

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC



EXPENDITURE (IN KCHF)

Protection	1,405
Assistance	10,959
Prevention	1,506
Cooperation with National Societies	1,289
General	-

► **15,158**
of which: Overheads 925

IMPLEMENTATION RATE

Expenditure/yearly budget	98%
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PERSONNEL

Expatriates	28
National staff (daily workers not included)	126

KEY POINTS

In 2010, the ICRC:

- expanded its activities in the south-east to help meet the emergency needs of over 40,000 newly displaced people, vulnerable residents and refugees affected by the ongoing presence of an armed group in the region
- reinforced the capacities of the Central African Red Cross Society to respond to emergencies, as part of wider efforts to improve the Movement's humanitarian access in remote areas
- helped nearly 180,000 people in the north to start rebuilding their lives, through agricultural, water, sanitation and reconstruction activities and a range of micro-economic initiatives
- strengthened contacts with parties to the conflict whenever possible, notably by briefing over 2,300 weapon bearers in the field
- reunited 18 children, including 10 who had reportedly escaped from or been freed by armed groups, with their families
- contributed to a sharp decline in malnutrition among inmates in one prison, while regularly monitoring the general health of detainees during visits to detention facilities

The ICRC opened a delegation in the Central African Republic in 2007 in the context of the non-international armed conflict in the north, but has carried out activities in the country since 1983. It protects and assists people affected by armed conflict or other situations of violence, providing emergency aid, helping people restore their livelihoods, and rehabilitating water and sanitation facilities. It also visits detainees, restores links between family members separated by conflict, promotes IHL among the authorities, armed forces, armed groups and civil society, and supports the development of the Central African Red Cross Society.

CONTEXT

The situation in the Central African Republic (CAR) remained volatile, with improved security in some regions offset by fresh violence in others. In the north, the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of armed groups progressed slowly, while fighters in the north-east refused to disarm, citing insecurity as the main reason for keeping their weapons. IDPs returned home to parts of the north-west where security had improved, but ongoing violence, military clashes, banditry and looting remained common elsewhere. This continued to drive people from their homes and limited the movement of humanitarian organizations. In the south-east, the ongoing presence of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) contributed to a deterioration of the security situation throughout the year, confining humanitarian action to the main

towns, where most of the rural population had fled following attacks. Meanwhile, the Uganda People's Defence Force continued to carry out military operations against the LRA (see *Uganda*).

A number of foreign troops and peacekeeping forces remained in the country. The mandate of the UN Mission in the CAR ended on 31 December 2010, by which time all troops had withdrawn.

Presidential and parliamentary elections were postponed, and the National Assembly passed a constitutional amendment allowing the president to remain in power until the polls took place.

The Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CEMAC) held its 10th Summit of Heads of State in Bangui, aimed at strengthening regional cooperation.

MAIN FIGURES AND INDICATORS				
PROTECTION				
CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)				
Red Cross messages		Total	UAMs/SCs*	
RCMs collected		139	14	
RCMs distributed		346	4	
Reunifications, transfers and repatriations		Total		
People reunited with their families		23		
	<i>including people registered by another delegation</i>	6		
People transferred/repatriated		2		
Tracing requests, including cases of missing persons		Total	Women	Minors
People for whom a tracing request was newly registered		2		1
People located (tracing cases closed positively)		25		
	<i>including people for whom tracing requests were registered by another delegation</i>	21		
Tracing cases still being handled at 31 December 2010 (people)		2		1
UAMs/SCs,* including unaccompanied demobilized child soldiers		Total	Girls	Demobilized children
UAMs/SCs newly registered by the ICRC/National Society		21	10	14
UAMs/SCs reunited with their families by the ICRC/National Society		18	7	10
	<i>including UAMs/SCs registered by another delegation</i>	5		
UAM/SC cases still being handled by the ICRC/National Society at 31 December 2010		8	4	4
Documents				
People to whom travel documents were issued		6		
PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)				
ICRC visits		Total	Women	Minors
Detainees visited		1,557		
Detainees visited and monitored individually		79	6	4
Detainees newly registered		61	6	4
Number of visits carried out		156		
Number of places of detention visited		49		
Restoring family links		Total		
RCMs collected		12		
RCMs distributed		3		

* Unaccompanied minors/separated children

ASSISTANCE				
CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)				
Economic security, water and habitat				
Food		Total	Women	Children
	Beneficiaries	76,203	30%	50%
	<i>of whom IDPs</i>	76,203		
Essential household items	Beneficiaries	16,171	26%	54%
	<i>of whom IDPs</i>	4,525		
Agricultural, veterinary and other micro-economic initiatives	Beneficiaries	44,551	30%	50%
Water and habitat activities	Beneficiaries	134,647	30%	40%
	<i>of whom IDPs</i>	13,465		

MAIN FIGURES AND INDICATORS

ASSISTANCE

PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)

Economic security, water and habitat		Total	Women	Children
Food	Beneficiaries	63		
Essential household items	Beneficiaries	1,176		
Water and habitat activities	Beneficiaries	240		

ICRC ACTION AND RESULTS

The ICRC, together with the Central African Red Cross Society, focused on assisting people affected by armed conflict or other situations of violence in the CAR. Security constraints prevented the delegation from working in parts of the Vakaga region, so only limited assistance to the inhabitants of Birao town was possible.

People uprooted by fighting and their host communities received essential household items and food rations to help them cope. The ICRC and the Central African Red Cross scaled up such assistance in the south-east, in response to a worsening security situation there. To help ensure protection of civilians and gain safe access of aid workers to people in need, the ICRC briefed members of the armed forces and armed groups in the field, whenever possible, as well as a number of local authorities and influential community leaders, on basic humanitarian principles and the Movement. In more stable areas, the delegation supplied vulnerable residents and returning IDPs with a combination of seed, tools, draft animals and training in agricultural techniques to enable them to grow their own food. Others increased their income through a range of micro-economic initiatives. Returnees were given materials and training to build or repair their homes. To reduce health risks, the ICRC constructed or rehabilitated water points and latrines in villages, while ICRC-trained National Society volunteers conducted sessions for villagers on good hygiene practices.

People displaced by violence restored contact with family in the CAR and abroad through the tracing and RCM services run by the National Society and the ICRC. Where possible and appropriate, the ICRC reunited children, including demobilized child soldiers, with their families.

Delegates visited security detainees held in places of detention throughout the country, monitoring their treatment and general living conditions and sharing the findings and recommendations confidentially with the authorities. As the penitentiary administration often lacked the necessary resources, the ICRC provided financial, technical and material support to improve inmates' nutrition, health and hygiene. With the authorities' consent, the delegation also approached other organizations and donors for support in helping the CAR rebuild its penal and judicial systems.

The ICRC strengthened its dialogue with the national and military authorities while offering legal expertise to the relevant ministries in implementing humanitarian treaties and in creating a permanent national IHL committee. The delegation also assisted

the armed forces in integrating IHL into its doctrine, training and operations and sponsored several personnel to enhance their skills at courses abroad.

With ICRC financial, technical and material support, the Central African Red Cross continued to develop its emergency response capacities and its ability to promote IHL and the Movement among a broad audience. Notably, the National Society was in a better position to assist conflict-affected people during ICRC relief operations in the south-east after building a new office in the region.

By coordinating closely with Movement partners and other humanitarian actors working in the CAR, the ICRC helped ensure that the needs of vulnerable populations were met without duplication.

CIVILIANS

Violence and looting continued to affect populations in several regions, with civilians reportedly killed, wounded or abducted, particularly in the south-east. A number of people in conflict-affected areas approached the ICRC to make allegations of IHL violations. These were documented and formed the basis of confidential oral and written representations to the parties concerned. Whenever feasible, the delegation strengthened contacts with weapon bearers, reminding them of their responsibilities under IHL to protect civilians. Such dialogue had the aim of gaining safe access to people in need and preventing further abuses.

Conflict-affected families receive emergency relief

In parts of the north and south-east, thousands of people fled their homes as a result of armed clashes, banditry and ethnic tensions. Most sought refuge in town centres or outlying bush and often had few or no belongings. To help IDPs cope during their first few months of displacement and to alleviate some of the strain placed on host communities, over 66,700 people (19,250 households) received one-off food rations and almost 16,200 people (3,300 households) got by with essential household items. Those assisted included over 40,000 IDPs and Congolese refugees in the south-east, where food distributions were scaled up following a deterioration of the security situation during the year that sharply reduced agricultural production. Resident farmers there also got a one-off food ration to tide them and their families (nearly 9,500 people) over until the harvest. Whenever possible, trained Central African Red Cross volunteers worked alongside ICRC delegates during food distributions, reinforcing their operational capacities.

Returnees and vulnerable residents assisted in restoring their livelihoods

In northern areas where the security situation had improved, IDPs returning home found that little remained of their previous lives, and residents were struggling to make ends meet. During the year, over 44,500 conflict-affected people (nearly 9,000 households) started to get back on their feet thanks to a variety of ICRC livelihood-support initiatives. Some 300 villagers (20 families) regained access to markets and health centres by means of ICRC-donated bicycles or pushcarts or began earning a living again using brick-making kilns and peanut-processing kits. As part of efforts to revive agricultural activities in the country, more than 40,000 other residents and returnees (8,800 households) used seed, tools and draft animals to plant and harvest their own crops again and to generate income. Over a thousand farmers who had received disease-resistant seed from the ICRC in 2009 participated in courses on good farming practices and marketing, further boosting the economic security of some 230 families. Additionally, some 300 members of farmers' unions received seed, tools and draft animals, drawn from resources redirected from a planned seed multiplication initiative for village associations after an ICRC assessment concluded that the unions had more immediate needs. Owing to the volatile security situation in Birao, resources to rehabilitate a veterinary pharmacy were used instead to build and stock a new one in the more stable Paoua region, boosting animal health and thus the livelihoods of some 3,000 pastoralists.

Civilians have improved access to water, sanitation and shelter

In parts of the north-west, residents and people returning to their villages after months or years of displacement had limited access to adequate water, sanitation and shelter. Meanwhile, newly displaced people in the south-east were living in precarious conditions. By year-end, nearly 135,000 people in the CAR had benefited from a range of ICRC initiatives.

Thus, in support of local water committees, over 17,000 people were able to access a clean water supply after the ICRC dug new wells and protected natural springs, as did some 42,200 people living near newly repaired boreholes. Over 57,000 people learnt about good hygiene practices from Central African Red Cross volunteers trained by the ICRC. To reinforce this initiative, communities worked with the ICRC to construct additional latrines near schools and health facilities, serving over 9,000 people, and nearly 9,000 families had latrines installed in their homes. In the north-west, over 7,100 people started to repair or rebuild their destroyed homes with ICRC material and technical support.

As an emergency measure in the south-east, some 10,000 IDPs received clean water through an emergency distribution network and attended hygiene-promotion sessions conducted by National Society volunteers. Thanks in part to these initiatives, no major outbreak of water-borne diseases was reported.

In parallel, health facilities in conflict-affected areas received ICRC donations of medicines and medical materials to treat vulnerable

IDPs, residents and returnees. Hospitals also received ad hoc supplies of drugs and medical supplies to help ensure people wounded during violence received appropriate treatment.

Family members separated by conflict reconnect with their relatives

Refugees, IDPs and others separated from their families in or across borders, mostly owing to insecurity in the south-east, restored and maintained contact with relatives using the tracing and RCM services run by the National Society and the ICRC.

Eighteen children, ten of whom had reportedly escaped from or been freed by armed groups, rejoined their families thanks to the coordinated efforts of national authorities, relevant UN agencies and neighbouring ICRC delegations.

PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM

Across the country, some 1,557 detainees received visits, conducted according to the ICRC's standard procedures, enabling delegates to monitor their treatment and living conditions. Those detained in connection with armed conflict or for other reasons of State security were followed up individually. Particular attention was also paid to the situation of vulnerable detainees, such as women and children. Inmates had the opportunity to communicate with their families through RCMs. After the visits, the relevant authorities received confidential oral and written feedback on the ICRC's findings and, where relevant, recommendations. Meanwhile, with the full agreement of the national authorities, the support of other organizations and donors was sought in helping rebuild the CAR's penal and judicial systems. Dialogue continued with the government and armed groups to obtain access to all detainees in their custody.

Because the authorities often lacked the necessary resources, many detainees suffered from poor health brought on by inadequate food, health care and sanitary facilities. Delegates regularly monitored their general health and nutritional status during visits to detention facilities and encouraged the authorities to meet their responsibilities regarding detainees' welfare. Some 63 inmates in one prison received high-energy dietary supplements and food rations, contributing to a sharp decline in malnutrition there. Detainees countrywide also had improved access to health care in prison dispensaries or nearby public health structures regularly supplied with drugs and medical material by the ICRC. To bolster the prison administration's efforts to improve living conditions in detention facilities, health personnel received expert advice in their work, with emphasis, among other things, on the importance of giving inmates access to national HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis programmes.

In parallel, detainees were given personal hygiene items, along with buckets and jerrycans for cleaning purposes, and participated in sessions on good hygiene practices conducted by ICRC-trained National Society volunteers. In two detention facilities, including the *gendarmerie's* main detention centre in Bangui,

240 inmates enjoyed improved sanitation conditions after the ICRC rehabilitated latrines, showers, waste-collection systems and water-storage units. With ICRC technical support, the authorities began reorganizing prison water distribution procedures to ensure that inmates had a more regular supply.

Despite a good harvest in 2009, the authorities in Bossangoa prison had trouble managing the market garden launched with ICRC support in 2007 to boost inmates' nutritional intake. The project was therefore suspended.

AUTHORITIES

National and local authorities and the ICRC strengthened their dialogue through regular meetings. Discussions enhanced the authorities' understanding of humanitarian principles and the Movement and reminded them of their responsibilities under IHL.

Meanwhile, the government received legal advice in ratifying IHL treaties, such as Additional Protocol III, and in incorporating the relevant provisions into domestic law, for example through a draft prison act. The authorities were also supported in their ongoing efforts to create a permanent national IHL committee to better implement humanitarian instruments and to promote the enforcement of existing laws, such as the law governing use of the emblem, adopted in 2009. To this end, two members of the ad hoc committee were sponsored to attend the third Universal Meeting of National IHL Committees, held in Geneva, Switzerland (see *International Law and Cooperation*). With ICRC technical support, the ad hoc committee was also actively involved in organizing a national workshop on IHL implementation for key decision-makers.

At the regional level, diplomats, members of the international community and representatives of the Bangui-based CEMAC met regularly with the ICRC, enabling the delegation to rally support for the Movement, keep abreast of developments in IHL implementation and provide legal recommendations on draft laws.

ARMED FORCES AND OTHER BEARERS OF WEAPONS

Some 760 members of the armed forces and 1,600 other weapon bearers, including those in still active armed groups, learnt about IHL and the Movement during ICRC presentations. These contacts also served to encourage respect for civilians and to facilitate ICRC/National Society access to people in need.

In parallel, the armed forces received technical support to integrate IHL into their doctrine, training and operations. Thus, one officer was sponsored to attend the fourth Senior Workshop on International Rules governing Military Operations in Lucerne, Switzerland (see *International Law and Cooperation*). The armed forces' IHL committee was also in a better position to implement and promote IHL after one of its members participated in a regional workshop abroad. With ICRC input, the military academy

in Bangui was reviewing the status of the integration of IHL into its curriculum, and cadets in their final year of study examined basic humanitarian principles during an ICRC seminar.

Incoming peacekeepers and officers of the Multinational Force in the CAR participated in pre-deployment sessions on the basic principles of IHL. They attended refresher sessions in the field, as needed.

CIVIL SOCIETY

Many influential members of civil society, as well as the general public, were introduced to the ICRC and Central African Red Cross through a series of national radio broadcasts, press releases and interviews on the Movement's activities throughout the CAR, such as its work to reunite members of dispersed families in the south-east.

To further generate support for IHL and the Movement, religious and traditional leaders participated in briefings held in areas where the ICRC and the National Society worked. During the discussions, the communities shared their knowledge of how seasonal communal conflicts were triggered, which helped the ICRC to respond to needs more effectively.

Notwithstanding academic strikes in 2009, the CAR's two main educational institutions, including the country's only public university, continued teaching IHL with ICRC support. While a moot court competition was not held as planned, students boosted their IHL knowledge during various information sessions, notably a seminar for 100 public law students. One lecturer sharpened his teaching skills at an IHL workshop abroad (see *Yaoundé*) and took an active role in the national workshop on IHL implementation (see *Authorities*).

RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

With ICRC material, financial and technical support, the Central African Red Cross continued to develop its capacities to respond to emergencies, restore family links and promote IHL and the Movement.

To strengthen its first-aid capacity, the National Society trained new instructors, organized refresher courses for volunteers, produced instruction manuals, and improved the delivery of materials to local committees in violence-prone areas. In preparation for the elections, it also drafted a contingency plan, with the ICRC's help, which included monitoring and early warning systems.

In the south-east, volunteers were fully involved in ICRC-led food distributions and water and sanitation projects, strengthening the National Society's operational capacities (see *Civilians*). To this end, local volunteers underwent specialized training to assess the needs of people affected by fighting. To extend its field presence in the region, the National Society constructed a new provincial office in Obo, with ICRC funding.

To promote widespread understanding of humanitarian principles and the Movement, National Society communication personnel gave talks on these topics to thousands of local volunteers, community members and local authorities throughout the country. Volunteers received bicycles and megaphones to help get the message out, and launched a campaign promoting respect for the red cross emblem.

The ICRC worked in close cooperation with Movement partners, holding regular meetings to coordinate activities and support to the National Society.