

Operation support services

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OPERATION SUPPORT SERVICES

Relief supplies

The tables which follow show the relief supplies which the ICRC provided for 58 countries during 1975.

If we consider only the new missions undertaken by the ICRC alone (Angola, Lebanon, Timor) or in collaboration with the League (Indo-China) with the support of governments and National Societies or various other bodies, the value of relief supplies of all kinds sent either by the ICRC or directly by the donors but under ICRC supervision came to 83 million Swiss francs.

The ICRC was able to send food supplies, to a value of 25.3 million Swiss francs, to 18 countries as a result of agreements concluded with the EEC and the Swiss Confederation.

Nearly 2.2 million Swiss francs was spent on helping detainees—mainly political—and detainees' families in most need.

The ICRC also continued helping National Societies, and allocated over 200,000 Swiss francs to 30 of them. Several tens of thousands of Swiss francs were given in aid to some private charity organisations and to liberation movements.

The figures given above cannot be added together, because the food supplies provided by the EEC and the Swiss Confederation are taken into account in stating the value of relief supplies distributed as part of new missions and in helping detainees and their families (Chile). Bearing this in mind, the total value of relief supplies sent to zones of conflict or unrest can be set at 97 million Swiss francs.

NEW MISSIONS WITH AD HOC FINANCING

(relief in kind) **83.19 million Swiss francs**

– Angola	2,814,000 Swiss francs *
– Indo-China	77,600,000 Swiss francs *
– Lebanon	2,403,000 Swiss francs *
– Timor	375,000 Swiss francs

* These items include the emergency food supplies provided by the EEC and the Swiss Confederation (see following table).

The amounts mentioned above represent the value of *gifts in kind provided* by donors (governments, National Societies, miscellaneous) and the value of the *supplies purchased* (by the ICRC, the Indo-China Operational Group or the Indo-China Office) with contributions in cash from donors.

FOOD AID
25.18 Million

Beneficiary countries	Total Sw. frs.	Swiss Government		European Economic Community	
		Quantities and Kind	Value Sw. Frs.	Quantities and Kind	Value Sw. Frs.
Africa	2 005 000.—		1 205 000.—		800 000.—
– Angola	1 148 000.—	57 tons unskimmed milk powder	480 000.—	100 tons skimmed milk powder	400 000.—
– Mozambique ..	85 000.—	400 tons flour	268 000.—		
– Western Sahara	772 000.—	10 tons unskimmed milk powder	85 000.—		
		12 tons unskimmed milk powder	100 000.—	100 tons skimmed milk powder	400 000.—
		400 tons flour	272 000.—		
Latin America ...	4 082 000.—		242 000.—		3 840 000.—
– Chile	1 125 000.—	50 tons skimmed milk powder	85 000.—	100 tons butter oil	800 000.—
– Haiti	2 800 000.—			60 tons skimmed milk powder	240 000.—
– Honduras	85 000.—	10 tons unskimmed milk powder	85 000.—	700 tons skimmed milk	2 800 000.—
– Paraguay	72 000.—	8 tons unskimmed milk powder	72 000.—		
Asia	13 103 000.—		145 000.—		12 958 000.—
– Afghanistan ...	46 000.—	50 tons flour	46 000.—		
– Burma	45 000.—	5 tons unskimmed milk powder	45 000.—		
– Fiji	278 000.—			20 tons skimmed milk powder	80 000.—
– India	2 280 000.—			200 tons rice	150 000.—
– Sri Lanka	45 000.—	5 tons unskimmed milk powder	45 000.—	60 tons flour	48 000.—
– Rep. South Vietnam	10 409 000.—	1 ton unskimmed milk powder	9 000.—	570 tons skimmed milk powder	2 280 000.—
				500 tons butter oil	4 000 000.—
				100 tons skimmed milk powder	400 000.—
				8 000 tons rice	6 000 000.—
Middle East	5 948 400.—		1 234 000.—		4 714 400.—
– Israel and Occupied Territories	4 939 600.—	1 000 tons flour	686 000.—	617 tons flour	493 600.—
– Jordan	343 000.—	500 tons flour	343 000.—	140 tons skimmed milk powder	560 000.—
– Lebanon:				400 tons butter oil	3 200 000.—
Red Cross ..	545 800.—	10 tons unskimmed milk powder	85 000.—	300 tons flour	240 000.—
“Palestinian RC”				276 tons flour	220 800.—
– Syria	120 000.—	14 tons unskimmed milk powder	120 000.—		
Europe	45 000.—		45 000.—		
– Portugal	45 000.—	5 tons unskimmed milk powder	45 000.—		
	25 183 400.—		2 871 000.—		22 312 400.—

HELP FOR DETAINEES AND THEIR FAMILIES

2.17 m

Country	Detainees	Families
(Swiss francs)		
AFRICA	81,572	
Congo-Brazzaville	5,410	
Ethiopia	6,304	
Gambia	1,550	
Liberia	1,800	
Mali	580	
Rhodesia	27,070	
Rwanda	9,895	
South Africa	2,619	
Togo	26,100	
Upper Volta	244	
LATIN AMERICA	265,058	1,354,870
Bolivia	9,767	16,860
Brazil	14,675	
Chile	125,000	1,336,300
Colombia	59,609	
Dominican Republic	6,490	
Ecuador	1,690	
El Salvador	6,580	
Guatemala	10,285	
Honduras	8,230	510
Panama	8,060	
Paraguay	12,380	1,200
Venezuela	2,292	
EUROPE	18,000	5,000
Portugal	18,000	5,000
MIDDLE EAST	417,344	33,083
Israel and occupied zones	357,403	33,083
Jordan	3,612	
Yemen Arab Republic	56,329	
Total	781,974+	1,392,953
	=	2,174,927

AID TO NATIONAL SOCIETIES

0.22 m

Country	Value in Swiss francs
AFRICA	89,930
Benin (Republic of)	12,800
Burundi	90
Central African Republic	1,070
Congo	125
Ghana	4,000
Liberia	6,250
Mozambique	40,000
Nigeria	1,557
Rwanda	180
Togo	7,833
Uganda	90
Upper Volta	5,000
Zaire	3,935
Zambia	7,000
LATIN AMERICA	3,180
Bolivia	3,180
EUROPE	36,915
Bulgaria	795
Hungary	767
Portugal	33,600 ¹
Romania	433
Turkey	1,000
Yugoslavia	320
MIDDLE EAST	91,002
Egypt	2,175
Israel (for the Red Crescents in the occupied territories)	16,245
Lebanon — Lebanese Red Cross	29,875
— "Palestinian Red Crescent"	32,115
People's Democratic Republic of Yemen ²	10,592
Total	221,027

¹ For Portuguese Red Cross assistance to persons repatriated from Angola.

² New National Society being created.

The above table does not include Asia, as the amounts here mentioned are the sums paid by the ICRC to support one or more aspects of the activities of the National Societies. The Red Cross Societies of the countries involved in the Indo-China conflicts received their aid from the Indo-China Operational Group (IOG) and the Indo-China Office (INDSEC). The cash donation that the Indonesian Red Cross received from the ICRC came from governments and National Societies and was meant to

finance aid to refugees from East Timor who were in the western part of the island.

The table does not mention the food supplies provided by the European Economic Community (EEC) and the Swiss Confederation (see table on p. 27), most of which was distributed by the National Societies.

That Asia is not included in the table of *Help for Detainees and their Families* is because the relief to prisoners in Indo-China and East Timor was financed by special budgets for that purpose.

TRANSPORT: 4.4 million Swiss francs

The cost of transport arranged and paid for by the ICRC—usually reimbursed from ad hoc funds for special activities—amounted to 4.4 million francs in 1975, broken down as follows:

Means of transport	Tons	Swiss francs
Scheduled services		
– surface shipments	1,304.4	332,165
– air shipments	13.3	103,480
Chartered transport		
– surface shipments	6,100.0	858,384
– air shipments	869.1	
<i>plus passengers</i>	4,123	3,179,890
Total	8,268.8t	
<i>plus passengers</i>	4,123	4,473,919

Transport charges assumed by the donors—governments, National Societies, voluntary organizations, etc.—are not included in the foregoing table.

Several airlines, under special circumstances, agreed to carry urgent freight shipments without charge. Thus, 79.5 tons of relief material were sent free, saving the ICRC more than a half-million Swiss francs and constituting a very substantial “invisible contribution”.

It should also be noted that the ICRC spent more than 69,000 Swiss francs to insure shipments.

Telecommunications service

Radio and telex traffic—44% increase

Great demands were made upon the ICRC telecommunications service, both telex and radio, during 1975. The substantial increase in traffic was due mostly to special actions in Indochina, Angola, Lebanon and Timor, to mention only the major ones.

In the course of the year, 7,780 radiotelegraph messages were exchanged between Geneva and its delegations in the field, to which must be added an estimated 12,000 to 14,000 messages exchanged between field stations. The estimated total of 20,000 messages, compared to some 14,000 in 1974, constituted an increase of 43%.

The 7,780 messages between Geneva and field stations comprised a total of 576,000 words—2,880,000 letters.

The foregoing figures do not include the countless radio-telephone conversations between Geneva and the field, especially with Phnom-Penh in Cambodia, Luanda in Angola and

Beirut in Lebanon. This type of communication, permitting those in charge of operations in Geneva to keep in touch, sometimes hour by hour, with developments on the spot, was indispensable for judging the situations and making appropriate decisions.

Telex traffic increased by 44% in 1975, with a total of 16,398 messages—8,922 outgoing and 7,476 incoming—compared to 11,376 in 1974.

Versoix – its first year of operation

For the telecommunications service with its staff of 12 radio operator/technicians and telex operators—compared to 11 in 1974—1975 was the first year's operation of the radio station at Versoix, which was inaugurated on 4 December 1974.

The new installation, designed by the ICRC technicians themselves, gave complete satisfaction. Further equipment was added to the station during 1975, with the setting up of two workshops providing virtual self-sufficiency for upkeep and repairs.

ICRC stations in service during 1975

Two main stations:

- Geneva-Versoix
- Geneva-ICRC

Thirteen field stations, in direct communication with Geneva:

- Amman, Jordan
- Beirut-Airport, Lebanon
- Beirut delegation, Lebanon
- Cairo, Egypt
- Caracas, Venezuela
- Dacca, Bangladesh
- Islamabad, Pakistan
- Lomé, Togo
- Luanda, Angola
- Nicosia, Cyprus (closed on 4 August)
- Phnom-Penh, Cambodia (closed on 17 April)
- Santiago, Chile
- Vientiane, Laos

Nine field stations without direct communication with Geneva:

- Bangkok, Thailand, traffic with Vientiane
- Dalatando, Angola, traffic with Luanda
- Damascus, Syria, traffic with Amman
- Delhi, India, traffic with Dacca
- Huambo (formerly Nova Lisboa), Angola, traffic with Luanda
- Jerusalem, Israel, traffic with Amman
- Luang-Prabang, Laos, traffic with Vientiane (closed on 25 November)

- Uige (formerly Carmona), Angola, traffic with Luanda
- Vouga, Angola, traffic with Luanda

Three other field stations were in operation during 1975, a fixed and a mobile station in East Timor and a fixed station at Darwin, Australia, all of which were provided to the ICRC by the Australian Red Cross.

Thus, the ICRC's radio network comprised a total of 27 stations during the year. Once again, it was proved that ICRC operations would have been seriously impeded, if not indeed paralyzed, without this vital infrastructure.

Red Cross emergency network

Pursuant to a joint circular sent out on 29 March 1971 by the League of Red Cross Societies and the ICRC, numerous National Societies set up radio stations and obtained authorization from their governments to use frequencies assigned to the Red Cross. Thus, in addition to the ICRC stations set up around the world for its field operations, as listed above, this emergency network at the end of 1975 included stations operated by the following National Societies:

- Asuncion, Paraguay
- Bogota, Colombia
- Bonn, Federal Republic of Germany
- Delft, Netherlands
- Guatemala City, Guatemala
- La Paz, Bolivia
- Lima, Peru
- Madrid, Spain
- Managua, Nicaragua
- Manila, Philippines
- Nassau, Bahamas
- Panama City, Panama
- Port-au-Prince, Haiti
- Quito, Ecuador
- Sanaa, Yemen Arab Republic
- San José, Costa Rica
- San Salvador, El Salvador
- Tegucigalpa, Honduras
- Vienna, Austria

Two other National Societies were granted call signals and authorization to establish stations, but had not yet obtained their equipment at the end of the year: Bridgetown, Barbados, and Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic.

II. CENTRAL TRACING AGENCY

The upheavals in Vietnam and Cambodia, in Angola in the spring and in Lebanon and Timor during the summer, added to the work resulting from other recent conflicts—the Middle East, India-Pakistan, Chile and Cyprus, not forgetting the continuing consequences of such events as World War II—bringing particularly intense pressure to bear upon the ICRC Central Tracing Agency, both at headquarters and in the field.

A single figure may serve to show the magnitude of the work in 1975: a total of 210,000 incoming and outgoing messages at Geneva alone—an average of 840 per working day; handled by a regular staff of 40 persons, increased to 55 during the most intense period of the conflicts in Indo-China.

Indo-China—150,000 individual records

The Asian sector undoubtedly produced the most sustained field activity for the CTA. From the beginning of April the Agency prepared to deal with the considerable increase in work which was to come with the end of fighting in Cambodia on 17 April, and in Vietnam on 30 April.

From mid-April onward, an Agency specialist sent from Geneva to South Vietnam tried to estimate the proportions of the "tracing problem" resulting from the flight southwards of tens of thousands of civilians seeking escape from combat zones. He soon realized that the situation was too turbulent to initiate Agency activity in the countless camps for displaced persons which were hastily set up, mainly on the outskirts of Saigon and Vung Tau.

Agency efforts were therefore concentrated in countries outside the Indo-Chinese fighting areas, in the Philippines, Malaysia, Singapore and Taiwan, to which thousands of refugees were fleeing. Two specialist delegates shared the task of registering them, with the assistance of the National Societies and local authorities. Travel documents were given to those who had found countries of asylum but who lacked identity papers.

Another centre of concentration for the refugees was on the island of Guam, but registration here was carried out by the American authorities and the American Red Cross. An ICRC delegate here provided travel documents to some of the refugees.

The Agency faced its greatest problem in Thailand. Some 60,000 refugees had come for temporary asylum, from Cambodia, Laos and even from Vietnam. The ICRC bureau in Bangkok was reinforced by Agency specialists who systematically registered the names of refugees in all the camps in Thailand.

At the end of 1975, this ad hoc register listed the names of more than 52,000 persons out of the total of 60,000, a figure which included those listed in the other countries mentioned above.