

LIBERIA



KRC/AR_2016
 ⊕ ICRC delegation ⊕ ICRC sub-delegation

The ICRC has worked in Liberia since 1970, opening its delegation in 1990. It visits detainees and works with the authorities to improve conditions of detention. It also runs programmes to promote IHL and humanitarian principles among the authorities and the armed and security forces and supports the Liberia National Red Cross Society to help it strengthen its operational capacities. With the National Society, the ICRC works to protect and assist people affected by armed conflict and other situations of violence, including refugees, notably by restoring links between separated relatives and improving sanitation conditions in vulnerable communities.

YEARLY RESULT

Level of achievement of ICRC yearly objectives/plans of action

MEDIUM

KEY RESULTS/CONSTRAINTS IN 2016

- ▶ Detainees in several prisons had better living conditions following ICRC projects. Financial constraints delayed the authorities' construction of a new detention facility; consequently, ICRC support was also postponed.
- ▶ Following the resumption of the UNHCR-led voluntary repatriation process, unaccompanied Ivorian minors were reunited with their families by the Liberian and Ivorian National Societies and the ICRC.
- ▶ Liberia incorporated key provisions of the Arms Trade Treaty in domestic legislation by adopting the Firearms and Ammunition Control Act, which had been drafted with the ICRC's help.
- ▶ The Liberia National Red Cross Society took steps to implement organizational reforms, with support from Movement partners. The ICRC provided funding for an audit and for the hiring of an independent interim manager.

PROTECTION	Total
CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)	
Restoring family links	
RCMs collected	95
RCMs distributed	42
Phone calls facilitated between family members	636
Tracing cases closed positively (subject located or fate established)	2
People reunited with their families	30
<i>of whom unaccompanied minors/separated children</i>	30
PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)	
ICRC visits	
Detainees visited	2,336
Detainees visited and monitored individually	49
Number of visits carried out	103
Number of places of detention visited	16
Restoring family links	
RCMs collected	86
RCMs distributed	29
Phone calls made to families to inform them of the whereabouts of a detained relative	1

EXPENDITURE IN KCHF

Protection	714
Assistance	2,145
Prevention	972
Cooperation with National Societies	1,445
General	50
Total	5,326
<i>Of which: Overheads</i>	<i>325</i>

IMPLEMENTATION RATE

Expenditure/yearly budget	91%
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PERSONNEL

Mobile staff	8
Resident staff (daily workers not included)	69

ASSISTANCE

	2016 Targets (up to)	Achieved
CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)		
Water and habitat (in some cases provided within a protection or cooperation programme)		
Water and habitat activities	Beneficiaries	8,000
		10,336

CONTEXT

Liberia remained vulnerable to flare-ups of Ebola, but isolated cases during the year were quickly contained, with the assistance of the international community. The Liberian economy slowly began to recover from the outbreak's effects. However, the authorities faced financial difficulties, which affected penitentiary budgets, among other things.

Tens of thousands of Ivorian refugees, previously displaced by the 2011 Ivorian conflict and by other violence, continued to return home from south-eastern Liberia – part of the UNHCR-led voluntary repatriation process that began in December 2015. The Ivorian-Liberian border was fully reopened in April 2016.

The authorities continued to recruit and train law enforcement officers, the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) having handed over, by the end of June 2016, full responsibility for security to the Liberian government.

ICRC ACTION AND RESULTS

Given the significant decline in Ebola cases and the conclusion of its Ebola-related initiatives last year, the ICRC resumed the activities that it had been focusing on before the outbreak. It planned to reduce its presence in Liberia by July 2017, from a delegation to a mission that would report to the regional delegation in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire; it therefore started making preparations to hand over some of its activities to other actors.

The ICRC made regular visits to detainees, in line with its standard procedures, to monitor their well-being; findings and recommendations were communicated confidentially to the authorities. Needs in Liberian prisons having changed – they were more long-term and less emergency-related – the ICRC planned to shift to a more advisory role to the detaining authorities. It focused on helping them strengthen their managerial capacities; notably, it advised penitentiary officials on budgetary issues, food-supply management and other topics, and trained prison staff in internationally recognized standards for detention. It also continued to provide some material and financial support for improving detainees' living conditions, by renovating and building prison infrastructure – for instance, water and sanitation facilities, kitchens and storerooms – and distributing hygiene supplies and other items to inmates. It also worked with the authorities to ensure that detainees' medical and nutritional status was monitored, and helped treat the sick and/or malnourished by providing medicines and therapeutic food. Financial constraints delayed the authorities' construction of a new detention facility; consequently, ICRC support was also postponed.

Members of separated families maintained or restored contact through Liberian National Red Cross Society and ICRC family-links services. Notably, Ivorian children who had been separated from their families by the 2011 Ivorian conflict were reunited with their relatives by the ICRC, in coordination with the Liberian and Ivorian National Societies. The ICRC was unable to cut back its family-links services as planned, owing to the emergence of new needs.

In south-eastern Liberia, the National Society and the ICRC conducted hygiene-promotion sessions, urged communities to build sanitation facilities, renovated and constructed wells and established maintenance committees; people thus had better access to water, and reduced their risk of contracting diseases. The

ICRC regularly guided National Society volunteers' planning and management of these activities, to strengthen their ability to carry out these tasks unaided, after the conclusion of the ICRC's support in 2017.

The National Society strove to resolve an internal crisis with coordinated Movement support led by the International Federation. The ICRC contributed funding for an audit of the National Society's activities, and for the hiring of an independent interim manager; these necessitated the cancellation of some of its other plans for assisting the National Society. Owing to this state of affairs, the partnership agreement with the National Society was not signed until the end of June. Despite these obstacles, the ICRC supported some National Society activities, such as the provision of psycho-social support and vocational training for vulnerable women.

The ICRC maintained its efforts to promote the implementation of IHL. Discussions with regional organizations led to an agreement among the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States and the ICRC to promote the incorporation of key IHL provisions in Liberian legislation. The Liberian legislature adopted, in line with the country's ratification of the Arms Trade Treaty in 2015, the Firearms and Ammunition Control Act, which had been drafted with the ICRC's help.

The army took steps to incorporate IHL in its training: for instance, in an ICRC-organized workshop, officers were trained to teach IHL; and ICRC-donated manuals on IHL – which included a chapter on facilitating safe access to health care – were distributed to troops. At ICRC dissemination sessions, combined sometimes with first-aid training from the National Society, Liberian security forces personnel and UNMIL troops learnt more about IHL and the Movement's work.

CIVILIANS

Given the significant decline in Ebola cases and the conclusion of its Ebola-related initiatives in 2015, the ICRC resumed the activities that it had been focusing on before the outbreak. It also started making preparations to hand some of these activities over to others, particularly the Liberian Red Cross.

A livelihood-support project for Ebola-affected people, which had been conducted in 2015, was evaluated in February 2016. The ICRC found that, despite some logistical difficulties, most of the households that had received cash grants were able to use them to restart small businesses.

Unaccompanied Ivorian minors rejoin their families

People reconnected with their relatives through RCMs, phone calls and other Movement family-links services. Following the resumption of the voluntary repatriation process, 18 unaccompanied Ivorian minors who had been separated from their families because of the 2011 Ivorian conflict were reunited with them by the ICRC in coordination with the Liberian and Ivorian National Societies (see also *Abidjan*). Though this was the last set of cases from previous years, the ICRC could not cut back its family-links services, as new needs emerged in 2016. For instance, some children were separated from their caregivers by the latter's return to Côte d'Ivoire. The ICRC referred their cases to the UNHCR, and registered some 70 of them as unaccompanied minors or separated children. Subsequently, 11 of them were reunited with their families in Côte d'Ivoire; five others were scheduled to rejoin their families in January 2017.

Coordination with the Liberian and Ivorian National Societies, the authorities, the UN and others helped ensure that roles in cross-border tracing and family reunification were clearly defined. With a view to helping it strengthen its ability to provide family-links services unassisted, the ICRC continued to provide the Liberian Red Cross with financial and technical support, including training, funds to cover key employees' salaries, and assistance in publishing a new handbook on restoring family links.

People in south-eastern Liberia mitigate their disease risks

Communities in three counties of south-eastern Liberia – which had experienced the effects of the refugee influx connected to the 2011 Ivorian conflict – learnt more about good hygiene practices at workshops conducted by National Society volunteers, who were trained and supervised by the ICRC. At the urging and with the guidance of the National Society and the ICRC, the communities constructed bathhouses, garbage pits and other sanitation facilities. The ICRC also built wells and trained maintenance committees composed of community members. As a result of these initiatives, some 10,300 people had better access to clean water, which helped mitigate their risk of disease.

The ICRC sought to contribute to the National Society's capacity-building efforts by providing regular guidance for staff in planning and managing the activities mentioned above.

PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM

The ICRC visited detainees in accordance with its standard procedures. It monitored the treatment and living conditions of some 2,300 people held by the justice ministry – including women, minors and people with particular concerns – with a view to ensuring that these were in line with internationally recognized standards for detention. People arrested in connection with the situation in Côte d'Ivoire (see *Abidjan*) were followed up individually. After these visits, the ICRC communicated its feedback and recommendations confidentially to the authorities, particularly the justice ministry's Bureau of Corrections and Rehabilitation (BCR).

Detainees communicated with their relatives through family-links services provided by the National Society and the ICRC.

Penitentiary officials strengthen their managerial capabilities

Given the decrease in emergency-related – particularly Ebola-related – needs, the ICRC focused on helping penitentiary authorities strengthen their managerial capacities, with a view to shifting from direct-support and substitution activities to a more advisory role in 2017.

For instance, the ICRC discussed food-supply management with penitentiary officials; it helped them strengthen their current procedures and secure funding for food in prisons by advocating the adoption of pertinent legislation. It also advised them on such matters as budget management and internationally recognized standards for detention, including those related to the construction of new facilities. The authorities drew on ICRC expertise to review their strategy, their training manual for BCR staff, and a draft law for prison reform.

Some 140 new BCR recruits learnt more about internationally recognized standards for detention through the ICRC's participation in their training. Around 20 penitentiary officials received ICRC training to promote rehabilitation and social welfare for detainees.

The ICRC also organized several joint visits to prisons with some BCR staff, to help them strengthen their ability to assess detainees' needs.

Inmates' living conditions improve after ICRC-supported infrastructure projects

Around 1,200 detainees had better living conditions after ICRC projects in several prisons. For instance, the ICRC improved water and sanitation facilities and installed energy-efficient stoves at some facilities. It renovated and reorganized kitchens and store-rooms in five prisons; at two prisons, it held workshops on hygienic food preparation and storage. It also built outdoor areas at two facilities, which improved detainees' access to sunlight and fresh air. Financial constraints delayed the authorities' construction of a new detention facility in Robertsport; consequently, ICRC support was also postponed.

The ICRC continued providing material and technical support for infrastructure maintenance teams in four prisons – including Monrovia Central Prison (MCP), which held over half of all the detainees in Liberia – with a view to developing their ability to carry out repairs unassisted in the future.

Detainees at the MCP had better sanitation conditions after the ICRC provided supplies for a fumigation campaign and the weekly cleaning of bathrooms. Detainees in all prisons were regularly provided with soap, which helped reduce their vulnerability to skin disease. Hundreds of inmates also benefited from ICRC donations of items, such as blankets, eating utensils and hygiene kits.

Ailing and malnourished detainees benefit from ICRC assistance

The ICRC monitored the health needs of inmates; it focused on vulnerable groups, such as women, foreigners and the elderly. Detainees in the MCP were screened for TB by the health ministry, with ICRC assistance; the MCP clinic was provided with supplies for diagnosing and treating malaria. In all, 60 people with various medical problems were followed up on by the ICRC and the health ministry; 11 of them received free surgical treatment, after a local hospital and the MCP began coordinating more closely, at the ICRC's urging. At 13 prisons, detainees were treated with ICRC-donated medicines and other supplies. At a seminar organized by the health ministry, with ICRC support, penitentiary and prison health officials from all 15 counties strengthened their capacity to provide health care for detainees.

BCR staff continued, with ICRC assistance, to monitor detainees' nutritional status regularly. After 161 cases of malnutrition were diagnosed, the ICRC urged the health and justice ministries to provide adequate nutrition for the detainees affected; 110 of them – inmates at the MCP – were given ICRC-donated therapeutic food.

ACTORS OF INFLUENCE

With a view to broadening support for the Movement, the ICRC kept government officials and representatives of the UN and other international organizations working in the country informed of its activities. It discussed subjects of common interest with these parties; these discussions led to an agreement with the African Union and the Economic Community of West African States to promote the incorporation of key IHL provisions in Liberian legislation.

Liberia adopts the Firearms and Ammunition Control Act

The ICRC engaged the authorities regularly in discussions about the status of IHL-related treaties that Liberia had signed or

ratified, particularly about the ratification of the African Union Convention on IDPs. The Liberian legislature adopted, in line with the country's ratification of the Arms Trade Treaty in 2015, the Firearms and Ammunition Control Act, which had been drafted with the ICRC's help.

The army takes steps to incorporate key IHL provisions in its training

The Liberian army worked on incorporating key IHL provisions in its training curriculum. At ICRC train-the-trainer courses, officers strengthened their ability to instruct others in IHL. Troops learnt more about the subject through field exercises, case studies and ICRC-donated IHL training manuals, which included a chapter – drafted by senior officers in 2015, with the ICRC's assistance – on ensuring safe access to health care during military operations. The ICRC provided support for the head of the army's legal department to attend an advanced IHL course in San Remo.

At an ICRC predeployment briefing, soldiers bound for a UN peacekeeping mission in Mali learnt about the Movement's activities and about the basic principles of IHL – including the necessity of respecting medical services and preventing sexual violence during armed conflict. These subjects were also covered in ICRC dissemination sessions for newly arrived UNMIL officers.

More than 1,200 law-enforcement personnel, prison officers, presidential guards and firemen learnt about IHL and the Movement's work during ICRC dissemination sessions. Some sessions, particularly for officers deployed in counties along the border with Côte d'Ivoire, included first-aid training from the Liberian Red Cross and the ICRC. At an ICRC train-the-trainer course, 20 instructors from several law-enforcement agencies added to their knowledge of international policing standards.

National Society and ICRC communication initiatives help raise awareness of the Movement's work

The general public learnt more about the Movement and its work from the local and international media, which drew on Liberian Red Cross and ICRC communication materials and events for journalists. An online documentary about the reunion of Ivorian minors with their families (see *Civilians*) helped broaden awareness about this issue.

The ICRC held IHL forums for students and professors at two universities; one university established a new elective course on IHL with ICRC support.

RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

During meetings led by the International Federation, Movement components present in Liberia coordinated their response to allegations, made towards the end of 2015, that the Liberian Red Cross had mismanaged some of the Ebola funds. The matter was discussed with the authorities, and subsequently, the National Society's 2014–2015 activities were audited and an independent interim manager was hired. The ICRC contributed funding for these initiatives, which meant that some of its other plans for supporting the National Society in 2016 had to be cancelled; moreover, because of this crisis, the partnership agreement with the National Society was not signed until the end of June. The National Society did, however, receive some support, particularly for its family-links services (see *Civilians*) and for first-aid and IHL dissemination sessions for security forces personnel (see *Actors of influence*).

The Liberian Red Cross, with ICRC support, provided victims of floods, fires and storms with household essentials and/or materials for rebuilding their homes. A project partly funded by the American Red Cross, the German Red Cross and the ICRC enabled the National Society to provide some 200 vulnerable women – including those affected by or at risk of sexual violence – with assistance in the form of home visits, counselling sessions and vocational training.

The ICRC also supported the National Society's organizational development. Joint activities (see *Actors of influence*) helped National Society staff strengthen their capacities in public communication. The National Society's mandate and priorities, as well as issues linked to accountability and organizational sustainability, were explained to the interim manager. In December, the National Society elected a new president and board of directors.

MAIN FIGURES AND INDICATORS: PROTECTION		Total			
CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)					
RCMs and other means of family contact			UAMs/SC		
RCMs collected		95	54		
RCMs distributed		42	15		
Phone calls facilitated between family members		636			
Reunifications, transfers and repatriations					
People reunited with their families		30			
	<i>including people registered by another delegation</i>	1			
Tracing requests, including cases of missing persons			Women	Girls	Boys
People for whom a tracing request was newly registered		7	1	1	2
Tracing cases closed positively (subject located or fate established)		2			
Tracing cases still being handled at the end of the reporting period (people)		11		3	3
	<i>including people for whom tracing requests were registered by another delegation</i>	2			
Unaccompanied minors (UAMs)/separated children (SC), including demobilized child soldiers			Girls		Demobilized children
UAMs/SC newly registered by the ICRC/National Society		80	31		
UAMs/SC reunited with their families by the ICRC/National Society		30	11		
	<i>including UAMs/SC registered by another delegation</i>	1			
UAM/SC cases still being handled by the ICRC/National Society at the end of the reporting period		59	28		
Documents					
People to whom travel documents were issued		29			
PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)					
ICRC visits			Women	Minors	
Detainees visited		2,336	65	43	
			Women	Girls	Boys
Detainees visited and monitored individually		49	1		3
Detainees newly registered		29	1		3
Number of visits carried out		103			
Number of places of detention visited		16			
RCMs and other means of family contact					
RCMs collected		86			
RCMs distributed		29			
Phone calls made to families to inform them of the whereabouts of a detained relative		1			
Detainees released and transferred/repatriated by/via the ICRC		1			

MAIN FIGURES AND INDICATORS: ASSISTANCE		Total	Women	Children
CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)				
Water and habitat (in some cases provided within a protection or cooperation programme)				
Water and habitat activities	Beneficiaries	10,336	3,618	4,134
PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)				
Water and habitat (in some cases provided within a protection or cooperation programme)				
Water and habitat activities	Beneficiaries	1,200	120	240
Health				
Visits carried out by health staff		118		
Places of detention visited by health staff	Structures	16		
Health facilities supported in places of detention visited by health staff	Structures	13		