



# dakar (regional)

The Dakar regional delegation has existed in its current form since 1994. It focuses on promoting IHL among the armed forces and other bearers of weapons and on encouraging its implementation by the authorities throughout the region. It also supports the activities of the National Societies, assists people affected by violence in Casamance and in Niger, such as displaced persons in need and returnees, and visits detainees of ICRC concern, providing them with material aid where necessary.

### COVERING

Cape Verde, Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Niger, Senegal

### EXPENDITURE (IN KCHF)

Protection	659
Assistance	1,507
Prevention	1,721
Cooperation with National Societies	851
General	-

► **4,738**

of which: Overheads 290

### IMPLEMENTATION RATE

Expenditure/yearly budget	88%
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### PERSONNEL

14	expatriates
63	national staff (daily workers not included)

### KEY POINTS

#### In 2007, the ICRC:

- ▶ visited 4,072 detainees held by the Niger authorities and 40 detainees, mainly members of Niger's army, held by the Mouvement des Nigériens pour la Justice (MNJ)
- ▶ as a neutral intermediary, facilitated the release of 33 people, mainly members of Niger's army, held by the MNJ
- ▶ supported the Red Cross Society of Niger by training 152 first-aid coordinators and volunteers in violence-prone regions
- ▶ developed dialogue with the Mouvement des Forces Démocratiques de la Casamance with a view to returning to Casamance and resuming its activities fully there
- ▶ improved access to water for people in 10 communities affected by fighting and violence in northern Guinea-Bissau in 2006
- ▶ supported the armed forces of Mali, Niger and Senegal in adopting measures to integrate IHL, and assisted the University of Niamey in incorporating IHL into its law curriculum

## CONTEXT

The security situation in northern Niger deteriorated steadily, with a series of clashes between the military and the Mouvement des Nigériens pour la Justice (MNJ). Scores of people, mainly military personnel, were captured by both sides. The MNJ released over 60 of them through intermediaries. Civilians and military personnel alike were affected by an increase in anti-vehicle mine incidents and banditry along major roads linking Agadez to other urban centres.

In an effort to resolve the problem, the government of Niger issued a decree temporarily giving greater powers to security forces. Several local and international journalists were arrested following temporary restrictions on the media. Notwithstanding international efforts to mediate, a rapid resolution of the situation appeared unlikely.

In northern Mali, during clashes with the army, the Alliance Touareg Nord-Mali pour le Changement captured military personnel, ten of whom were later released. The government sought a political solution to the problem through the mediation of certain countries. The illegal traffic of humans, weapons and narcotics and the presence of radical religious groups in Mali and Niger also posed a serious challenge to the governments of the two countries.

In Senegal, the economy and the population continued to suffer the effects of steep oil prices. The peace initiative in Casamance experienced a setback with the assassination of a senior government representative involved in reviving it. Along the borders with Gambia and Guinea-Bissau, the presence of weapon bearers remained a serious security concern. This and delays in implementing the long-awaited programme to clear mines discouraged some 50,000 IDPs and 12,000 refugees (in Gambia and Guinea-Bissau) from returning to their villages of origin, and humanitarian organizations from operating in Casamance.

Guinea-Bissau still encountered difficulties linked to the unwieldy size of its army, the political and socio-economic situation, and insecurity. Like most of the region, it grappled with problems arising from illegal migration and drug trafficking.

**MAIN FIGURES AND INDICATORS**

	Total		Total	Women	Children	
<b>PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)<sup>1</sup></b>			<b>CIVILIANS AND PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM</b>			
Detainees visited	4,161	<i>Economic security, water and habitat</i>				
Detainees visited and monitored individually	102	Agricultural inputs and micro-economic initiatives <sup>2</sup>	Beneficiaries	5,124	31%	50%
	<i>of whom minors</i>	1				
Number of visits carried out	44	Water, sanitation and habitat projects <sup>3</sup>	Beneficiaries	35,050	20%	60%
Number of places of detention visited	28	<i>Health<sup>4</sup></i>				
<b>RESTORING FAMILY LINKS</b>		Health centres supported	Structures	3		
<i>Red Cross messages (RCMs) and reunifications</i>		Consultations	Patients	4,919		
RCMs collected	15		<i>of which curative</i>		1,234	1,991
RCMs distributed	44		<i>of which ante/post-natal</i>		505	
<b>DOCUMENTS ISSUED</b>		Immunizations	Doses	1,813		
People to whom travel documents were issued	3					

- 1. Guinea-Bissau, Niger and Senegal
- 2. Senegal
- 3. Guinea-Bissau and Senegal
- 4. Senegal

**ICRC ACTION**

In Niger, the ICRC opened an office in Agadez and upgraded its office in Niamey to a mission, intensifying its monitoring of the situation in the northern regions of Mali and Niger and its response to the population’s needs. Upon the request of the authorities in Niger and the MNJ, the ICRC evacuated wounded and ailing military personnel released by the MNJ, confirming its role as a neutral intermediary. It strengthened its dialogue with the authorities, the MNJ and other stakeholders to ensure respect for civilians by weapon bearers and to safeguard the security of its staff and those of other Movement components operating in northern Niger. It assessed the mine risk around Agadez to find ways of identifying and meeting the needs of the population affected by the conflict and expanding its humanitarian activities without jeopardizing the safety of its staff.

In Senegal, the ICRC assistance programme in the Fogny region of Casamance, comprising market gardening projects and the rehabilitation of water, sanitation and health facilities, remained suspended following the death, in 2006, of an ICRC delegate in a mine incident. Nevertheless, the organization still implemented certain projects with the support of the Senegalese Red Cross Society and the health authorities. It reassessed the security situation and the population’s needs and reinforced its dialogue with the leaders of a faction of the Mouvement des Forces Démocratiques de la Casamance (MFDC) to obtain security guarantees that would permit its return to Casamance and the full resumption of its activities there.

It continued to visit detainees in Guinea-Bissau, Niger and Senegal to monitor their conditions of detention and treatment. It shared its findings with the authorities and supported them in ensuring that detainees’ treatment and living conditions complied with internationally accepted standards. In Gambia, where access to detainees was denied following the 2006 attempted coup d’état, the organization pursued discussions with the authorities on the possibility of resuming prison visits, but so far to no avail.

The ICRC maintained a dialogue with the region’s national authorities on the need to ratify IHL treaties and incorporate their provisions into domestic legislation. It continued to promote the integration of IHL and international human rights law into the

training and practice of the armed and security forces. At the MFDC’s request, the ICRC organized the first-ever IHL sessions for members of the group. It carried on promoting IHL and the Movement in collaboration with other traditional partners, including regional authorities, the media and academics.

Alongside other Movement partners, the ICRC assisted victims of conflict and floods in northern Niger. It trained staff and volunteers of the National Societies of Guinea-Bissau, Niger and Senegal to strengthen their emergency preparedness and response capacities.

The regional training unit continued to develop and coordinate ICRC strategy and provide delegations with specialist advice, training and field support. It conducted 20 courses, on topics ranging from child protection to team management, for around 280 ICRC staff.

**CIVILIANS**

**Mali and Niger**

Some 3,800 people were displaced from Iférouane in northern Niger to camps in the vicinity and to neighbouring towns owing to clashes, banditry and mine incidents and to floods that occurred in August, destroying homes and crops. Abuses against civilians, including summary executions, were reported.

The ICRC maintained or stepped up contacts with national authorities, armed forces, armed groups, local leaders, civilians and other stakeholders in northern Mali and Niger. However, security constraints, mainly the presence of mines, prevented the ICRC from making an overall assessment of the situation of IDPs. An assessment of the mine risk around Agadez, carried out at year-end, was expected to help identify measures to enhance the organization’s access to victims of the armed conflict and its response to their needs.

In Iférouane, a health post was able to provide better treatment for civilians affected by the conflict and floods thanks to medical supplies received from the ICRC.

**Casamance, Senegal**

In Casamance, the situation remained generally calm, although the presence of weapon bearers remained a security concern for

civilians. In Fogny, the hub of ICRC activities in Casamance, the assistance programme, comprising market gardening and the rehabilitation of water, sanitation and health facilities, remained suspended (see *ICRC action*). Nevertheless, the National Society and the health authorities provided support, such as monitoring activities, to ensure the continuation of certain projects. Following the ICRC's intercession with the army and local authorities in Casamance, military personnel occupying a private house vacated it.

#### *Providing health care*

In Fogny, 50 traditional birth attendants and health and first-aid workers were trained as part of ongoing support to community health facilities. To ensure that community health facilities constructed previously by the ICRC continued to run smoothly, the heads of 16 such facilities received management training. The ensuing improvement in the quality of services enabled the facilities to cater for around 10,000 people. One health centre also benefited from the construction of latrines.

Three referral health posts in Fogny received mosquito nets treated with insecticide as part of a malaria prevention programme. The sale of 1,200 nets at subsidized prices for use by pregnant women and children under five helped the posts enhance their self-sufficiency. Within the scope of the programme, the network of health workers responsible for raising awareness of the transmission, control and treatment of malaria in 49 communities received bicycles and manuals and attended 307 sessions on malaria. This boosted local efforts to combat the disease, a major killer in Casamance.

In parallel, teachers from 20 schools in Fogny and São Domingos (in Guinea-Bissau) attended a course on basic hygiene and sanitation and, on their return, shared their newly acquired knowledge with over 2,200 pupils and their families.

In the 3 ICRC-supported health centres (catchment population: 9,500):

- 4,919 people given consultations, including 505 attending ante/post-natal consultations and 4,414 attending curative consultations
- 1,813 vaccine doses administered (1,519 to children aged five or under and 284 to women of childbearing age)

#### *Boosting economic security*

Twenty-five vegetable gardens run by ICRC-supported women's groups continued to increase their productivity, yielding some 119,000 kg of vegetables in 2007. With 20% of the produce consumed by themselves and the remainder sold, the women improved both their households' food security and their incomes. They used their profit to purchase their own seed for the next planting season, thereby reducing their dependence on external aid.

Fifteen village communities received oxen, seed, sowers, oxcarts and farm implements to boost their production of rice and facilitate its transportation to storage and markets. The 40 tonnes of rice thus yielded enabled households to meet their basic needs and to cut their dependence on outside help.

- 5,124 people (525 households) benefited from agricultural initiatives, including:
  - 4,824 people from distributions of seed and tools
  - 300 people from a market gardening project

#### *Improving access to clean water*

Three people, after receiving appropriate training, installed hand pumps on eight wells completed by the ICRC before a mine incident halted its activities (see *ICRC action*). The wells could thus be put into service, providing a reliable water supply to surrounding communities. Likewise, 500 people in a leper colony benefited from the construction of a well.

- 20,000 people benefited from water/sanitation projects

#### **Guinea-Bissau**

Fighting between Guinea-Bissau's army and MFDC factions along the border with Casamance in 2006 forced civilians to flee their villages along Guinea's border with Senegal and restricted their access to clean water, health and other services. With the construction by the ICRC of 11 wells in the border region, 10 of the affected villages (5,000 inhabitants) had improved access to water. Health centres in the towns of Suzana and Varela, in the north-eastern border region, benefited similarly from the installation of two solar-powered water pumps and were thus able to improve the quality of their services. All this encouraged some displaced people to return to their villages of origin.

- 15,000 people benefited from water/sanitation projects

In addition, a local organization, Casa Amigas Deficientes, received materials, training and funds to enable it to produce prostheses and fit 42 disabled people with prosthetic/orthotic devices. The patients, who were also provided with accommodation in Bissau while being fitted, thus acquired greater mobility and self-sufficiency.

#### **Restoring family links**

A small number of people cut off from family members by conflicts in the sub-region still relied on the RCM services to restore or maintain contact with them. A case in point was a father in Mali who, after 12 years of uncertainty about his son's fate, received news from him through an RCM sent from Côte d'Ivoire.

- 11 RCMs collected from and 37 RCMs distributed to civilians, including 3 to unaccompanied/separated children
- new tracing requests registered for 7 people (including 1 female and 1 minor at the time of disappearance); 5 people (including 1 female and 1 minor at the time of disappearance) still being sought
- 3 people issued with an ICRC travel document

## **PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM**

In Guinea-Bissau, Niger and Senegal, the ICRC continued to visit detainees to monitor their conditions of detention and treatment. It shared its findings with the relevant authorities and supported them in bringing detainees' treatment and living conditions in line with internationally accepted standards. Detainees were offered the opportunity to communicate with their families through the RCM network and, where necessary, were given basic drugs and hygiene items.

#### **Niger**

Numerous people newly arrested by the authorities of Niger in connection with the situation of armed violence in the north of the country were registered and monitored individually by the ICRC during visits to six prisons countrywide and three places of

temporary detention in the Agadez region. The relevant embassies were notified of the detention of their nationals, if the detainees in question so wished. Inmates' conditions of detention were enhanced thanks in part to the cooperation between the prison administration and the ICRC.

Following requests by the government of Niger and the MNJ to act as a neutral intermediary between them, the ICRC made a visit to detainees, mainly military personnel, held by the MNJ in the north of the country. This made it possible for injured detainees to receive emergency medical care. Security constraints, however, prevented the ICRC from conducting regular visits to people detained by the MNJ. The group released 33 injured military personnel and a Chinese national, through the intermediary of the ICRC, which evacuated them and handed them over to the relevant authorities.

- ▶ government: 4,072 detainees visited, of whom 53 monitored individually (including 1 minor) and 38 newly registered (including 1 minor), during 29 visits to 24 places of detention
- ▶ MNJ: 40 detainees visited, registered and monitored individually during 1 visit to 1 place of detention and given the opportunity to inform their families of their whereabouts by satellite phone

#### Guinea-Bissau

Detainees in Guinea-Bissau benefited from a series of ICRC initiatives, including the transfer of ailing inmates to hospital. Repairs were carried out on prison buildings, toilets and water supply systems. Thanks to hygiene products supplied regularly, in response to requests from the authorities, a cholera epidemic was kept in check. Additionally, nine ex-detainees, who were followed up to monitor compliance with the conditions of their release, received hygiene items every two months to help them meet their basic needs.

- ▶ 46 detainees visited, of whom 6 monitored individually, during 13 visits to 2 places of detention
- ▶ 50 detainees benefited from water and sanitation projects

#### Senegal

Detainees visited in Casamance received mosquito nets, which contributed to a 30% drop in the incidence of malaria among them within three months.

- ▶ 3 detainees visited, registered and monitored individually during 1 visit to 1 place of detention
- ▶ 4 RCMs collected from detainees

#### Gambia

No progress was made in discussions with the authorities on the resumption of ICRC visits to detainees in Gambia (see *ICRC action*).

### AUTHORITIES

The region's national authorities and the ICRC maintained good relations. This was borne out by the request from the government of Niger for the ICRC to act as a neutral intermediary with regard to people, mainly military personnel, detained by the MNJ.

Key national authorities in the region and the ICRC pursued discussions on the need to ratify IHL treaties and incorporate their provisions into national legislation. The authorities received the necessary legal expertise and documentation from the ICRC to support them

in this task. Seminars organized for the authorities in Mali and Niger helped them take stock of the progress made in, and renew their commitment to, the implementation of IHL treaties. As a result, the authorities in Mali overcame certain obstacles, approved a draft law on the red cross emblem and prepared to present it to the national assembly for adoption. Senegal benefited from ICRC expertise in its initiative to revise laws on the repression of IHL violations.

- ▶ government representatives from Cape Verde, Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Mali and Senegal attended a seminar on IHL co-organized by the ICRC and the Economic Community of West African States in Abuja, Nigeria
- ▶ representatives of the Gambian and Senegalese authorities attended the ICRC's Second Universal Meeting of National IHL Committees in Geneva, Switzerland

In Senegal, intergovernmental organizations, NGOs and the ICRC continued to coordinate their local and regional humanitarian activities. Similar initiatives were developed in particular in Mali and Niger, where the ICRC intensified its operations in the north. This helped improve the exchange of information, knowledge and expertise.

### ARMED FORCES AND OTHER BEARERS OF WEAPONS

With ICRC support, Mali, Niger and Senegal adopted draft directives on the integration of IHL into their armed forces' training, doctrine and practice. Their police and security forces were similarly supported in consolidating their knowledge of human rights, humanitarian principles, the ICRC and the Movement. Their capacities in these endeavours were strengthened through workshops, information sessions for IHL instructors, working sessions with the leadership of the armed and security forces, and the supply of teaching materials.

Cooperation between the military authorities in Niger and the ICRC and contact between the MNJ and the ICRC facilitated the organization's humanitarian operations in the country's northern region. These included the emergency treatment of wounded or sick detainees held by the MNJ and the evacuation of some of the detainees released by the MNJ and their handover to the relevant authorities. Through such contact, the MNJ was made aware of the ICRC, its mandate and neutral and impartial action and the importance of protecting civilians during armed conflict and of facilitating humanitarian access to them.

In Senegal, the MFDC and the ICRC developed further contacts. At the group's request, the ICRC organized the first-ever IHL sessions for its members, during which they were made aware of the ICRC, its mandate and neutral and impartial action and the importance of protecting civilians during armed conflict and of facilitating humanitarian access to them.

### CIVIL SOCIETY

Journalists based in Guinea-Bissau and the Casamance region of Senegal attended a session on IHL, the Fundamental Principles and the ICRC and its activities in the two countries and along the border with Gambia. The journalists were also made aware of the reasons for the suspension of the organization's activities in the border region (see *ICRC action*). In Senegal, contact with the

media was maintained through meetings with editorial staff, directors and programme coordinators. They were briefed on the organization's activities and provided with documents on IHL, the ICRC and the Movement.

Following a session in Guinea-Bissau on the ICRC, its mandate and the Movement, 20 young members of a local association, SOS Children First, decided to join the Red Cross as volunteers.

With ICRC support, the Senegalese education authorities completed the second year of pilot-testing the Exploring Humanitarian Law programme in schools. They identified subjects in which to incorporate the programme, trained more teachers involved in it and adopted standard content. Thus, the authorities got closer to the objective of assuming full responsibility for the programme.

Universities and other institutions of higher education in Mali, Niger and Senegal carried on receiving support from the ICRC in integrating IHL in their curricula. The University of Niamey introduced the subject in the curriculum of its law faculty. The promotion of IHL among university students bore fruit, as illustrated by the number of times it was chosen as the subject of a Master's thesis in Mali and Senegal. In Dakar, students could consult an IHL library maintained by the regional delegation.

## RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

Staff and volunteers of the National Societies of Guinea-Bissau, Niger and Senegal received training to strengthen their capacities to assist civilians affected by situations of armed violence, banditry and intercommunal violence in their countries. This was particularly needed in Niger, where the population was especially vulnerable to the growing insecurity.

While financial and other difficulties delayed the implementation of cooperation activities with the region's National Societies, the issues were resolved towards the end of the year in the case of the National Societies of Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Niger and Senegal, enabling programmes to get back on track.

With ICRC support:

- 188 first-aid trainers, volunteers and coordinators trained in regions affected by armed violence in Guinea-Bissau, Niger and Senegal
- the National Societies of Gambia, Guinea-Bissau and Niger participated in the Council of Delegates and 30th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent in Geneva