help build their capacities to run and sustain health and livelihood programmes respectively. By year-end, the local health authorities

had taken full responsibility for the management of four health clinics in Lofa county previously supported by the ICRC. Likewise, farmers took over the running of their palm-oil plantations as the ICRC wrapped up its agricultural support in Liberia. With the completion of these activities, the ICRC closed its offices in Sanniquellie and Voinjama.

Through meetings, workshops and multimedia communication, the ICRC endeavoured to increase support for Movement activities and raise awareness of IHL, international human rights law and humanitarian principles among the authorities, security forces and members of civil society. Regional seminars encouraged the authorities to advance domestic IHL implementation, including the establishment of a national IHL committee. The armed forces took steps to integrate IHL modules into their training and operations, with ICRC-supported in-house briefings and training.

As the ICRC's main operational partner, the Liberian Red Cross received training, financial and material support to strengthen its emergency response capacities and to enhance its family-links, promotion and assistance activities and governance/management, for example during its national and county elections.

CIVILIANS

The National Society and the ICRC worked together to improve the living conditions of Liberians or of foreign nationals who had taken refuge in the country and to enable them to maintain contact with their families. Aside from benefiting from practical experience and coaching while conducting activities jointly with the ICRC, National Society volunteers attended regular theoretical

Main figures and indicators	ASSISTANCE	Total	Women	Children
CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)				
Economic security, water and habitat (in some cases provided within a protection or cooperation programme)¹				
Productive inputs	Beneficiaries	18,192	50%	30%
Water and habitat activities	Beneficiaries	41,928	35%	45%
Health				
Health centres supported	Structures	4		
Average catchment population		11,114		
Consultations	Patients	15,436		
	<i>of which curative</i>		2,445	6,774
	<i>of which ante/post-natal</i>		1,183	
Immunizations	Doses	8,281		
	<i>of which for children aged five or under</i>	7,885		
Referrals to a second level of care	Patients	9		
Health education	Sessions	523		
PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)				
Economic security, water and habitat (in some cases provided within a protection programme)				
Food commodities	Beneficiaries	713		
Essential household items	Beneficiaries	2,090		
Water and habitat activities	Beneficiaries	1,400		

1. Owing to operational and management constraints, figures presented in this table and in the narrative part of this report may not reflect all activities carried out during the reporting period

training, such as workshops on planning, monitoring and evaluating relief and livelihood initiatives and on implementing water, sanitation and hygiene-promotion projects. Thus, volunteers were better equipped to help those in need and to train community members to manage and maintain the systems installed.

Ivorian refugees are better able to cope with their displacement

The Liberian authorities, National Society/ICRC teams, UN agencies and other humanitarian actors monitored refugees' movements, well-being and impact on host communities, and coordinated activities in order to meet needs without duplication. For example, ICRC plans to repair roads/bridges were no longer pursued as other organizations took on such activities to ensure access to the refugees and their host communities. A total of 18,192 people (3,032 households) who had settled in host communities along the Ivorian border, specifically in Grand Gedeh and River Gee counties, received essential household items, including tarpaulins and sleeping mats, from the ICRC to ease the burden on their hosts.

Dispersed family members get back in touch

National Society/ICRC family-links services proved invaluable as a means for refugees and other people in Liberia to locate or get in touch with relatives with whom they had lost contact, including those detained/interned (see *People deprived of their freedom*). Using these free services, they made 1,453 telephone calls, sent 728 RCMs and received 503 RCMs during the year. Effective cooperation among Movement components and other organizations in Liberia, as well as in Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea, helped 104 children and 12 vulnerable adults from Côte d'Ivoire rejoin their families, mainly in Côte d'Ivoire, while of the 99 pending cases of children being handled by the ICRC, 42 had already restored contact with their families. Where necessary, vulnerable children received material or medical assistance from child protection agencies.

Communities enjoy improved access to water and sanitation

In parts of Monrovia and in Bong, Grand Gedeh, Maryland, Nimba and River Gee counties, where water infrastructure was inadequate or dilapidated, residents and any refugees they were hosting struggled to obtain clean water, with many suffering from water-borne diseases. The water authorities and community

members worked with National Society/ICRC teams to construct or repair wells and hand pumps and, in Monrovia, to rehabilitate latrines. As a result, 41,928 people had a more reliable supply of safe water and efficient sanitation, including 26,500 who benefited from improved general public health after ICRC-trained National Society volunteers promoted basic hygiene practices. Training sessions helped 64 pump mechanics from 20 communities sharpen their maintenance skills so that facilities would not fall into disrepair in the short term.

People in Lofa County access quality health care

Four clinics in Bondi, Duogomai, Kpotomai and Vezala (catchment population: over 11,000), to which the ICRC had resumed material, technical and logistical support in 2011, made marked progress in improving the quality of curative and ante/post-natal health care they provided. By mid-year, the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare's County Health Team was making regular visits to all clinics, while the ministry had taken over supplying the most-needed medicines and payment of staff salaries. These efforts helped attract an adequate number of qualified personnel to the clinics, which, along with on-the-job coaching, improved services and more than doubled the number of consultations carried out. The local health authorities, while continuing to work to incorporate the clinics into Liberia's national health care development plan, reassumed full responsibility for them in October.

Farmers receive livelihood support

In Lofa county, the 2,592 farmers (including members of associations/cooperatives and women's groups) who had previously rehabilitated palm-oil plantations with ICRC support continued to benefit from agricultural inputs and management/marketing training to enable them to maintain the plantations independently and thus support their families (another 2,160 people). Under the supervision of ICRC-trained National Society volunteers, the farmers used fertilizer and insecticide to help stimulate crop growth and combat pests. By year-end, the farming communities had taken full responsibility for the plantations and had been referred by the ICRC to commercial enterprises interested in purchasing their palm oil, helping ensure the sustainability of their livelihoods.

Support also continued to rice-cultivation initiatives to boost food/economic security. Some 1,000 people from 50 farming

communities joined an ICRC-supported National Society initiative to train upland rice farmers to cultivate swamp-rice instead, in order to combat environmental degradation in upland areas and associated losses in productivity. They received tools, including cutlasses, shovels, hoes and boots, to enable them to begin cultivation and generate income for their families. Additionally, 750 people hosting Ivorian refugees in Grand Gedeh county received rice seed and tool kits to help improve their yields and better cope with the presence of refugees.

PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM

Over 2,700 detainees, including women, minors and the sick, and internees held by the Liberian Justice Ministry and other authorities continued to receive ICRC visits according to the organization's standard procedures. Some 180 of them, including 131 alleged combatants who had fled the conflict in Côte d'Ivoire, were monitored individually. Delegates also monitored detainees' treatment and living conditions in relation to internationally recognized standards, including IHL where applicable. Following such visits, the detaining authorities received confidential reports detailing delegates' findings and, where necessary, recommendations. Detainees/internees were able to communicate with their families using RCMs and/or phone calls.

Detaining authorities benefit from ICRC support in ensuring the well-being of detainees/internees

The government's taskforce on internment solicited ICRC guidance on how best to comply with international norms applicable to internment, including the principle of *non-refoulement*. Juvenile and other vulnerable internees among the 82 people being held at the Wainsue internment camp received particular attention, including the provision of food for at least six weeks. As a result of cooperation among the Liberian authorities, UNHCR and the ICRC, eight minors rejoined their families. In March, the government closed the Wainsue internment camp and released 69 of the 82 internees. They received ICRC assistance to get to the refugee camps, as well as clothing and shoes.

ICRC assessments in police detention facilities revealed that the health of those in custody was not linked to police practice; thus, efforts focused instead on enhancing the national penitentiary system. To help ensure that detainees' conditions were in line with internationally recognized standards, the Liberian Bureau of Corrections and Rehabilitation (BCR) worked with the ICRC to improve the prison administration as a whole and to minimize the consequences of overcrowding, particularly in relation to health, nutrition and hygiene. For example, during the drafting of its 2012 budget, the BCR received input from the UNMIL Corrections Advisory Unit and the ICRC, with the ICRC focusing on the three aforementioned issues.

The Ministry of Health and Social Welfare took a number of steps to implement the new national guidelines on prison health care, which were included in the national health policy produced in 2011, such as opening new clinics in five prisons with ICRC technical and material support. It also appointed a focal point for prison health care and co-organized with the BCR an introductory workshop for 30 prison health workers and correctional officers. Additionally, prison health workers received ICRC coaching on appropriate health care for detainees. Consequently, they initiated systematic tours of cells with a view to identifying problems early and, by year-end, regularly visited all 15 prisons across Liberia, two of which introduced medical examinations for all new inmates.

Detainees in Monrovia Central Prison, which housed over half of Liberia's prison population, benefited from better disease monitoring and control after health workers there received ICRC support in establishing guidelines and regulations, and following the rehabilitation/expansion and completion of the prison clinic and infirmary. Thanks to improved coordination with local hospitals, detainees underwent regular TB/malaria screening, with 3,335 treated on-site or referred outside for treatment as necessary. Given the prompt reaction to any diagnosed cases, malaria remained under control within the facility. Other prisons improved their health care services with ICRC-supplied equipment and drugs.

Although the BCR had yet to establish a maintenance team, it worked with the ICRC to improve water and sanitation infrastructure in nine prisons, benefiting 1,400 detainees. To enhance their environmental health and living conditions, 2,090 detainees received essential household items, including mosquito bed-nets, mattresses and blankets, and soap and hygiene items backed by hygiene-promotion campaigns.

With ICRC support, the prison administration conducted a comprehensive nutritional survey and discussed the results with representatives of the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare and all prison superintendents at a two-day seminar. These discussions and ICRC advocacy for a substantial increase in the food budget led to all detainees being guaranteed two meals per day, with protein-rich foodstuffs a daily part of their diet. The comprehensive survey, as well as independent ICRC nutritional surveys, revealed cases of malnutrition; thus, 130 malnourished detainees in three prisons received supplementary food from the ICRC. Prison kitchen staff and nutritional supervisors from the ministry learnt more about identifying and measuring malnutrition at a workshop conducted by an ICRC nutritionist.

AUTHORITIES

Local, national and regional authorities, including diplomats and representatives of UNMIL and UN agencies, and the ICRC regularly met to discuss humanitarian/security concerns and IHL. Briefings and publications kept the authorities updated on Movement activities in Liberia, particularly those focusing on refugees from Côte d'Ivoire, to encourage them to support neutral, impartial and independent humanitarian action.

The government continued to work to bring national legislation in line with IHL, for example by finalizing the formation of a national IHL committee. Representatives of the Ministries of Justice and Foreign Affairs and the Law Reform Commission shared expertise with and learnt from their counterparts during regional seminars on the implementation of IHL (see *Nigeria*) and on the "Strengthening IHL" process (see *International law and cooperation*). The government actively promoted a future arms trade treaty at both national and regional level, with representatives of the Liberia National Commission on Small Arms and civil society attending a meeting (see *Nigeria*) and a UN diplomatic conference on this topic, in support of efforts to reduce the humanitarian impact of unregulated arms transfers.

With ICRC support, the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) took steps to enhance their IHL teaching capacities in line with the integration of IHL modules into their training and operations. For example, seven instructors broadened their knowledge and skills during workshops and one officer participated in an IHL course in

San Remo. As a result, ICRC-supported AFL instructors trained 96 military officers in IHL and briefed 451 soldiers on the basic rules of IHL. The AFL also drafted an IHL training manual.

Through ICRC briefings, 470 military/joint security personnel and incoming UN peacekeepers, as well as police officers, better understood the organization's activities, particularly for detainees, and the importance of respecting IHL and international human rights law, including provisions on arrest and detention, during situations of violence.

CIVIL SOCIETY

Influential individuals and organizations, including political, religious and community leaders, NGOs and the media, deepened their knowledge of the Movement and kept abreast of its activities through bilateral meetings, briefings, National Society dissemination sessions and ICRC publications/multimedia communication.

To encourage Liberian journalists to cover and to produce more in-depth reports on the humanitarian situation and IHL implementation in their country, two journalists participated in a media and IHL workshop (see *Nairobi*) and nine undertook trips to see ICRC operations first-hand. Thus, the general public became better informed about the Movement's activities worldwide, as well as ICRC programmes in Liberia, particularly for refugees, detainees/internees and other people affected by the conflict in Côte d'Ivoire, through regularly produced media reports, supplemented by photo diaries and features posted on the ICRC website and Facebook page.

As no suitable lecturer could participate in an IHL training abroad, a government representative was sponsored instead (see *Authorities*).

RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

The Liberian Red Cross received training and logistical, material and financial support from the ICRC to help it achieve its peacetime objectives while maintaining its emergency response capacities. While the National Society was the ICRC's main operational partner in the country (see *Civilians*), it also drew on ICRC support to boost its capacity to work independently. For example, all 15 chapters received stocks of essential household items for distribution in emergencies, enabling them to assist 7,433 families affected by natural disasters. Similarly, after undergoing training in the dissemination of IHL and humanitarian principles and the receipt of multimedia equipment, the National Society went on to conduct presentations for 2,832 people, including the authorities, community leaders and youth groups (see *Authorities* and *Civil society*). It also continued to produce its newsletter independently to strengthen its image in the country. An ICRC-supported National Society-run first-aid training course for 225 people, including journalists, generated income for the National Society.

With Movement support, the National Society took steps to reinforce its organizational structure by holding a general assembly and national and county elections, after which 165 newly elected officials from all 15 chapters participated in ICRC induction training. It also adopted its strategic development plan for 2013–17 and an anti-corruption policy.

Regular meetings of Movement components facilitated coordination of activities.