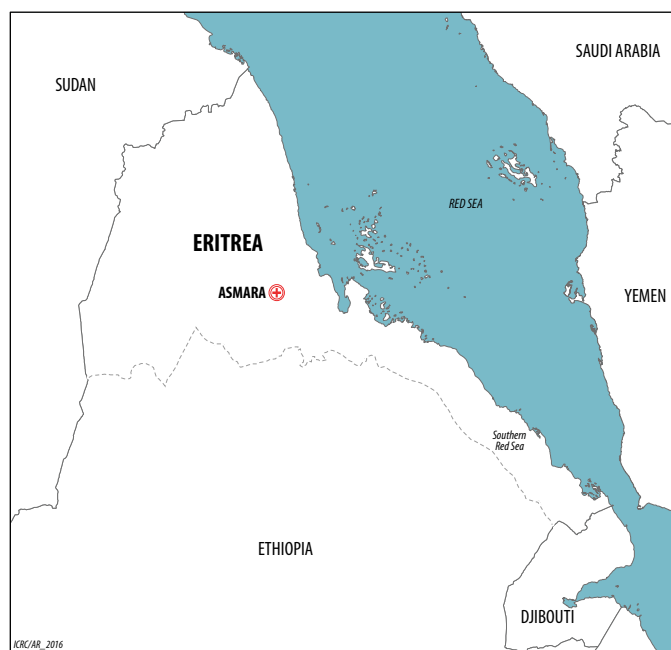


ERITREA



ICRC/AR_2016
 ⊕ ICRC delegation

The boundaries, names and designations used in this report do not imply official endorsement, nor express a political opinion on the part of the ICRC, and are without prejudice to claims of sovereignty over the territories mentioned.

KEY RESULTS/CONSTRAINTS IN 2016

- ▶ Households affected by past violence worked to rebuild their livelihoods, aided by seed and tools, and veterinary services for their livestock, from the ICRC; they had better access to clean water through solar-powered systems.
- ▶ Vulnerable people of Ethiopian origin renewed their residence permits with ICRC financial assistance. Those who wished to be repatriated through the government's programme had their transport and other costs covered.
- ▶ The ICRC and the "Red Cross Society of Eritrea" resumed cooperation under a new agreement focused on supporting the latter's efforts to rebuild its emergency response and other operational capacities.
- ▶ Beneficiary communities, students, military personnel and local authorities learnt more about IHL and the Movement at ICRC briefings during activities organized by a youth group, and through an article published in local languages.
- ▶ The ICRC's access to and activities for conflict-affected people, including detainees, remained limited. Through discussions with the authorities, and other means, it sought to increase acceptance for its mandate and work.

EXPENDITURE IN KCHF

Protection	889
Assistance	3,253
Prevention	494
Cooperation with National Societies	206
General	31
Total	4,872
<i>Of which: Overheads</i>	<i>297</i>

IMPLEMENTATION RATE

Expenditure/yearly budget	110%
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PERSONNEL

Mobile staff	3
Resident staff (daily workers not included)	44

The ICRC opened a delegation in Eritrea in 1998 in the context of the 1998–2000 international armed conflict between Eritrea and Ethiopia and continues to respond to the needs remaining from that two-year war. Its priorities are to help improve the resilience of the population concerned and to ensure compliance with internationally recognized standards with regard to any detainees in Eritrea of concern to the ICRC. The ICRC supports the "Red Cross Society of Eritrea".

YEARLY RESULT

Level of achievement of ICRC yearly objectives/plans of action

MEDIUM

PROTECTION

	Total
CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)	
Restoring family links	
RCMs collected	496
RCMs distributed	1,103
Tracing cases closed positively (subject located or fate established)	55

ASSISTANCE

	2016 Targets (up to)	Achieved
CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)		
Economic security (in some cases provided within a protection or cooperation programme)		
Essential household items	Beneficiaries 10,000	3,025
Productive inputs	Beneficiaries 239,000	427,880
Cash	Beneficiaries 4,870	3,723
Water and habitat (in some cases provided within a protection or cooperation programme)		
Water and habitat activities	Beneficiaries 22,500	87,400

CONTEXT

Ethiopian and Eritrean forces clashed along the border in June 2016, but the fighting did not escalate further; tensions persisted between the two countries. The dispute regarding the sealed Eritrea–Ethiopia border remained stalled; both countries maintained a military presence in the disputed areas.

People in Eritrea continued to feel the effects of past violence: many found it difficult to restore their livelihoods, and access to public services was limited.

No progress was made in the demarcation of the Djibouti–Eritrea border, or in implementing the mediation agreement signed by the two countries in 2010. Qatar, acting as a mediator, maintained troops in the disputed region. In March 2016, the Eritrean government handed over four Djiboutian POWs, previously reported missing, to Qatar.

Humanitarian action remained limited following the government's request, in 2011, that international humanitarian agencies terminate or curtail their activities. The government continued to implement agreements, signed in 2013, on resuming cooperation with the European Union and the UN.

ICRC ACTION AND RESULTS

The ICRC in Eritrea maintained dialogue with the authorities and other efforts to foster understanding of and acceptance for its mandate and activities. Operating within the limits imposed on its movements and activities (see *Context*), it continued to help vulnerable communities cope with their circumstances, particularly people affected by the border dispute between Ethiopia and Eritrea and by the past conflict with Djibouti.

The ICRC worked with rural communities – including those near the border with Ethiopia – to help them restore their livelihoods. Farming households increased their food production with the help of seed and tools and other ICRC material assistance. The ICRC and the authorities implemented campaigns to treat livestock against parasites and disease; this helped herding households maintain or improve the health and market value of their herds. More water was available for the livestock of some of these households after watering ponds were constructed in their villages.

Communities in border areas had better access to safe water after solar-powered systems were constructed, repaired and maintained by local authorities with ICRC support. The authorities also received ICRC assistance in the form of training and equipment for maintaining these systems and for bolstering their capacity to ensure the sustainability of water supply.

The ICRC continued to monitor the situation of Ethiopians living in Eritrea to help ensure that their rights under internationally recognized standards, including voluntary repatriation in humane conditions, were respected; permission for the ICRC to facilitate the voluntary repatriation of civilians had been withdrawn in 2009. The ICRC covered administrative and transport expenses for Ethiopians who wished to be repatriated, and paid for residence permits and medical care for those who wished to stay in Eritrea. It also helped released detainees of Ethiopian origin cover some of their expenses for food, accommodation and transport.

In areas to which it had access, the ICRC helped members of families dispersed by conflict, migration or other circumstances reconnect

through RCMs. It maintained efforts to follow up, with the pertinent authorities, requests for information from the families of people reported missing in connection with the 1998–2000 Eritrea–Ethiopia conflict. The ICRC continued to appeal to the authorities, on behalf of the families concerned, for information on 13 Djiboutian soldiers reported by their government as missing after the hostilities between Djibouti and Eritrea in June 2008.

The ICRC and the “Red Cross Society of Eritrea” signed a one-year cooperation agreement in March 2016. Under the agreement, the ICRC provided material support and training aimed at helping the organization refresh its capacities in conducting first-aid, family-links and other emergency activities, and in operational communication.

CIVILIANS

Amid restrictions on the activities of international humanitarian organizations, the ICRC continued to provide support to violence-affected people in need of assistance. It cultivated dialogue with the Eritrean authorities, with a view to fostering acceptance for its mandate and gaining permission to broaden its activities.

Households headed by women grow crops using ICRC-provided supplies

Vulnerable households affected by previous conflict, including people in areas near the border with Ethiopia, worked to strengthen their resilience against the effects of violence by restoring or improving their livelihoods with ICRC support.

In Anseba, Debub, Gash Barka and Northern Red Sea, households dependent on livestock for their livelihood had limited access to veterinary services. Some 73,800 households (369,000 people) among them maintained or improved the health – and thus the productivity and market value – of their herds by having over 2.5 million heads of livestock treated for parasites under a campaign implemented by the authorities and the ICRC. These households and around 5,000 others (some 25,000 people) in Southern Red Sea and Zoba Maekel also had nearly two million of their animals vaccinated against disease.

In Debub and Gash Barka, 10,000 households (30,000 people) had more water for their livestock during the dry season after four watering ponds were constructed in or near their villages.

Around 700 farming households (some 3,500 people) in rural areas of Anseba, Debub and Gash Barka resumed farming or increased their harvests using vegetable seed, foot pumps and tools distributed by the ICRC; most of these households were headed by women. In Debub, some households grew their crops on land irrigated by a solar-powered system being tested by the ICRC.

Seventeen people, from the agriculture ministry and the “Red Cross Society of Eritrea”, developed their ability to design and implement livelihood assistance projects during ICRC-led training sessions.

Households in rural areas obtain safe drinking water from newly built water points

Some 87,400 vulnerable people in border communities, where access to safe water was limited or non-existent, had a more reliable supply through solar-powered systems constructed, repaired and maintained by the authorities with ICRC assistance. The environmentally friendly systems minimized running and maintenance costs, which was particularly important as fuel was scarce in Eritrea.

Twenty-four technicians developed their abilities to maintain these systems at training sessions conducted by the ICRC.

The authorities developed their capacities to ensure the sustainability of water-supply systems, in particular by sustaining efforts to create an inventory of the water wells across Eritrea; they received surveying equipment and computers from the ICRC.

Patients and staff in the Debub regional hospital had more safe water, after the ICRC repaired infrastructure in the facility.

Vulnerable people of Ethiopian origin renew their residence permits

People of Ethiopian origin continued to be repatriated through Sudan by the Eritrean authorities; the ICRC's authorization to facilitate voluntary repatriation of civilians across the Eritrea–Ethiopia border had been withdrawn by the government in 2009. Working under these conditions, the ICRC monitored the situation of Ethiopians living in Eritrea, to help ensure that their rights under internationally recognized standards, including voluntary repatriation in humane conditions, were respected.

Particularly vulnerable Ethiopians – including women, minors, former detainees and elderly people – coped with their circumstances with the help of ICRC financial assistance. Among them were 3,052 people who renewed their residence permits, and thus obtained government benefits, and 377 repatriates who were able to pay administrative fees, and cover their expenses for food, transport and accommodation; the medical expenses of 39 people were covered. Twenty-three former detainees of Ethiopian origin also received assistance for covering food and accommodation expenses, and transport costs for relatives.

Members of families separated by conflict reconnect through RCMs

Family-links services run by the “Red Cross Society of Eritrea” had been suspended in 2012. Since then, the ICRC had provided these services, to a limited extent, in areas to which it had access. Under the new agreement signed by the two organizations (see *Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement*), the ICRC provided support to the “Red Cross Society of Eritrea” for strengthening its capacity to provide family-links services.

People separated by conflict, migration or other circumstances used RCMs to reconnect with relatives. Family members sent each other official documents, such as academic transcripts and attestations of detention, which helped the recipients to pursue employment opportunities or further studies, or meet legal requirements. At the request of the UNHCR, the ICRC issued travel documents to 47 Somali refugees bound for Slovakia, for eventual resettlement in the United States of America.

The ICRC continued to engage the Eritrean and the Ethiopian authorities in dialogue on helping unaccompanied Eritrean minors in Ethiopia restore contact and, where appropriate, reunite with their relatives (see *Ethiopia*).

The ICRC continued to follow up, with the pertinent authorities, requests from families for news of relatives missing in connection with the 1998–2000 Eritrea–Ethiopia conflict; no new information was made available. The families of the 19 Eritrean POWs held in Djibouti received news of their relatives through ICRC family-links services (see *Nairobi*).

PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM

The ICRC continued its discussions with the authorities, with a view to resuming visits to detainees in Eritrea, including any POWs, civilian detainees of Ethiopian origin and other detainees of concern to the ICRC. After the clashes between Eritrean and Ethiopian troops in June 2016, the ICRC submitted written representations requesting that it be informed of people, if any, captured during the hostilities.

Requests to the Eritrean government for information on the whereabouts of 13 Djiboutian soldiers reported by their government as missing after the 2008 Djibouti–Eritrea conflict remained unanswered; four Djiboutian soldiers were released early in the year (see *Context*).

ACTORS OF INFLUENCE

Given the restrictions on its activities (see *Context*), the ICRC's dialogue with national and local authorities continued to focus on fostering their support and acceptance for IHL, particularly the 1949 Geneva Conventions, and for its own neutral, impartial and independent humanitarian action. During meetings with government officials, and by involving the authorities in the planning and implementation of its activities, the ICRC created opportunities to discuss humanitarian issues and seek broader access to people affected by violence, including detainees (see *People deprived of their freedom*).

More than a hundred regional authorities were briefed on IHL and Movement activities at dissemination events; they also received copies of ICRC publications.

Young Eritreans learn more about IHL

Some 3,600 people – members of the National Union of Eritrean Youth and Students and beneficiaries of ICRC projects – learnt more about IHL and the Movement's activities through dissemination sessions. During a youth festival at the Sawa Military Training Centre, participants – including students and military personnel – added to their knowledge of IHL, and received reference materials on the subject, at an information centre set up by the ICRC. Members of the general public familiarized themselves with IHL and the Movement during briefings organized by the ICRC at a book fair conducted across the country, and through an article published in local languages.

Asmara Law School students demonstrated their knowledge of IHL at a regional competition, which they attended with ICRC assistance; lecturers developed their ability to teach IHL at an event abroad (see *Nairobi*). Law students drew on ICRC-provided IHL reference materials for their theses.

RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

The “Red Cross Society of Eritrea” and the ICRC resumed cooperation under a one-year agreement signed in March 2016. The agreement focused on developing the former's capacities in restoring family links, responding to emergencies and broadening awareness of its activities; members and volunteers of the “Red Cross Society of Eritrea” refreshed their capability in these areas at ICRC training sessions. The organization boosted its emergency preparedness by stocking emergency household items with ICRC assistance.

Efforts to pursue discussions with the authorities, on a legal framework recognizing the status of the “Red Cross Society of Eritrea”, continued.

MAIN FIGURES AND INDICATORS: PROTECTION		Total			
CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)					
RCMs and other means of family contact			UAMs/SC		
RCMs collected		496			
RCMs distributed		1,103			
Tracing requests, including cases of missing persons			Women	Girls	Boys
People for whom a tracing request was newly registered		144	49	19	15
<i>including people for whom tracing requests were registered by another delegation</i>		55			
Tracing cases closed positively (subject located or fate established)		55			
<i>including people for whom tracing requests were registered by another delegation</i>		11			
Tracing cases still being handled at the end of the reporting period (people)		487	75	39	30
<i>including people for whom tracing requests were registered by another delegation</i>		332			
Documents					
People to whom travel documents were issued		47			
Official documents relayed between family members across borders/front lines		12			
PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)					
RCMs and other means of family contact					
People to whom a detention attestation was issued		12			

MAIN FIGURES AND INDICATORS: ASSISTANCE		Total	Women	Children
CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)				
Economic security (in some cases provided within a protection or cooperation programme)				
Essential household items	Beneficiaries	3,025	2,269	
Productive inputs	Beneficiaries	427,880	315,083	10,500
Cash	Beneficiaries	3,723	2,506	287
Water and habitat (in some cases provided within a protection or cooperation programme)				
Water and habitat activities	Beneficiaries	87,400	26,220	34,960