



NEWSLETTER

ICRC SOMALIA DELEGATION

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GARGAAR

DESPITE HUMANITARIAN EFFORTS, 2012 REMAINS CHALLENGING

Somalis have continued to suffer the consequences of major food insecurity and conflict over the first half of 2012. Despite the difficult situation, the ICRC has delivered food to 1.4 million people in the country since the beginning of the year.

While food security has gradually improved since the drought crisis was at its worst in 2011, the severity of that crisis, poor rains and other production constraints mean that malnutrition rates remain alarming and that the most vulnerable people must continue to fight for survival.

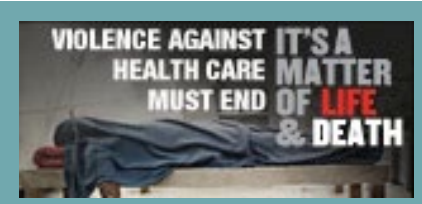


Mogadishu food distribution

“Sadly, 2012 has thus far been another challenging period for a great many Somalis, who continue to endure the tremendous hardships that have arisen from a combination of conflict and extreme weather conditions,” said Patrick Vial, the head of the ICRC Somalia delegation.

For 21 years, the ICRC has been performing its humanitarian tasks in the country. “The fact that Mogadishu’s Keysaney Hospital, which is supported by the ICRC and now run by the SRCS, has been providing emergency medical care for over 20 years is an indication of how great the needs are and of our determination to meet them,” said Mr Vial. “I would like to commend all of the staff who have worked at the hospital over the years and provided such a critical, indeed life-saving, service to the community.”

The situation has been aggravated by continuing conflict across the south and centre of Somalia, as the transitional federal government and its international supporters have sought to achieve territorial gains over Al Shabaab. Widespread inter-clan



Health Care in Danger is an ICRC-led, Red Cross / Red Crescent Movement wide initiative that aims to address the widespread and severe impact of illegal and sometimes violent acts that obstruct the delivery of health care, damage or destroy facilities and vehicles, and injure or kill health-care workers and patients, in armed conflicts and other emergencies.

[Watch the video of Medina Hospital](#)

[See here for more information about the project](#)

clashes, and ongoing instability stemming from the dispute between Somaliland and Puntland over the Sool and Sanag regions, have resulted in casualties, displacement and other matters of humanitarian concern.

FROM EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE TO HELPING PEOPLE TO SUPPORT THEMSELVES

Over the past 12 months, the ICRC's activities in Somalia have been dominated by providing the emergency assistance required by the major drought-induced food insecurity and by the needs of those who have suffered weapon-related injury. The ICRC has been doing its utmost to respond as appropriately and as comprehensively as possible to these emergency needs in invariably difficult circumstances.

"The ICRC has also been making an ongoing effort to help people to earn a living without outside help, for example by providing them with seed and tools. Together with the Somali Red Crescent Society, we have also ensured that primary health care is available," said Mr Vial. "Now that the emergency food distributions have been completed, we will be able to focus even more on these types of activities."



Therapeutic feeding center

[View the photo gallery on self-sustenance](#)

ICRC RESPONSE TO FOOD INSECURITY

The emergency food distributions, launched in response to the crisis that started in 2011 as a result of the drought and conflict, were completed just before the end of Ramadan and the Eid-ul-Fitr celebrations. Some 420,000 vulnerable people in Mogadishu, including displaced, orphaned, widowed and elderly persons, were given rations that included rice, beans, oil and corn-soya blend. Since the beginning of the year, 720,000 others, across the rest of south and central Somalia and Puntland, have been given similar food aid. In total, between July 2011 and mid-August 2012, emergency food aid was distributed to 2.5 million Somalis.

"Fortunately, the nutritional situation in Somalia has improved since the crisis peaked last July. However, despite all the efforts of the humanitarian community, many people are still facing considerable difficulties," said Mohamed Sheikh, who coordinates the ICRC's economic-security programmes in the country.



Canal Rehabilitation - Beletweyn

"The people with the biggest needs are those affected by the ongoing conflict or by natural disasters – mainly displaced people, farmers, livestock herders and members of marginalized communities," he said. "The ICRC helps them in a variety of different ways, each of which is designed to address specific needs. In acute crises we provide relief while preparing at the same time to help people restore their livelihoods, which we do by distributing tools and seed, upgrading farm infrastructure and taking various micro-economic initiatives."

In addition to the food distributions, seed and tools have been distributed to 42,000 people so far this year. Repair work on canals has enabled a further 33,000 people to improve their agricultural productivity.

20 YEARS OF MEDICAL CARE AT KEYSANEY HOSPITAL

On 2 February 1992, at a time of intense fighting in Mogadishu in the wake of the collapse of the Siad Barre regime, Keysaney Hospital first opened its doors. The hospital building – originally intended as a prison – was transformed by the ICRC, and staff began to provide war surgery and other emergency medical care. Today Keysaney is fully run by the SRCS.



The new operating theatre at Keysaney

“Two decades of armed conflict have taken a toll on the people and the country at large, resulting in a protracted humanitarian crisis,” said Yussuf Mohamed Hassan, the hospital’s director since 2004, as the facility marked its 20th anniversary. “The infighting between different political factions has resulted in the destruction of essential infrastructure, including



Keysaney Hospital in Mogadishu

hospitals, all over the country. Despite all this, Keysaney Hospital has treated more than 216,000 people, including 30,000 weapon-wounded patients, since its inception 20 years ago. I believe that we have been able to function over time simply because of our impartiality and neutrality.”

[Watch the video report on the 20th anniversary of Keysaney Hospital](#)

ELSEWHERE IN SOMALIA

Between January and the end of August, the ICRC also:

- helped the Somali Red Crescent Society provide access to primary health care for 700,000 people. Medical staff saw over 300,000 patients and administered 48,000 vaccinations. In addition, they treated over 45,500 malnourished persons in 43 primary health-care and mother-and-child clinics;
- provided support for Mogadishu’s Medina and Keysaney hospitals, where 6,800 trauma patients received treatment;



Surgeons operating at the hospital in Mogadishu

- delivered emergency medical supplies on 11 different occasions to three health-care providers for the treatment of war-wounded patients;
- provided emergency water rations for more than 22,300 people displaced

from Buuhoodle, as a result of conflict in the Cayn, Sool and Sanaag regions;

- improved boreholes, hand-dug wells and other water-catchment facilities in south-central Somalia and parts of Puntland, providing 51,000 people with access to clean water;
- improved the conditions in which 1,000 people were detained in Mogadishu by distributing mattresses, blankets, sandals and sanitary items;
- operated a family message service together with the Somali Red Crescent Society that enabled 256 families to re-establish contact with relatives from whom they had become separated by the conflict.

MISSION

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is an impartial, neutral and independent organization whose exclusively humanitarian mission is to protect the lives and dignity of victims of armed conflict and other situations of violence and to provide them with assistance. The ICRC also endeavours to prevent suffering by promoting and strengthening humanitarian law and universal humanitarian principles. Established in 1863, the ICRC is at the origin of the Geneva Conventions and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. It directs and coordinates the international activities conducted by the Movement in armed conflicts and other situations of violence.

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