

UGANDA



The ICRC has been present in Uganda since 1979. Given the progress towards peace in the north of the country, ICRC assistance activities have been adapted to decreasing humanitarian needs. The ICRC continues to monitor the treatment of detainees and strives to raise awareness of IHL and humanitarian principles among the armed and police forces. Whenever possible, the ICRC supports the Uganda Red Cross Society in its efforts to improve its capacities.

YEARLY RESULT

Level of achievement of ICRC yearly objectives/plans of action

MEDIUM

KEY RESULTS/CONSTRAINTS IN 2016

- ▶ Particularly vulnerable detainees spent time with their families, who visited them in prison with the ICRC's help. Thousands of detainees eased their living conditions with ICRC-provided hygiene kits and recreational items.
- ▶ Refugees from countries affected by armed conflict or other situations of violence kept in touch with their relatives via the ICRC's family-links services. Some unaccompanied minors were reunited with their families.
- ▶ Through ICRC-backed initiatives, relatives of missing persons received psychosocial support, and some established savings/loan associations or began small-scale income-generating activities to help cover their economic needs.
- ▶ Peacekeepers bound for the African Union Mission in Somalia learnt more about IHL and other norms applicable to their duties, and the goals of the Health Care in Danger project, at ICRC presentations during predeployment briefings.
- ▶ Given the National Society's administrative difficulties, the ICRC initially deferred most joint activities with it, though it provided help during some emergencies. Some joint activities gradually resumed in the second half of 2016.

EXPENDITURE IN KCHF

Protection	2,461
Assistance	-
Prevention	668
Cooperation with National Societies	325
General	42
Total	3,495
<i>Of which: Overheads</i>	<i>213</i>

IMPLEMENTATION RATE

Expenditure/yearly budget	82%
---------------------------	-----

PERSONNEL

Mobile staff	10
Resident staff (daily workers not included)	44

PROTECTION

	Total
CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)	
Restoring family links	
RCMs collected	2,371
RCMs distributed	1,221
Phone calls facilitated between family members	12,450
Tracing cases closed positively (subject located or fate established)	28
People reunited with their families	18
<i>of whom unaccompanied minors/separated children</i>	18
PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)	
ICRC visits	
Detainees visited	15,385
Detainees visited and monitored individually	225
Number of visits carried out	70
Number of places of detention visited	16
Restoring family links	
RCMs collected	182
RCMs distributed	176
Phone calls made to families to inform them of the whereabouts of a detained relative	149

ASSISTANCE

	2016 Targets (up to)	Achieved
CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)		
Economic security (in some cases provided within a protection or cooperation programme)		
Food commodities	Beneficiaries	10
Essential household items	Beneficiaries	1,301
Productive inputs	Beneficiaries	101
Cash	Beneficiaries	7

CONTEXT

Sporadic incidents of violence, particularly in connection with the general elections in February, persisted. These included political demonstrations and communal clashes in western Uganda; reportedly, attacks on police stations and military detachments led to fighting between government forces and other weapon bearers. Such incidents often resulted in casualties, arrests, displacement and damage to public property.

Uganda reportedly hosted nearly a million refugees, a significant increase from last year; their presence strained the country's resources. Most of them had fled South Sudan, particularly after violence surged from July onwards (see *South Sudan*).

Thousands of families remained without news of relatives who went missing in connection with the 1986–2006 non-international armed conflict in northern Uganda.

The Uganda People's Defence Force (UPDF) contributed troops to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and to military operations against the Lord's Resistance Army in the Central African Republic (hereafter CAR).

ICRC ACTION AND RESULTS

The ICRC continued its efforts to help ensure the protection and well-being of vulnerable people in Uganda, particularly detainees, refugees and the families of missing persons. Given the Uganda Red Cross Society's administrative difficulties, the ICRC initially deferred most joint activities with it; however, the ICRC did provide support for the National Society for responding to some emergencies, such as violence related to the elections. Some joint activities were gradually resumed in the second half of 2016.

Thousands of detainees received ICRC visits conducted according to the organization's standard working procedures. ICRC delegates assessed the treatment and living conditions of detainees, and confidentially shared their findings and, where necessary, recommendations with the authorities. Detainees kept in touch with their relatives using family-links services; particularly vulnerable detainees spent time with their families during ICRC-arranged prison visits. Distributions of hygiene and recreational items, and improvements to prison facilities, helped ease the living conditions of thousands of detainees. Support for prison authorities in managing detainees' files was concluded in February.

Cooperation with the National Society having been temporarily suspended, the ICRC took the lead in helping thousands of refugees – mainly from South Sudan – to restore or maintain contact with their families. It paid particular attention to unaccompanied minors, including those previously associated with armed groups; ten of them rejoined their families, and received food and other essential items to ease their reintegration.

Families of people missing in connection with the 1986–2006 non-international armed conflict in northern Uganda found some comfort amid their grief through an ICRC-backed psychosocial support programme staffed by community-based volunteers. Local trainers, with the ICRC's assistance, also helped these families set up community savings and loan associations or begin small-scale income-generating activities, enabling them to meet some of their financial needs. The ICRC began facilitating discussions among newly elected local and national officials, religious and

cultural leaders, representatives of missing people's families and other stakeholders, to help raise awareness of the issue of missing persons. Its offer to strengthen national capacities in managing human remains did not receive a positive response from the authorities; plans to support their attendance in international courses were therefore cancelled.

The ICRC maintained its efforts to foster understanding of IHL and support for the Movement among weapon bearers and academics. UPDF officers and troops bound for AMISOM added to their knowledge of IHL and the Movement's activities through briefings organized by the ICRC during their predeployment training; senior officers attended overseas events on the subject, through the ICRC's sponsorship. Military legal advisers furthered their understanding of international rules governing military operations, partly through training sessions organized by the ICRC at the UPDF's request. The ICRC extended its memorandum of understanding with the defence ministry and the UPDF, with a view to further promoting IHL among military and security forces through dissemination sessions. University lecturers developed their ability to teach IHL at local and regional events: students joined IHL-related competitions, with ICRC support. Dissemination sessions for Uganda Police Force (UPF) personnel did not take place as planned, as the UPF did not respond positively to the ICRC's proposal.

The ICRC delegation in Uganda continued to operate a warehouse to support ICRC food distributions in South Sudan (see *South Sudan*).

CIVILIANS

The ICRC continued to monitor the situation of people affected by violence, particularly in western Uganda (see *Context*). During visits to the area, it met with local authorities, community leaders and other pertinent actors, creating a network to help it respond in case of renewed tensions.

Unaccompanied minors rejoin their families

As the ICRC suspended its cooperation with the National Society during the first half of 2016, it took over the provision of family-links services for people separated from their relatives. Nevertheless, whenever possible, the ICRC extended assistance to the National Society, to strengthen its capacity to deliver these and other services to people in need (see *Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement*).

With ICRC assistance, people who had fled armed conflict and other violence in South Sudan (see *South Sudan*) and other countries (see *Burundi* and *Congo, Democratic Republic of the*) restored or maintained contact with relatives through phone calls (12,450 made) and RCMs (2,371 collected; 1,221 distributed).

Refugees and other vulnerable foreign nationals continued to approach the ICRC to express their concerns about their security or for advice on third-country resettlement. They were referred to the appropriate organizations, including providers of psychosocial support, the UNHCR and other ICRC delegations.

The ICRC paid particular attention to unaccompanied minors, including those who were formerly associated with armed groups or who had fled violence in Uganda or elsewhere. Ugandan officials were apprised of these minors' concerns and urged to address their specific needs. With the ICRC's help, some minors contacted their relatives, and 18 who had been staying in settlements in western Uganda were reunited with their families. Ten minors received

food, clothes, shoes and hygiene items from the ICRC, and were vaccinated against yellow fever before they returned to their families.

Families of the missing set up their own savings associations and income-generating projects

Thousands of families remained without news of relatives who went missing in connection with the 1986–2006 non-international armed conflict in northern Uganda. As part of an ICRC-initiated programme, some 500 families received psychosocial support for coping with their situations, through peer-support sessions led by local volunteers recruited by the ICRC. Some of them were referred to relevant organizations for their specific needs, such as health care.

The families of the missing also had help in covering some of their financial needs. With assistance from ICRC-backed local trainers, about 500 families established over 20 savings and loan associations. Households began small-scale, community-based livelihood activities, such as farming and livestock rearing, after receiving sheep, seed and farming tools from the ICRC, benefiting some 100 people; this project had been put on hold in 2015, following the Movement-wide suspension of cooperation with the National Society. Following an assessment, the most vulnerable families – 1,300 people in all – were provided by the ICRC with household essentials such as mattresses, blankets, soap and kitchen utensils, to help improve their living conditions.

Complementing these efforts, the ICRC worked closely with parties concerned to raise awareness of the issue of missing persons and to create mechanisms to address it, including by advocating the creation of a national registry of missing persons. To this end, the ICRC began facilitating discussions among newly elected local and national officials, religious and cultural leaders, representatives of missing people's families, and others. With ICRC support, the families organized commemorative events, for instance, on the International Day of the Disappeared; these were attended by thousands of people.

Plans to sponsor their attendance at international courses in managing humans were cancelled, because the authorities showed no interest.

PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM

Over 15,000 detainees – some of whom were alleged members of armed groups or were held on charges of “terrorism” or armed rebellion – in 16 places of detention received ICRC visits conducted in accordance with the organization's standard procedures; 225 detainees were followed up individually. Following these visits, delegates confidentially shared their assessment of detainees' treatment and living conditions with the authorities concerned. They were urged to address overcrowding in prisons, and to ensure that detention conditions were in line with internationally recognized standards, particularly with regard to respect for judicial guarantees and, for foreign detainees, the principle of *non-refoulement*. The ICRC continued to seek to engage the authorities in dialogue, with a view to gaining access to all detainees.

Elderly and other particularly vulnerable detainees spend time with their families

Detainees stayed in touch with their relatives through ICRC family-links services. Particularly vulnerable detainees – such as the elderly and the mentally ill – spent time with their relatives,

who visited them in prison with the help of the ICRC; one released detainee was provided assistance by the ICRC to return home. Some detainees sent or received RCMs, or informed their families of their whereabouts through phone calls. Foreign inmates notified their diplomatic representatives or UNHCR of their situation through the ICRC; others were referred to local organizations for legal and other assistance.

Thousands of detainees receive hygiene and recreational items

The ICRC kept up its discussions with penitentiary authorities on the type and scope of support that it could provide to help them improve the situation of detainees. In line with these discussions, over 12,300 detainees – including people held at places of temporary detention run by the police – were given hygiene supplies and recreational items. Over 1,900 detainees at various facilities received rice, sugar and other provisions from the ICRC; some detainees at the Jinja Women's Prison received powdered milk for their children who were living with them. 6,200 inmates in three prisons had better living conditions, including access to clean water, after the ICRC finished repairing water-supply and other facilities.

Drawing on ICRC technical input, administrators at the Luzira Upper Prison began to independently manage their new information-management system, which had been installed by the ICRC in 2015 to help them expedite the processing of detainees' cases and ease prison overcrowding. Plans to send a prison official to a regional meeting on data management were therefore cancelled, and ICRC support for information management ended in February.

ACTORS OF INFLUENCE

The ICRC continued to promote IHL and the Movement's work among influential actors in Uganda. Some joint activities with the Ugandan Red Cross and the ICRC were put on hold, however, owing to the suspension of cooperation between the two during the first half of 2016 (see *Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement*); these included first-aid training sessions for UPDF and police personnel, and field visits for journalists.

UPDF officers and peacekeepers learn more about IHL and other norms applicable to their duties

Over 4,700 troops and officers bound for AMISOM enhanced their understanding of IHL and the Movement, and the goals of the Health Care in Danger project, through ICRC presentations during predeployment briefings; they also received copies of an ICRC-produced code of conduct containing the basic principles of IHL and first-aid instructions, and were urged to continue facilitating access for Movement personnel to violence-affected people. At ICRC-organized training sessions requested by the authorities, over 200 legal advisers, commanders and air force personnel from the UPDF broadened their knowledge of international rules governing military operations, as did two senior military officers at a workshop abroad (see *International law and policy*). Another high-ranking officer exchanged ideas with his peers at a regional round-table on ensuring respect for IHL (see *African Union*). No senior official was sponsored to attend an advanced course in San Remo, Italy, as the UPDF had other engagements, including security for the national elections.

With a view to further promoting IHL among the armed forces through dissemination sessions, the ICRC extended its memorandum of understanding with the defence ministry and the UPDF. An IHL module, designed with the ICRC's technical

assistance, continued to be taught as part of the syllabus at the senior and junior command and staff colleges. UPDF's legal training centre received ICRC-donated IHL publications.

The chairman of the national IHL committee was unable to attend the universal meeting of such committees, owing to his other priorities. Nevertheless, the authorities and the ICRC sustained discussions on ways to incorporate IHL in domestic legislation, and on ratifying/acceding to and implementing IHL treaties, notably the Arms Trade Treaty and the Convention on Cluster Munitions. With ICRC sponsorship, a Ugandan government representative discussed with his peers the implementation of the African Union Convention on IDPs, at a regional conference on the subject (see *Nairobi*).

The police showed no interest in the ICRC's offer to conduct dissemination sessions for their personnel on international human rights law and the use of force.

Academics enrich their understanding of IHL

University lecturers developed their ability to teach IHL, at a local training course organized by the ICRC. With ICRC support, other academics attended events held abroad, such as a regional round-table for IHL lecturers (see *Nairobi*), and a conference on the points of correspondence between Islamic law and IHL (see *Iran, Islamic Republic of*). Representatives from the military, judiciary, universities and NGOs exchanged ideas on promoting respect for IHL, at a panel discussion organized by the ICRC.

Some students demonstrated their grasp of IHL through a regional essay contest, and others prepared for an international moot-court competition, all with the help of ICRC training and reference materials. Hundreds of students in Uganda, including foreigners, learnt more about IHL and the ICRC at dissemination sessions. The Kampala International University expanded its library's IHL section with over 100 copies of publications donated by the ICRC.

RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

The Uganda Red Cross Society continued its efforts to implement structural and financial reforms and carry out its activities. However, the administrative problems it continued to face compelled the ICRC to suspend anew its cooperation with the National Society, which affected some of their planned joint activities (see *Civilians* and *Actors of influence*). Nevertheless, the National Society continued to receive capacity-building and ad hoc support from the ICRC, and some joint activities – notably in relation to emergency response and the Safer Access framework – resumed in the second half of 2016.

Volunteers from two branches refreshed their first-aid skills at ICRC-organized courses. National Society teams carried out their work – particularly, in response to election-related emergencies (see *Context*) – with the help of ad hoc donations of first-aid kits, helmets and other supplies from the ICRC, which also helped cover the teams' operating costs. The ICRC also contributed to the salaries of personnel at the National Society's headquarters, with a view to facilitating the implementation of the National Society's plans.

The National Society and the ICRC discussed ways to effectively address the needs of refugees and IDPs. In particular, volunteers and staff working at a settlement camp for refugees from South Sudan were trained to deliver first-aid and family-links services safely and in accordance with Movement principles, at a workshop organized by the National Society and the ICRC.

MAIN FIGURES AND INDICATORS: PROTECTION		Total			
CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)					
RCMs and other means of family contact			UAMs/SC		
RCMs collected		2,371	147		
RCMs distributed		1,221	32		
Phone calls facilitated between family members		12,450			
Reunifications, transfers and repatriations					
People reunited with their families		18			
	<i>including people registered by another delegation</i>	1			
People transferred or repatriated		9			
Tracing requests, including cases of missing persons			Women	Girls	Boys
People for whom a tracing request was newly registered		43	9	13	11
	<i>including people for whom tracing requests were registered by another delegation</i>	7			
Tracing cases closed positively (subject located or fate established)		28			
	<i>including people for whom tracing requests were registered by another delegation</i>	9			
Tracing cases still being handled at the end of the reporting period (people)		44	6	15	13
	<i>including people for whom tracing requests were registered by another delegation</i>	15			
Unaccompanied minors (UAMs) /separated children (SC), including demobilized child soldiers			Girls		Demobilized children
UAMs/SC newly registered by the ICRC/National Society		217	86		
UAMs/SC reunited with their families by the ICRC/National Society		18	6		1
	<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		291	109		4
Documents					
People to whom travel documents were issued		13			
Official documents relayed between family members across borders/front lines		4			
PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)					
ICRC visits			Women	Minors	
Detainees visited		15,385	675	50	
			Women	Girls	Boys
Detainees visited and monitored individually		225	15		6
Detainees newly registered		117	12		4
Number of visits carried out		70			
Number of places of detention visited		16			
RCMs and other means of family contact					
RCMs collected		182			
RCMs distributed		176			
Phone calls made to families to inform them of the whereabouts of a detained relative		149			
Detainees visited by their relatives with ICRC/National Society support		29			
People to whom a detention attestation was issued		4			

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)				
Food commodities	Beneficiaries	10		
Essential household items	Beneficiaries	1,301	653	2
Productive inputs	Beneficiaries	101	57	
Cash	Beneficiaries	7	1	
PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)				
Economic security (in some cases provided within a protection programme)				
Food commodities	Beneficiaries	1,957	67	
Essential household items	Beneficiaries	12,353	546	
Water and habitat (in some cases provided within a protection or cooperation programme)				
Water and habitat activities	Beneficiaries	6,200		