

rwanda



The ICRC opened a delegation in Rwanda in 1990. It focuses on visiting the tens of thousands of detainees held in central prisons. It also regularly visits people held in places of temporary detention such as police stations and military facilities. It helps to reunite children with the families from whom they became separated during the exodus of 1994 or during the mass repatriations in 1996–97. The ICRC works with the authorities to incorporate IHL into domestic legislation and into school and university curricula. It also supports the development of the Rwandan Red Cross.

EXPENDITURE (IN KCHF)

Protection	3,626
Assistance	3,812
Prevention	631
Cooperation with National Societies	787
General	-

► **8,855**

of which: Overheads 540

IMPLEMENTATION RATE

Expenditure/yearly budget	93%
---------------------------	-----

PERSONNEL

22 expatriates
129 national staff (daily workers not included)

KEY POINTS

In 2007, the ICRC:

- ▶ visited more than 96,000 detainees and made recommendations to the authorities, where necessary, for improvements to detention conditions
- ▶ submitted a report to the authorities summarizing observations made during visits to people held in police stations
- ▶ reunited 48 children with their families
- ▶ in conjunction with the local authorities, improved access to safe water for some 33,000 people
- ▶ together with the Rwanda Defence Forces, held a five-day advanced IHL course for 20 military instructors
- ▶ conducted workshops on the Safer Access approach for 140 emergency brigade volunteers from the Rwandan Red Cross

CONTEXT

During the year, the country made considerable progress in processing the cases of people accused of crimes related to the genocide. By the end of the year, *gacaca* jurisdictions throughout the country had heard over 1 million cases and delivered judgment on over 800,000 of them. A revision to the 2004 Organic Law on Gacaca Jurisdictions and a resolution adopted by the Council of Ministers allowed people who had been convicted by the *gacaca* courts, who had pleaded guilty, and whose repentance and remorse had been accepted by the courts to serve the public work portion of their sentences before imprisonment.

The government announced that *gacaca* trials would continue into 2008, allowing the remaining cases to be heard, and that the courts might also try those accused of Category I crimes (i.e. the most serious charges, including planning, organizing or leading the genocide, mass murder and rape).

The government formally abolished the death penalty in July, thus removing one of the objections to the transfer of cases from the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda to the country's own courts. In further preparation for the proposed transfers, a transit facility had been built in Kigali and cells in Mpanga prison made ready to receive the accused.

Rwanda continued to benefit from international support. Improving regional relations were demonstrated by the country's participation in a meeting in April to revive the Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries, as well as by its formal accession to the East African Community in July. Many people continued to suffer poverty, especially in rural areas.

MAIN FIGURES AND INDICATORS

	Total
PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)	
Detainees visited	96,533
Detainees visited and monitored individually	394
<i>of whom females</i>	31
<i>of whom minors</i>	10
Number of visits carried out	294
Number of places of detention visited	122
RESTORING FAMILY LINKS	
<i>Red Cross messages (RCMs) and reunifications</i>	
RCMs collected	4,705
RCMs distributed	6,514
People reunited with their families	56
<i>Tracing requests, including cases of missing persons</i>	
People for whom a tracing request was newly registered	90
<i>of whom females</i>	50
<i>of whom minors at the time of disappearance</i>	51
Tracing cases closed positively (persons located)	17
Tracing cases still being handled at 31 December 2007 (people)	75
<i>of which for females</i>	46
<i>of which for minors at the time of disappearance</i>	47
<i>Unaccompanied minors (UAMs) and separated children (SCs), including unaccompanied demobilized child soldiers</i>	
UAMs/SCs newly registered by the ICRC	98
UAMs/SCs reunited with their families by the ICRC	48
UAM/SC cases still being handled at 31 December 2007 (people)	506
DOCUMENTS ISSUED	
People to whom a detention attestation was issued	11

	Total	Women	Children
CIVILIANS AND PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM			
<i>Economic security, water and habitat</i>			
Essential household items <i>Beneficiaries</i>	96,938	3%	
Water, sanitation and habitat projects <i>Beneficiaries</i>	138,283	13%	16%

ICRC ACTION

The first part of 2007 saw a rise in the prison population, reaching 98,000 by the end of May. As a result, conditions of detention in central prisons worsened. Physical infrastructure was far overstretched, and in most prisons the deterioration in inmates' nutritional status and hygiene conditions created serious health hazards. The ICRC monitored these conditions closely and addressed regular reports to the authorities concerned, calling for a significant and rapid reduction in the prison population. To adapt its activities to the needs of the growing prison population, the ICRC increased deliveries of hygiene products and materials and contributed to the building of four outdoor kitchens. It continued to make the RCM service available to newly imprisoned detainees so that they could make contact with their relatives.

The steady reduction of the prison population in the second half of the year had an overall positive effect on health, hygiene and other conditions of detention. The focus of discussions with the authorities therefore shifted from the need to reduce overcrowding to other concerns over detention conditions.

The ICRC systematically visited police jails throughout the country. It submitted a summary report to the police authorities based on the visits it had made during the previous two years.

To provide the population of rural areas with access to safe drinking water, the ICRC completed five projects for almost 49,000 people and initiated one further project.

The ICRC was engaged in various initiatives to help build an environment that favoured the promotion, adoption and implementation

of IHL. These included working with the Rwanda Defence Forces to organize a training module on IHL for military instructors and with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation in the holding of a technical workshop on the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons for legal advisers from the principal ministries and institutions concerned.

Where children had been separated from their families by conflict in the region, the ICRC helped to trace their relatives, reunite them if appropriate, and monitor and support their reintegration. The Rwandan Red Cross continued to receive ICRC financial and technical support to run the RCM service, for which it had assumed responsibility (apart from in detention facilities) at the end of 2006. It also began to take over the handling of tracing requests. The ICRC remained committed to supporting the development of the National Society's family-links activities, as well as its programmes to promote IHL and the Fundamental Principles and build its conflict preparedness and response capacity. When needed and on request, the ICRC provided logistical support for the National Society's emergency response programmes.

Movement partners working in Rwanda met regularly to share information and coordinate their activities.

CIVILIANS

People separated from their relatives were able to restore or maintain contact through the tracing and RCM services provided by the Rwandan Red Cross, with ICRC support (see *Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement*). Weapon bearers demobilized and

repatriated to Rwanda by the UN Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) were able to use these services at the Mutobo demobilization camp.

Where appropriate, children were repatriated to Rwanda, mostly from the DRC, and reunited with their families. The names of children seeking their parents were broadcast on local radio bulletins. A total of 124 children who had been reunited with their families received visits from ICRC staff to see how they were settling back into society. Eighty-two families with social or economic problems received support mobilized by the ICRC from local authorities or associations.

- ▶ 4,393 RCMs collected from and 6,364 RCMs distributed to civilians, including 88 from and 56 to unaccompanied/separated children
- ▶ new tracing requests registered for 90 people (including 50 females and 51 minors at the time of disappearance); 17 people located; 75 people (including 46 females and 47 minors at the time of disappearance) still being sought
- ▶ 56 people reunited with their families, including 48 unaccompanied/separated children
- ▶ 98 unaccompanied/separated children registered (including 18 demobilized children); 506 cases of unaccompanied/separated children (including 37 demobilized children) still being handled
- ▶ 374 names of children seeking their relatives broadcast
- ▶ 174 vulnerable orphans' school fees paid

After more than a decade of activity, as a result of which several hundred thousand Rwandans had benefited from improved access to safe water, ICRC water supply projects in the country neared conclusion. People living in rural areas where other organizations were absent were still the principal focus of the ICRC's remaining activities. The organization continued to work directly with the local authorities on construction/rehabilitation projects, while simultaneously building their capacities to provide safe water and manage the water supply system.

Residents of Gasasa, Gihogwe, Kabarondo, Kabaya and Ndiza gained access to an improved supply of safe water with the completion of five projects in those areas. For each project, the local authorities also received ICRC support to help them transfer management of the water supply to the private sector or to the community itself.

A project in the Mbazi rural area was initiated to improve access to safe water for approximately 10,000 people.

Some 15,000 people in Nyagatare had access to safe water during a cholera outbreak thanks to National Society and ICRC water trucking and delivery.

- ▶ 48,736 people benefited from water/sanitation projects

PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM

Visiting detainees

The population of Rwanda's 16 central prisons reached 98,000 by the end of May. The rapid, significant and continual increase seriously worsened conditions of detention, to the point where they were dramatically below all recognized standards, whether international or those prescribed by national legislation. In the second

half of the year, the prison population decreased substantially, to 59,000 at the end of December, with some limited corresponding improvements in conditions of detention.

Whether held in places of permanent or temporary detention, detainees received regular visits from ICRC delegates, who checked on their treatment, living conditions, nutritional status, health and access to health care. Observations regarding detention conditions were regularly conveyed to the relevant authorities. Newly imprisoned detainees were given the opportunity to make contact with their relatives through the RCM service. Minors and women received particular attention, and the ICRC insisted on their strict separation from male adults. The organization also submitted cases of prolonged detention without trial to the judicial authorities and provided school materials to support educational programs for underage detainees.

Conditions of detention and standards of treatment in police stations were the subject of a confidential summary report transmitted to the Rwandan authorities, conveying observations made by the ICRC over a two-year period.

- ▶ 96,533 detainees visited, of whom 394 monitored individually (including 31 females and 10 minors) and 330 newly registered (including 25 females and 9 minors), during 294 visits to 122 places of detention
- ▶ 312 RCMs collected from and 150 RCMs distributed to detainees
- ▶ 650 minors in prison provided with school supplies

Helping improve detention conditions

At the beginning of the year, the ICRC finished its phased withdrawal from the provision of essential medicines in prisons. Nevertheless, it continued to monitor detainees' access to health services through visits by its delegates and conveyed their observations to the prison authorities.

In February 2007, a health department was set up within the National Prison Service, with financing from the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and as advocated by the ICRC. The department aimed to ensure health coordination and monitoring in the prisons and consisted initially of a medical doctor, later joined by two nurses. The new medical team met ICRC delegates regularly and underwent on-site training.

In collaboration with the prison service health department, the delegation ensured that epidemiological surveillance of communicable diseases in prisons was in place. During cholera and typhus epidemics in five prisons, detainees benefited from ICRC logistical and technical support to the prison service. In order to improve detainees' access to mental health services, the prison service health department organized a two-week mental health training session for 17 prison nurses in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and with ICRC support.

The nutritional status of detainees continued to be monitored by the ICRC through measurement of their Body Mass Index. The results of the assessments carried out in 16 prisons were shared with the authorities, so that they could take corrective action. Sick detainees in 12 prisons had a better diet, thanks to seed, fertilizers and tools supplied by the ICRC to the prison authorities, enabling the cultivation of vegetables and pulses.

Detainees' living conditions in a number of prisons were enhanced through ICRC engineering projects, carried out in conjunction with the authorities. These included measures to improve water supply

through water catchment and rainwater collection systems. Biogas systems (wastewater management combined with energy production) were being built in order to improve sanitation facilities and reduce wood consumption. One new kitchen facility was completed and four were under construction.

To maintain hygiene standards in view of the rising number of detainees, prisons received an increased supply of chlorine, liquid soap, soap bars, and hygiene products for women. Pest-control campaigns were conducted in 10 prisons.

- ▶ 89,547 detainees benefited from water/sanitation/habitat projects
- ▶ 96,938 detainees received hygiene items
- ▶ minors in 3 places of detention were able to move into newly constructed separate accommodation blocks

AUTHORITIES

State bodies continued to receive information and advice from the ICRC concerning the ratification and national implementation of IHL instruments.

Having completed its consultations with the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation requested ICRC legal and technical support in clarifying the exact responsibilities that ratification of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and its five protocols would entail. Together with the ICRC, the ministry subsequently organized a one-day technical workshop, bringing together legal advisers from the principal ministries and institutions concerned to discuss the implications of ratification of the Convention.

The authorities received input from the ICRC on IHL aspects of the new draft penal code.

ARMED FORCES AND OTHER BEARERS OF WEAPONS

The Rwanda Defence Forces received ICRC assistance in their efforts to integrate IHL into military procedures and training.

- ▶ 20 military instructors refreshed and deepened their knowledge of IHL during a five-day advanced course run by the ICRC
- ▶ officers on the Grade 3 staff course followed an IHL component facilitated by the ICRC

Information sessions on IHL and the ICRC were organized for:

- ▶ more than 600 newly promoted cadets
- ▶ over 600 soldiers prior to their deployment on peacekeeping duties in Sudan

CIVIL SOCIETY

Journalists were regularly invited to cover ICRC events, such as the inauguration of water supply projects, family reunifications, IHL training sessions in military academies, and IHL workshops. The media regularly published articles on ICRC activities and broadcast several events on national television.

Preparation and revision of the new secondary school political education course manual, which included a chapter devoted to human rights and IHL, neared fruition. French and English versions of the text were completed in April and November, and the printing process got under way.

University students researching IHL-related topics continued to receive advice and help in obtaining access to appropriate source materials. A team from the National University of Rwanda participated in an international IHL competition in the United Republic of Tanzania, with ICRC technical and financial support.

RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

The Rwandan Red Cross responded to emergencies and worked to fight poverty, confirming its position as a major humanitarian actor in Rwanda, while decentralizing its 30 district committees. It received ICRC support for its programmes to promote IHL and the Fundamental Principles, prepare for and respond to crisis situations in the country, and restore family links.

Following the transfer to it of responsibility for the running of the RCM service (excluding in places of detention) at the end of 2006, the National Society distributed and collected RCMs countrywide and formed part of the international RCM network. Through further ICRC support, the National Society developed other elements of its family-links programme and began to handle tracing requests in 10 of Rwanda's 30 districts.

- ▶ 2 permanent tracing staff and 20 volunteers trained in the handling of tracing requests

The Rwandan Red Cross received ICRC technical support in the preparation of a bill protecting the name and emblems of the Movement, for adoption by the government. It drafted a national communication policy, a communication strategy and a five-year plan of action with the support of the International Federation and the ICRC. Through dissemination activities and continued media coverage, the mission and activities of the National Society were better known to and appreciated by the authorities and the population.

- ▶ dissemination volunteers delivered information sessions on the Movement and the basic rules of IHL for local authorities and Red Cross volunteers
- ▶ 50 radio programmes and frequent press releases on Rwandan Red Cross activities broadcast/issued

During natural disasters, the Rwandan Red Cross was able to respond rapidly and efficiently thanks in part to ICRC training and material and logistical support. The Safer Access approach was integrated into the National Society's emergency response training course.

- ▶ 140 emergency brigade members attended 5 workshops on the Safer Access approach

Movement partners working in Rwanda met regularly to share information and coordinate their activities. The National Society participated in the 30th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent in Geneva, Switzerland, with ICRC support.