

ETHIOPIA



+ ICRC delegation + ICRC sub-delegation + ICRC office
 + ICRC-supported prosthetic/orthotic centre
 * The ICRC delegation to the African Union is also in Addis Ababa

EXPENDITURE (IN KCHF)

Protection	3,537
Assistance	6,161
Prevention	2,108
Cooperation with National Societies	850
General	-

▶ **12,657**

of which: Overheads 767

IMPLEMENTATION RATE

Expenditure/yearly budget	91%
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PERSONNEL

Expatriates	30
National staff (daily workers not included)	149

KEY POINTS

In 2012, the ICRC:

- ▶ monitored the welfare of 66 newly captured Eritrean POWs
- ▶ stepped up activities in regionally run prisons, visiting some 28,000 detainees and working with prison authorities to enhance the living conditions of over 7,000 inmates through infrastructural improvements
- ▶ conducted a multidisciplinary assessment of all federally run prisons with a view to resuming visits to detainees in these facilities
- ▶ with local water boards and rural communities, improved access to water for more than 76,000 people in areas along the border with Eritrea and in areas hosting refugees from Sudan
- ▶ with the National Society, helped families of missing persons, families newly repatriated from Eritrea and other vulnerable families start income-generating projects through micro-economic initiatives
- ▶ to regain acceptance of its activities for conflict-affected populations in the Somali Regional State, pursued dialogue with the authorities, including through a meeting between the new Ethiopian prime minister and the ICRC president

Continuously present in Ethiopia since 1977, the ICRC's priority is to protect and assist people detained, displaced or otherwise affected by the 1998–2000 international armed conflict with Eritrea or by other armed conflicts. Thus, it helps to preserve the livelihoods of communities affected by past conflict, often compounded by natural disaster, and supports physical rehabilitation services. It visits detainees and restores family links, particularly for relatives separated by the closed Ethiopia-Eritrea border, ensuring compliance with IHL with regard to any persons still protected by the Third and Fourth Geneva Conventions. It also supports the Ethiopian Red Cross Society.

CONTEXT

Tensions between Eritrea and Ethiopia persisted, with clashes occurring in border regions between the two countries. Meanwhile, the physical demarcation of the Eritrea-Ethiopia border remained stalled, with both countries maintaining a large military presence in the disputed areas.

In the Somali Regional State (SRS), non-international armed conflict was ongoing between special regional police forces, operating with the Ethiopian National Defence Force (ENDF), and the Ogaden National Liberation Front.

In other areas affected by intercommunal clashes, police forces, sometimes supported by the ENDF, were brought in to curb instability.

The ENDF continued to supply troops to the UN Interim Security Force for Abyei and the African Union-UN Mission in Darfur, both in Sudan, and to participate in military operations in support of the government of the Federal Republic of Somalia.

Fleeing drought and/or fighting in Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan, thousands of people crossed the border into Ethiopia. Insufficient rainfall caused food and water shortages in areas of Afar, Amhara, Oromia, SRS and Tigray, exacerbating the effects of conflict. Incidents of violence arising from competition for resources were reported in some regions.

ICRC ACTION AND RESULTS

The ICRC engaged in dialogue with the authorities in Ethiopia to strengthen acceptance of its neutral, impartial and independent humanitarian action, while continuing to assist people affected by conflict. During discussions with government officials, including a meeting in October between the new Ethiopian prime minister and the ICRC president, the ICRC sought to regain access to conflict-affected communities in the SRS and to restart visits to detainees in federally run prisons.

After the government agreed in 2011 to the resumption of ICRC visits to federal prisons, the ICRC briefed prison officials on its working methods, followed by a multidisciplinary assessment of all federal prisons. Subsequently, it held discussions with federal prison authorities on restarting visits according to its standard procedures and on making potential improvements

Main figures and indicators	PROTECTION	Total		
CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)				
Red Cross messages (RCMs)			UAMs/SCs*	
RCMs collected		3,392	246	
RCMs distributed		3,045	11	
Phone calls facilitated between family members		4,739		
Reunifications, transfers and repatriations				
People reunited with their families		3		
	<i>including people registered by another delegation</i>	1		
People transferred/repatriated		2		
Tracing requests, including cases of missing persons			Women	Minors
People for whom a tracing request was newly registered		118	32	35
People located (tracing cases closed positively)		66		
	<i>including people for whom tracing requests were registered by another delegation</i>	16		
Tracing cases still being handled at the end of the reporting period (people)		317	37	55
UAMs/SCs*, including unaccompanied demobilized child soldiers			Girls	Demobilized children
UAMs/SCs newly registered by the ICRC/National Society		21	5	
UAM/SC cases still being handled by the ICRC/National Society at the end of the reporting period		18	5	
Documents				
People to whom travel documents were issued		33		
Official documents relayed between family members across borders/front lines		40		
PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)				
ICRC visits			Women	Minors
Detainees visited		28,071		
Detainees visited and monitored individually		163	1	
Detainees newly registered		95	1	
Number of visits carried out		22		
Number of places of detention visited		20		
Restoring family links				
RCMs collected		225		
RCMs distributed		1		
People to whom a detention attestation was issued		78		

* Unaccompanied minors/separated children

to detention facilities under their authority. While pursuing efforts to gain access to all detainees within its purview, the ICRC visited people held in regionally run prisons in Afar and Tigray and resumed visits to those held in Amhara and Oromia. It also monitored the welfare of Eritrean POWs captured during clashes between the Eritrean and Ethiopian defence forces. With prison officials, it enhanced water, sanitation, kitchen and dormitory facilities in several prisons to improve inmates' living conditions.

In the northern border regions of Afar and Tigray, which were most affected by the past conflict and ongoing tensions between Eritrea and Ethiopia, the ICRC worked with the water authorities and rural communities to improve access to water by building water points and repairing hand pumps. Community members improved sanitation practices and built latrines with ICRC-provided materials and training. Water bureau personnel in Tigray who were trained by the ICRC managed water resources more efficiently using a geographic information system. In the Benishangul Gumuz region, particularly in areas hosting refugees from Sudan, the ICRC assisted local technicians in the rehabilitation and maintenance of water points.

Combining their resources, the Ethiopian Red Cross Society and the ICRC provided assistance to civilians displaced by clashes. National Society/ICRC teams also delivered relief to Ethiopians newly repatriated from Eritrea, while repatriated families, as well as those of people still missing from the Eritrea-Ethiopia conflict, started income-generating projects with loans and training. Family members dispersed by conflict, including Ethiopian and

Eritrean civilians separated by the sealed border, as well as Somali and Sudanese refugees in camps, restored contact through family-links services run by the National Society with support from the Swedish Red Cross and the ICRC. The ICRC also facilitated the delivery of school transcripts across the border to/from Eritrea, to enable both Eritrean and Ethiopian nationals to apply for jobs or further studies.

Physical rehabilitation centres for people with disabilities, including those injured during armed conflict or other situations of violence, continued to receive ICRC support in the form of funding, materials, on-the-job supervision and training. As the Ethiopian authorities worked to strengthen the country's physical rehabilitation services, the ICRC contributed technical advice to a committee tasked with drawing up a plan to implement the national physical rehabilitation strategy.

To broaden support for IHL and the Movement, the ICRC provided IHL briefings to members of the Ethiopian Air Force and the ENDF prior to their deployment on peacekeeping operations. Police forces learnt international human rights standards and humanitarian principles related to their work through ICRC-led training. Judges, prosecutors, community elders, religious leaders, representatives of community-based organizations, journalists and academics deepened their knowledge of IHL during National Society/ICRC-organized events.

Backed by ICRC funds, materials and technical support, the Ethiopian Red Cross continued to build its capacities to assist conflict- and disaster-affected civilians and promote IHL.

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)				
Essential household items ¹	Beneficiaries	6,322	18%	8%
	<i>of whom IDPs</i>	5,510		
Cash ¹	Beneficiaries	660	87%	
Water and habitat activities	Beneficiaries	76,774	50%	40%
PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)				
Economic security, water and habitat (in some cases provided within a protection programme)				
Essential household items	Beneficiaries	16,533		
Cash	Beneficiaries	32		
Water and habitat activities	Beneficiaries	7,192		
WOUNDED AND SICK				
Physical rehabilitation				
Centres supported	Structures	7		
Patients receiving services	Patients	6,768	1,375	1,586
New patients fitted with prostheses	Patients	741	112	59
Prostheses delivered	Units	1,838	256	152
	<i>of which for victims of mines or explosive remnants of war</i>	347		
New patients fitted with orthoses	Patients	1,037	240	502
Orthoses delivered	Units	2,372	527	1,209
	<i>of which for victims of mines or explosive remnants of war</i>	15		
Number of patients receiving physiotherapy	Patients	3,495	778	897
Crutches delivered	Units	6,531		
Wheelchairs delivered	Units	359		

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

CIVILIANS

Dialogue maintained to gain access to the SRS

In view of the ongoing conflicts and other situations of violence, the concerned authorities received reminders of their legal obligation to safeguard those not or no longer taking part in the fighting and to allow humanitarian aid to reach those in need.

The situation in the SRS remained a concern for the ICRC, which had been unable to conduct activities there since 2007 because of a dispute with the authorities. As dialogue progressed between the authorities and the ICRC to re-establish trust and regain access to conflict-affected populations, federal and regional officials gave the ICRC permission in December to visit and assess the condition of the ICRC compound in the Gode district of SRS for the first time in five years.

Rural communities access water and improved sanitation

Communities living or resettling in rural border areas most affected by the past conflict and ongoing tensions between Eritrea and Ethiopia gained improved access to clean and reliable water sources. The construction of new water points and the repair of hand pumps helped over 55,000 people mainly in eight districts of Afar and Tigray avoid long treks to potentially polluted wells or rivers. In the same districts, more than 21,000 people further reduced health risks by constructing their own latrines and enhancing their sanitation practices following community hygiene-awareness sessions. In addition, 40 ICRC-trained technicians of the Tigray Regional Water Bureau improved their management of water resources by using a geographical information system to map water sources and a new web-based platform to facilitate more efficient live exchange of data between central administrators and field operators.

In response to the arrival in the Benishangul Gumuz region of thousands of refugees from Sudan, the local water bureau strengthened its capacity to provide quality water and sanitation services to some 20,000 residents and refugees. With spare parts

and technical assistance from the ICRC, the bureau repaired hand pumps and a major deep well serving Mankush town. Projects to improve the water supply systems in two towns were initiated.

In total, nearly 76,800 refugees and residents from different regions benefited from ICRC initiatives to facilitate access to safe water sources or to improve sanitation.

Repatriated Ethiopians and displaced civilians receive emergency assistance

People repatriated from Eritrea or affected by violence in some regions received help from the National Society, acting together with the ICRC or with its support.

Over 800 people of Ethiopian origin repatriated from Eritrea via Sudan were met with blankets, hygiene items and food upon their arrival in Tigray. They also received financial assistance to cover transportation and other costs. The ICRC continued to monitor the situation to ensure that people were repatriated voluntarily under humane conditions, in accordance with IHL.

Some 17,000 people displaced by intercommunal clashes mainly in Moyale, Oromia, and Bench Maji, Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Region (SNNPR), improved their living conditions with National Society/ICRC-supplied shelter materials and household items. To meet needs effectively, distributions were coordinated with the relevant authorities and other aid organizations.

Family members separated by conflict re-establish contact

The Ethiopian Red Cross enhanced its capacity to restore family links for conflict-affected people in partnership with the Swedish Red Cross and the ICRC, which provided training, funds, materials and technical support.

Through RCMs, civilians restored/maintained contact with their relatives. Among them were an increased number of Eritrean unaccompanied minors who had crossed the border and were

living in Ethiopian refugee camps. At the Indabaguna transit centre, children sent messages informing their families living in areas in Eritrea accessible to the ICRC that they had arrived safely. Refugees from Somalia and Sudan exchanged news with relatives; those from Sudan used a phone service to reach their families. Through the tracing service, 66 people were located.

Thirty-three people used ICRC travel documents issued in cooperation with the concerned embassies, immigration authorities and National Societies to resettle abroad or to return to their home countries. Two vulnerable and elderly women received assistance in reuniting with their families in Eritrea.

With ICRC assistance, Eritrean and Ethiopian nationals had important documents, usually school transcripts, sent across the sealed border so that they could apply for further studies or jobs. Thus, 40 people who had studied in Ethiopia had their documents sent to Eritrea, while 62 people who had studied in Eritrea had theirs sent to Ethiopia or elsewhere.

The ICRC followed up requests for information from families with relatives still missing in relation to the 1998–2000 international armed conflict with Eritrea. To mitigate difficulties caused by the absence of their main breadwinners, 32 households (192 individuals) availed themselves of loans and training from the National Society/ICRC to engage in income-generating projects ranging from small-scale trade to livestock rearing. Their participation in these projects also allowed them to interact with and receive emotional support from other families of missing persons. In addition, 75 households (450 individuals) newly repatriated from Eritrea and three other vulnerable households (18 individuals), including those headed by disabled persons, also took part in micro-economic initiatives to restore self-sufficiency.

PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM

The ICRC kept up its dialogue with the authorities with a view to gaining access to all detainees within its purview, including those in federally run places of detention and those allegedly arrested for State security reasons or on “terrorism” charges. The Ethiopian government agreed in 2011 to the resumption of ICRC visits, on hold since 2007, to security detainees in federally run prisons. Consequently, federal prison officials were informed of the ICRC’s standard procedures for visits through a briefing. Then, on the basis of a multidisciplinary assessment of all six federal prisons, the federal prison officials and the ICRC discussed ways to jointly enhance the conditions in these detention facilities.

Meanwhile, the ICRC visited detainees, including those of Eritrean origin, and monitored general conditions in regionally run detention centres in Afar and Tigray. In the second half of the year, it stepped up its activities, resuming visits to other regional prisons such as in the Amhara and Oromia regions. In 20 prisons, the ICRC visited, according to its standard procedures, over 28,000 detainees, as well as 66 Eritrean POWs newly captured by the ENDF during clashes with Eritrean forces. The authorities received confidential reports of the ICRC’s findings. The results of multidisciplinary assessments of seven regional prisons fed into discussions on future upgrades.

Some 7,000 detainees in three prisons in Tigray and two in Oromia benefited from better living conditions and reduced health risks following improvements to water, sanitation, kitchen and dormitory facilities, including new cells for women. Detainees

exchanged news with relatives through RCMs and enhanced their well-being with the help of hygiene, education and leisure items. After their release, 32 detainees had their transport costs home covered by the ICRC. To prevent disease outbreaks, an ICRC doctor checked the inmates’ health during visits. Ways to improve conditions for those suffering from TB or mental health problems were identified.

An association of former Ethiopian POWs and civilian returnees from the Ethiopia-Somalia conflict in 1977 organized, with ICRC support, a symposium that raised awareness of their past and current plight among government officials, international and local organizations and other relevant stakeholders. After the symposium, several entities pledged to support destitute members of the organization by various means, such as free training, fundraising activities or direct financial contributions.

WOUNDED AND SICK

Nearly 6,800 patients, many of whom had been injured during armed conflict or episodes of violence, received free treatment at seven physical rehabilitation centres, which continued to receive ICRC support in the form of funding, materials, equipment, on-the-job supervision and training. In addition to producing and fitting prostheses and orthoses, staff at these centres continued to assemble wheelchairs for patients. Twenty-three trainee technicians further improved their skills at an ICRC-taught nationally accredited three-year diploma course for prosthetic/orthotic technicians. Graduating in 2013, these trainees would add to the pool of skilled local personnel in the seven ICRC-supported centres, as well as others in Addis Ababa, Assosa, Gambella and Nekemte.

With technical input from the ICRC, a committee under the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs drew up a plan for implementing its national physical rehabilitation strategy, which included the setting up of a school for prosthetic/orthotic technicians and the development of a national supply chain for importing orthopaedic components and raw materials.

Prosthetic/orthotic technicians and shoemakers from eight African countries honed their skills in producing orthopaedic fittings and special footwear for people with disabilities at a seminar organized in coordination with the Red Crescent Society of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the African Federation of Orthopaedic Technicians and the International Rescue Committee.

AUTHORITIES

Expanding humanitarian activities in the country required increased support from the authorities for IHL and the ICRC’s neutral, impartial and independent humanitarian action. During several meetings, government officials at national and regional level learnt more about the ICRC’s mandate and working methods, including in relation to detainees. In October, the new Ethiopian prime minister and the ICRC president met in Addis Ababa to discuss, among other things, issues concerning the ICRC’s access to the SRS and to federal prisons (see *Civilians and People deprived of their freedom*).

Some 560 judges and prosecutors working in supreme, high and first instance courts deepened their knowledge of IHL and its national implementation mechanisms, as well as of the ICRC’s work, during dissemination sessions organized in Amhara, Oromia, SNNPR and Tigray in cooperation with regional judicial training centres.

ARMED FORCES AND OTHER BEARERS OF WEAPONS

To help ensure compliance with IHL during peace-support missions, 150 members of the Ethiopian Air Force participated in an IHL briefing prior to their deployment to Darfur. Given the crucial role of military legal advisers in the conduct of hostilities, 125 legal advisers of the ENDF strengthened their grasp of IHL during a three-day course.

Twenty-one instructors from the Sendafa Police University College and regional police training centres engaged in a five-day intensive training course to strengthen their ability to teach international human rights standards and humanitarian principles to fellow police officers. To enhance the quality of instruction, these centres were equipped with computers and other equipment. Some 860 members of the federal and regional police forces (including female officers) in Addis Ababa, Afar, Amhara, Dire Dawa, Gambella, Harari, SNNPR and Tigray learnt more about humanitarian principles in law enforcement during seminars.

CIVIL SOCIETY

To boost support for IHL and the Movement's work, 850 local authorities, including community elders, religious leaders and representatives of community-based organizations in violence-prone zones of Amhara, Benishangul Gumuz, Gambella and Oromia, participated in National Society/ICRC dissemination sessions. During seminars, some 100 journalists, including police and military media personnel, working in Addis Ababa, Gambella and Oromia discussed issues related to conflict reporting and the activities and mandate of the Movement.

To enhance their knowledge of IHL and their capacities to conduct research on related topics, 21 university lecturers from 18 universities attended an intensive five-day IHL training course, while 2 law lecturers took part in advanced IHL training abroad with ICRC support. Senior law students learnt more about IHL during a dissemination session. Students of Adama University demonstrated their grasp of IHL during a regional moot court competition in the United Republic of Tanzania.

RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

The Ethiopian Red Cross worked with the ICRC to assist struggling communities in violence- and drought-affected regions, run the family-links service (see *Civilians*) and promote IHL and humanitarian principles (see *Authorities* and *Civil society*). To reinforce its skills in these areas, the National Society continued to undergo a structural review and received ICRC funds, training, expertise and logistical back-up. Its running costs, including staff salaries and equipment/vehicle purchases, were partially covered by the ICRC.

The Ethiopian Red Cross improved its ambulance service through ICRC-supported first-aid training of instructors and staff and the receipt of 19 additional vehicles stationed in volatile zones. To enhance the provision of family-links services for refugees, it conducted training courses for its tracing staff and volunteers. A review of its partnership with the Swedish Red Cross and the ICRC sought to identify ways to bridge gaps in cooperation and increase the National Society's autonomy in providing family-links services.

In addition to coordination meetings between Movement partners, representatives of the National Society headquarters and 11 regional offices and the ICRC gathered early in 2012 to discuss the year's activities, thus further strengthening cooperation.

The ICRC's delegation to the African Union (AU) aims to achieve better understanding and wider acceptance of the ICRC within the AU Commission and other AU bodies. In its capacity as official observer to the AU, it works with member States to draw attention to problems requiring humanitarian action, to promote greater recognition and much wider implementation of IHL throughout Africa and to raise awareness of the ICRC's role and activities. It also endeavours to build strong relations with AU-accredited intergovernmental organizations, NGOs and UN agencies.

CONTEXT

The African Union (AU) continued to address the various political crises and social unrest that surfaced in Africa during 2012, including in Guinea-Bissau, Madagascar and Mali, as well as the conflicts in the Central African Republic (hereafter CAR), the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan.

The AU maintained peacekeeping forces in Somalia and, jointly with the UN, in Darfur, Sudan. An AU High-Level Implementation Panel mediated negotiations leading to agreements between South Sudan and Sudan, including on trade and security issues. Aided by the UN, the European Union and the United States of America, an AU regional taskforce endeavoured to counter armed activity by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in central Africa.

The AU continued to work towards strengthening the operational framework of its African Standby Force (ASF). Among the topics regularly discussed by the AU Commission and various AU bodies were the protection of civilians in armed conflict, peacekeeping operations, the international justice system and AU relations with other intergovernmental bodies.

ICRC ACTION AND RESULTS

To reinforce efforts to protect and assist conflict-affected populations across Africa, the ICRC made efforts to promote the integration of IHL into the AU's processes and policies and to raise awareness of IHL and ICRC activities among AU officials and, through the AU, among State decision-makers and civil society members in the region.

The AU and the ICRC worked together to incorporate IHL into the AU's normative frameworks and capacity-building mechanisms. For example, the AU drew on the expertise of an ICRC legal adviser in drafting guidelines for the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) on the treatment of defectors and captured fighters and for other forces on the handling of captured/detained LRA combatants. To boost respect for IHL during peacekeeping operations, the ICRC took steps to ensure the inclusion of IHL in the ASF's AMANI II training programme. The ICRC cooperated with the AU in developing and/or building support for IHL-related instruments, such as the AU Convention on IDPs, which entered into force in December, and weapon-related treaties. The ICRC also offered technical guidance to AU member States in the national implementation of these instruments in order to strengthen the protection afforded to children and other vulnerable populations.

Regular dialogue with the AU contributed to boosting support for the ICRC's operations in crisis-affected countries such as Mali. Through presentations and bilateral talks at regional conferences

EXPENDITURE (IN KCHF)

See Ethiopia

IMPLEMENTATION RATE

See Ethiopia

PERSONNEL

See Ethiopia

KEY POINTS

In 2012, the ICRC:

- ▶ generated support from the African Union (AU) and its member States for its operations in crisis-affected countries, including Mali
- ▶ helped AU legal experts develop guidelines on dealing with detainees and armed group defectors held by the African Union Mission in Somalia and with captured/detained Lord's Resistance Army combatants
- ▶ to help foster respect for IHL during peace-support operations, worked with the African Standby Force to integrate IHL into the content of its AMANI II training cycle for military, police and civilian units
- ▶ worked with the AU in drafting a model law for the national implementation of the AU Convention on IDPs, which entered into force in December
- ▶ raised awareness of humanitarian concerns, including the need to safeguard health services, among AU officials and member States, notably through the ICRC president's dialogue with the Peace and Security Council

and other events, the ICRC sought to facilitate the exchange of information on evolving humanitarian situations and to heighten understanding of IHL and humanitarian concerns, including the need to protect health services in armed conflict, among the leaders of AU member States, AU bodies and other organizations in order to influence their decisions in favour of people affected by armed conflicts and other situations of violence.

AUTHORITIES

AU bodies seek to ensure that their mechanisms and procedures accord with IHL

The AU continued to work with the ICRC to incorporate IHL and other relevant laws and norms into its policies. At an AU-organized expert meeting on the LRA, for instance, a planning team drew on the expertise of an ICRC legal adviser seconded to the AU in drafting procedures for the treatment of alleged LRA combatants captured/detained and for assistance to the victims. Similarly, the AU Peace and Security Department progressed in integrating IHL into AMISOM guidelines, including on dealing with armed group defectors and captured fighters, and received advice on handling reported incidents involving AMISOM forces.

To foster compliance with IHL during peace-support operations, African legal and military experts and their international partners received ICRC guidance on incorporating IHL into the design of the ASF's AMANI II training cycle. Through ICRC presentations at training events, members of ASF military, police and civilian units enhanced their knowledge of international standards relating to the use of force and IHL. Senior mission leaders preparing for deployment familiarized themselves with legal issues relating to peacekeeping during a course in Ghana. In addition, the AU Peace Support Operations Division (PSOD) and the ICRC discussed partnership on further IHL capacity-building within the wider ASF and PSOD frameworks.

AU members work on developing and implementing legal frameworks on the protection of civilians

Heightened cooperation between the AU and the ICRC led to progress in the ratification and implementation of IHL-related instruments. In December, the AU Convention on IDPs entered into force, following concerted efforts by the AU and the ICRC to encourage States to ratify the treaty. To help countries take the necessary steps to incorporate the treaty's provisions into domestic legislation, the ICRC offered technical advice at a regional consultative meeting in Tunisia, while an AU legal team worked in consultation with an ICRC adviser in drafting a model law.

The AU made progress in reinforcing mechanisms to protect vulnerable populations. During meetings and an ICRC-led seminar, the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child and the ICRC discussed the protection of children under IHL, the implementation of related provisions in domestic law and policy, and the jurisprudence of international tribunals on the recruitment of child soldiers. Ministers of justice and attorneys general from AU member States also welcomed ICRC input in revising the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and the Protocol on the Statute of the African Court of Justice and Human Rights during a conference at which they also endorsed a model national law on universal jurisdiction over international crimes, including IHL violations. To mitigate the effects of natural disasters on the continent, an AU committee conferred with the ICRC on a comprehensive disaster management policy and considered for inclusion provisions addressing the needs of dispersed families and the relatives of missing persons.

The AU and the ICRC sought to promote the national implementation of existing instruments relating to the use of weapons and to garner support for a possible international arms trade treaty by deepening understanding among member States of the humanitarian consequences of unregulated arms transfers.

The AU Commission on International Law (AUCIL) and the ICRC initiated talks on a possible partnership in efforts to encourage member States to ratify or accede to IHL instruments. To this end, two AUCIL members increased their IHL knowledge during a workshop in South Africa (see *Pretoria*).

The diplomatic community and the ICRC keep each other abreast of humanitarian concerns

The AU Commission and other AU bodies, member States, intergovernmental/regional organizations and the ICRC exchanged views on evolving humanitarian situations in Africa. Numerous meetings with representatives of these bodies served to raise awareness of National Society/ICRC operations in violence- and conflict-affected areas, such as in the CAR, Mali, South Sudan and Sudan. Interaction during various fora such as the 18th and 19th ordinary sessions of the AU Assembly, along with bilateral meetings with officials, such as the rotating presidency of the AU Peace and Security Council and the Panel of the Wise, enhanced mutual understanding and the promotion of IHL.

ICRC presentations during regional conferences and other events helped raise the awareness and elicit the support of AU members, regional economic communities and international organizations for humanitarian goals, the Movement and its neutral, impartial and independent humanitarian action. For instance, the PSC and the AU Partners Group increased their knowledge of humanitarian issues and ICRC operations worldwide on various occasions, including meetings with the ICRC president. An address to the African Parliamentary Union and an exhibit during the 8th Pan African Conference of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies provided opportunities to highlight some of the ICRC's key concerns, such as those covered by the Health Care in Danger project. To help foster the implementation of IHL at regional and country level, ICRC legal advisers and focal points from different delegations met in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, to examine IHL-related issues and developments.

CIVIL SOCIETY

Through round-tables and bilateral meetings, NGOs, think-tanks and the ICRC continued to forge closer working relationships, exchanging information on and deliberating humanitarian issues. Key civil society organizations participated in an AU consultative meeting attended by the ICRC, at which they were urged to improve information sharing, particularly in relation to the AU's Continental Early Warning System, to allow a faster response to needs arising from conflict situations.

Participants in meetings organized by the Institute for Security Studies (ISS) benefited from the ICRC's advice on IHL-related matters in areas such as cooperation between the AU and NATO and the launch of the African Centre for Peace and Security Training. In an AU and ISS initiative, journalists deepened their understanding of conflicts across Africa and discussed ethical issues surrounding their work at a course facilitated by the ICRC at the ISS's request.

Academics and civil society representatives continued to use the ICRC documentation centre in Addis Ababa for professional and research purposes.