



pakistan

The ICRC has been working in Pakistan since 1981, when it began assisting victims of the Afghan conflict. In addition to providing support for operations in Afghanistan, the delegation in Pakistan promotes the national implementation of IHL and its integration into the doctrine and theoretical and practical training of the armed forces and into university curricula. It also visits prisoners held in connection with the 2001 conflict in Afghanistan and seeks access to other categories of security detainees. The ICRC helps the Pakistan Red Crescent Society enhance its response capacity, particularly in areas near the Line of Control.

EXPENDITURE IN CHF

Protection

1,520,286

Assistance

1,429,697

Preventive action

1,351,300

Cooperation with National Societies

587,802

General

14,033

► **4,903,117**

of which: Overheads **299,251**

PERSONNEL

21 expatriates

181 national staff

KEY POINTS IN 2004

- The ICRC visited over 500 detainees/internees who had been transferred to Pakistan from Guantanamo Bay or Afghanistan, and made home visits to those who had been released.
- The delegation made an offer of services to assess the conditions of civilians in Waziristan and to visit detainees captured in connection with fighting there, but had not obtained authorization by the end of the year.
- The ceasefire with India improved security in areas near the Line of Control, where the ICRC assisted displaced people returning to isolated villages.
- The ICRC started helping amputees in isolated areas near the border with Afghanistan or the Line of Control to access rehabilitation services.
- Pakistan's armed and security forces advanced in integrating IHL into their standard training programmes.
- The ICRC co-sponsored a conference on IHL and Islam attended by religious scholars from Africa, Asia and the Middle East.

CONTEXT

Strong economic growth reinforced stability in Pakistan, but attacks and other types of violence highlighted the country's political and social fault lines. Two attempts on the president's life at the end of 2003 were followed by a series of assassination attempts on other key political figures in 2004. Sectarian violence between extremist Shia and Sunni groups escalated, taking the form of targeted killings and attacks on mosques. The resurgence of separatist activity in Baluchistan manifested itself in a growing number of attacks on government installations in the province.

Relations between Pakistan and India improved as the countries' top leaders met, diplomatic and commercial ties were strengthened and long-standing differences began to be addressed through the composite dialogue at various levels. The ceasefire established at the end of 2003 held throughout the year, improving security for residents of areas near the Line of Control (LoC) and permitting the return of internally displaced people who had fled cross-fire that had, in previous years, repeatedly threatened their security.

Pakistani forces heavily deployed in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas faced local resistance, and in March they intensified operations in South Waziristan. The area remained sealed off to journalists and international organizations as fighting there continued through the year.

Relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan, though eased periodically by goodwill gestures, remained strained. The steady flow of Afghan refugees returning home from Pakistan was accelerated in August, when the UNHCR closed camps housing Afghan refugees who had crossed the border in 2001–02.

ICRC ACTION

The ICRC continued to expand its activities within Pakistan, developing and expanding the field activities it conducted from its bases in Quetta and Peshawar. Reaching new areas along the LoC that had been too dangerous to visit before the ceasefire, field teams assessed security and economic conditions in villages that had been affected for years by crossfire between India and Pakistan. With the National Society, they distributed assistance to displaced people returning to villages near the LoC. The ICRC also drew up plans to help amputees living near the LoC receive rehabilitation services, and did the same for Afghan refugees who had crossed the border since 2001 and lived in camps in Baluchistan and North-West Frontier Province (NWFP).

When military operations in South Waziristan intensified in mid-March, there were reports of civilian displacement and injury. The ICRC made a written offer of services to the government in March. By the end of the year it had not yet received authorization to visit either detainees held in connection with the fighting or civilians living in the areas affected. It had, however, assisted a small number of people injured in the fighting and transferred out of Waziristan for medical treatment.

Aircraft based at the ICRC logistics centre in Peshawar kept up regular flights for Red Cross and other humanitarian workers travelling to major cities in Afghanistan.

The ICRC continued to develop its preventive activities, promoting IHL among media, academic and religious circles and the armed and security forces. Noteworthy in 2004 were the progress made by the Pakistani armed forces in integrating IHL into their training programmes, and the deepening of dialogue on the relationship between IHL and Islamic law at an international conference of Islamic scholars. The ICRC and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies worked with the Pakistani Red Crescent to promote its institutional development and provided funding or technical support for designated activities.

CIVILIANS

Assisting displaced people/returnees near the LoC

For years, crossfire between India and Pakistan had endangered people in villages near the LoC, causing sporadic displacement. The ceasefire in 2003 improved security conditions in areas near the LoC, and in 2004 many displaced people were able to return home.

In the high-altitude Northern Areas, people who had fled crossfire before the ceasefire had to stay in camps in Skardu until the roads to their villages opened with the spring thaw. To help some 700 displaced families survive the winter, the ICRC complemented assistance provided by the local authorities by distributing tents, blankets, stoves and other household necessities in camps. About half of the beneficiaries were able to return home in April, in time for the planting season, and on their route the ICRC gave each family a two-month food ration to see them through until the harvest. Others were from an area that was cut off longer, so they did not return until July. The ICRC visited them in their village and distributed staple foods and household necessities. Before the snow cut them off again, it sent a team of specialists to assess economic security, access to medical care, water supply and sanitation in both areas. Finding that the returnees had already regained their normal standard of living and could be expected to cope through the winter, the ICRC did not distribute further assistance. Meanwhile, ICRC engineers started small projects to improve water supply for displaced people who had stayed in Skardu because their villages had been destroyed or remained off-limits.

The rest of the LoC runs along Pakistan-administered Kashmir, in a more densely populated area with a milder climate and a lower altitude. Some 140,000 residents of villages in the area had been affected by crossfire for over two decades. When thus threatened, they moved to areas around Muzaffarabad and Bagh. In August 2004 the ICRC made its first visit to areas near the LoC in this region, including to the Jhelum and Leepa valleys and Bagh and Poonch districts. These places were in military zones requiring special permission to travel, making access more complicated. Some displaced people had already returned to their villages, but not all of those living in camps had clear-cut prospects for return. The ICRC found no immediate need for emergency assistance.

- 700 displaced/returnee families assisted
- over 360 tonnes of food, shelter and household items distributed

Maintaining family links

The ICRC and the Pakistani Red Crescent provided Red Cross message (RCM) and other tracing services. Most of the messages delivered were between detainees held at the Guantanamo Bay Naval Station, in Pakistan or in Afghanistan and their families in Pakistan, but some were between Afghan refugees who had difficulty communicating with relatives over the border.

- 4,354 RCMs delivered
- 29 travel documents issued

PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM

The ICRC made regular visits to people who had been detained at Guantanamo Bay or in Afghanistan and transferred to facilities in Pakistan. When they were released, it followed up to confirm their safe arrival home. Detainees visited included 364 Pakistanis transferred to Pakistan from Pul-i-Charki prison (Afghanistan) in September. The ICRC initiated a post-detention assistance programme to provide tools, equipment or supplies for those who needed help in getting back to work, or to ensure access to medical care for those with health problems.

- 568 detainees visited (all followed up individually) in 3 places of detention
- 668 RCMs delivered to detainees
- 224 releases followed up; 92 released detainees assisted

WOUNDED AND SICK

Care for the wounded

Unable to visit the areas in Waziristan where fighting was going on, the ICRC could not assess the medical care available to the wounded. It did assist about 20 patients who had been injured in Waziristan and then transferred elsewhere for care, reimbursing their medical costs and providing the facilities treating them with medical supplies.

Rehabilitation for amputees

While Pakistan had rehabilitation services for amputees, only veterans received prostheses free of charge. In its visits to camps housing refugees in areas along the border with Afghanistan and to areas near the LoC, the ICRC collected information on about

500 amputees who needed new prostheses. Isolated by harsh winters, mountainous terrain and travel risks, these amputees could neither reach rehabilitation facilities nor afford their services. The ICRC identified local facilities that could provide the services they needed, and arranged for their care there.

For Afghan refugees in Baluchistan, the ICRC began support to the physical rehabilitation programme at the Christian Hospital in Quetta. It agreed to cover the centre's running costs, to introduce ICRC-developed polypropylene technology to improve cost-effectiveness, and to equip a mobile unit to fit amputees living far away.

The ICRC transported amputees from the NWFP to its physical rehabilitation centre in Jalalabad (Afghanistan) and arranged for them to keep their refugee status while being treated there. The Jalalabad centre fitted 169 such refugees with prostheses and 10 with orthoses. To offer a longer-term solution that would permit them to be treated locally in Pakistan, the ICRC began reimbursing the services of the Peshawar Institute of Prosthetic and Orthotic Services (PIPOS). PIPOS took the first of these disabled refugees in November, and by the end of the year had fitted eight people under the agreement. For the disabled living near the LoC, the ICRC made a similar arrangement with the Fauji Foundation at the Artificial Limbs Centre in Rawalpindi.

AUTHORITIES

To strengthen the authorities' commitment to comply with IHL, the ICRC sent officials on IHL courses and to events abroad. The Pakistan Research Society of International Law conducted a study commissioned by the ICRC to assess the compatibility of national legislation with the requirements of IHL treaties, which would serve as a basis for prioritizing implementation measures. The delegation also organized workshops in Lahore and Peshawar to familiarize civil servants with IHL and the ICRC.

ARMED FORCES AND OTHER BEARERS OF WEAPONS

In 2003 the Pakistani armed forces started a programme to integrate IHL into the doctrine and theoretical and practical training activities of the army, navy and air force. As part of the programme, the ICRC trained IHL trainers, briefed senior officers on IHL, enhanced the forces' expertise in IHL by

sending officers on IHL courses at the International Institute of Humanitarian Law in San Remo, Italy, developed IHL teaching materials and provided training establishments with reference materials.

The delegation gave briefings on IHL and the ICRC's role and mandate to members of the UN Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan, which were stationed at the LoC. It also encouraged provincial paramilitary forces to include more instruction on human rights and humanitarian principles in their training programmes, and conducted train-the-trainer courses on IHL/human rights for police in Sindh and Punjab.

CIVIL SOCIETY

To foster better understanding of the ICRC's neutrality, impartiality and independence, the delegation regularly briefed members of Pakistan's influential print and electronic media on IHL, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and the Fundamental Principles.

The ICRC had worked for several years to develop contacts with Islamic scholars in Pakistan, and in 2004 it worked with the International Islamic University of Islamabad to organize an international conference on the relationship between IHL and Islamic Law. The three-day conference was held in September and was attended by representatives of all the major *madrassat* (Islamic schools) in Pakistan, along with scholars from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Egypt, Malaysia, India, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen.

Several Pakistani universities had recently added IHL to their law and international relations curricula. To enhance their capacities to teach the subject, the ICRC paid for two Pakistani professors to go on an IHL course in Arabic in Amman and co-operated with the Higher Education Commission to organize an IHL training session for 20 others. It also taught a course in IHL for law students and chose a team to represent Pakistan at the Jean Pictet Moot Court Competition from among the course participants.

NATIONAL SOCIETY

A National Society with a large membership, the Pakistan Red Crescent Society concentrated on developing ambulance services, blood banks, disaster management and first aid. It also maintained an RCM network. The International Federation supported its disaster management and health programmes, and the ICRC supported tracing and first-aid training. The two international organizations worked together to encourage and fund the National Society's institutional development (including strategic planning and the revision of its statutes) and its work to promote the Movement and the Fundamental Principles.