

# BANGKOK (regional)

COVERING: Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Thailand, Viet Nam



⊕ ICRC regional delegation    
 ◆ ICRC mission    
 + ICRC office  
▴ ICRC-supported prosthetic/orthotic project

## KEY RESULTS/CONSTRAINTS IN 2015

- ▶ Detainees in Cambodia and Thailand benefited from the authorities' improvements to prison management, following ICRC recommendations/support: more regular access to health care and open air, for example.
- ▶ The authorities, supported by the ICRC, expedited the resolution of some cases pending for several years in Cambodia; 174 detainees thus had their sentences finalized.
- ▶ Vulnerable households in southern Thailand and some disabled people in Cambodia made themselves more self-sufficient by starting small businesses with ICRC livelihood assistance.
- ▶ In Cambodia and the Lao People's Democratic Republic, disabled people received physical rehabilitation services at ICRC-supported centres; support for centres in the latter country began in 2015.
- ▶ Naval officers from 14 countries in the Asia-Pacific region added to their knowledge of the application of IHL in naval warfare at a workshop organized jointly by the Royal Thai Navy and the ICRC.
- ▶ Pending the development of dialogue with the Lao penitentiary authorities, ICRC assistance to one place of detention was put on hold. Dialogue on prison management with Vietnamese authorities was also limited.

## EXPENDITURE IN KCHF

Protection	3,628
Assistance	4,789
Prevention	3,242
Cooperation with National Societies	1,016
General	243
<b>Total</b>	<b>12,918</b>
<i>Of which: Overheads</i>	<b>788</b>

## IMPLEMENTATION RATE

Expenditure/yearly budget	93%
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## PERSONNEL

Mobile staff	46
Resident staff (daily workers not included)	127

Having established a presence in Thailand in 1975 to support its operations in Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Viet Nam, the ICRC promotes ratification and implementation of IHL treaties and IHL integration into military training regionwide. It raises awareness of humanitarian issues and supports National Societies in developing their capacities in IHL promotion, family-links services and emergency response. It seeks to protect/assist violence-affected populations in Thailand and visits detainees there and in Cambodia, where it supports the authorities in improving prison management. It helps meet the need for assistive/mobility devices in Cambodia and the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

## YEARLY RESULTS

Level of achievement of ICRC yearly objectives/plans of action

**MEDIUM**

PROTECTION	Total
<b>CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)</b>	
<b>Restoring family links</b>	
RCMs collected	1,560
RCMs distributed	2,290
Phone calls facilitated between family members	608
People located (tracing cases closed positively)	3
<b>PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)</b>	
<b>ICRC visits</b>	
Detainees visited	68,619
Detainees visited and monitored individually	504
Number of visits carried out	107
Number of places of detention visited	53
<b>Restoring family links</b>	
RCMs collected	1,913
RCMs distributed	1,067
Phone calls made to families to inform them of the whereabouts of a detained relative	671

ASSISTANCE	2015 Targets (up to)	Achieved
<b>CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)</b>		
<b>Economic security (in some cases provided within a protection or cooperation programme)</b>		
Essential household items	Beneficiaries	102
Productive inputs	Beneficiaries	750
481		
<b>Water and habitat (in some cases provided within a protection or cooperation programme)</b>		
Water and habitat activities	Beneficiaries	1,000
3,872		
<b>WOUNDED AND SICK</b>		
<b>Physical rehabilitation</b>		
Projects supported	Structures	6
6		
Patients receiving services	Patients	12,000
11,490		

## CONTEXT

The Thai government lifted martial law in April 2015, but socio-political tensions persisted. The process of enacting a new constitution stalled, and national elections were re-scheduled for 2017. Peace talks continued between the government and the MARA Patani, an umbrella organization representing some of the groups involved in the fighting in southern Thailand; civilian casualties continued to be reported following violent incidents in that region.

People who fled intermittent clashes in Myanmar (see *Myanmar*) remained in Thailand.

The presence of mines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) – particularly in Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic (hereafter Lao PDR) and Viet Nam – and irregular migration were among the region's main concerns in 2015. Viet Nam was one of several countries involved in territorial disputes over parts of the South China Sea.

## ICRC ACTION AND RESULTS

The ICRC's regional delegation in Bangkok continued to focus on activities for detainees and on supporting authorities in the region in improving prison management. It continued to assist people affected by past and ongoing conflicts/violence, and sought to broaden understanding of humanitarian principles/IHL among the authorities, civil society and weapon bearers, including, in Thailand, members of armed groups from Myanmar.

In Cambodia and Thailand, the ICRC visited detainees – including those held in connection with the violence in southern Thailand, the political situation in both countries and irregular migration – in accordance with its standard procedures. The ICRC sought to conduct such visits to all detainees within its purview in Thailand; to this end, it engaged the Thai authorities in dialogue on its working methods. Dialogue with Lao and Vietnamese authorities on prison management was limited; by mid-year, the ICRC had put on hold its assistance to one place of detention in the Lao PDR, pending developments in this dialogue.

The ICRC's findings and recommendations, shared confidentially with the authorities after its visits, helped prison authorities make improvements, such as increasing access to the open air for inmates and, in some Thai prisons, curtailing the use of restraining devices. In Cambodia, the ICRC supported judicial officials and penitentiary personnel in following up pending cases at provincial courts and expediting their resolution. In selected Cambodian and Thai prisons, the ICRC helped alleviate the effects of overcrowding by upgrading facilities with the authorities and supporting their efforts to improve detainees' access to health-care services. Cambodian health and penitentiary authorities launched a project with the ICRC, aimed at creating a national model for health-care delivery and hygiene promotion in prisons.

Detainees in Thailand restored/maintained contact with their relatives through the Movement's family-links network; detained migrants informed their families of their whereabouts and inmates held far from their homes received ICRC-facilitated family visits. In Cambodia and Thailand, members of dispersed families used their National Societies' RCM and tracing services to reconnect.

The ICRC kept regular contact with the people most affected by the violence in southern Thailand, partly through livelihood assistance activities, to document their needs. In the Lao PDR, the

ICRC, together with the authorities/Lao Red Cross, upgraded water systems in areas contaminated with mines/ERW; this helped to ensure that communities there had safe access to water for their daily needs. Livelihood projects initiated in 2014 in southern Lao PDR were phased out after a comprehensive assessment of their impact; resources were reallocated to support physical rehabilitation services.

The ICRC began to support three physical rehabilitation centres in the Lao PDR, and continued to support two in Cambodia, making good-quality rehabilitative care available to more disabled people in the region. A study on ways to help the national orthopaedic component factory in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, operate independently was discussed with the authorities. ICRC-supported sporting and initial income-generating activities helped advance the socio-economic reintegration of disabled people in Cambodia. The medical expenses of weapon-wounded patients from Myanmar seeking treatment in Thailand continued to be covered.

Regular dialogue with the authorities and other parties concerned kept them abreast of the humanitarian needs in southern Thailand and along the Thai-Myanmar border. At workshops/seminars, members of the Cambodian and Thai armed/security forces learnt more about internationally recognized standards for law enforcement. The new ICRC office in Hanoi facilitated dialogue with Vietnamese authorities on incorporating IHL in soldiers' training. At a workshop co-organized with the Royal Thai Navy, officers from the navies of 14 Asia-Pacific countries learnt more about IHL at sea. Academic institutions supported activities to stimulate interest in IHL, for instance, via students' participation in regional/international competitions. The Thai Red Cross Society created animated infographics to educate the public in the proper use of the red cross emblem.

The region's National Societies drew on ICRC support to strengthen their ability to assist communities affected by mines/ERW, restore family links and promote awareness of humanitarian principles/IHL and the Movement.

## CIVILIANS

### **Violence-affected people in southern Thailand have their concerns relayed to the authorities**

People who had fled the armed conflict in Myanmar and were seeking refuge in Thailand (see *Context*) continued to have their situation monitored; the ICRC stood ready to provide assistance, when needed. Dialogue with weapon bearers in the area was maintained, with a view to promoting respect for IHL.

Security forces in southern Thailand had confidential discussions with the ICRC about the conduct of law enforcement operations in line with internationally recognized standards (see *Actors of influence*). The ICRC was also in regular contact with the people most affected by the violence there; it tracked their needs and kept the authorities and other parties concerned abreast of the humanitarian situation. Some 80 vulnerable people started small businesses with ICRC-provided tools/equipment and training; this enabled them to better provide for their families (numbering around 480 people). Ad hoc assistance helped other victims of violence meet their immediate needs; for example, the families of eight casualties defrayed the cost of burial with financial assistance from the ICRC.

### **With water points built closer to their homes, Lao families reduce their risk of exposure to mines/ERW**

In two provinces of southern Lao PDR, approximately 1,800 people had easier access to water for their daily needs from hand pumps

and water networks repaired or installed close to their homes by the National Society/ICRC. This allowed them to avoid walking long distances, making them less at risk from mines/ERW. In Sekong province, as many as 1,780 people could grow crops over a wider area after the Lao agriculture department, National Society and ICRC upgraded the irrigation system. After an evaluation of their impact, livelihood projects initiated in 2014 for households affected by mines/ERW in southern Lao PDR were phased out, and resources reallocated to support physical rehabilitation services (see *Wounded and sick*).

The areas mentioned above were cleared of mines/ERW by the national mine-clearance operator, UXO Lao, partly with funds from the ICRC. Some training activities planned for UXO Lao did not take place, however, owing to administrative constraints.

Around 1,500 people in Cambodia and several in Thailand, including the families of detainees held abroad and Cambodian migrants returning from Thailand, used their National Societies' RCM and/or tracing services to restore contact with their relatives.

### PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM

Detainees in Cambodia and Thailand were visited regularly, in accordance with the ICRC's standard procedures. They included people arrested in relation to the violence in southern Thailand and to the political situation in both countries; vulnerable inmates – such as women, minors and, in Thailand, irregular migrants – received particular attention. The ICRC sought to visit all detainees within its purview in Thailand; to this end, it engaged the authorities in dialogue on its working methods.

The ICRC provided detaining authorities, including senior security forces personnel, with feedback on the basis of its visits and the results of its assessment of inmates' treatment and living conditions; among the subjects covered was the situation of people during their arrest and in the initial stages of detention. Previous ICRC recommendations have since been implemented. In Thailand, for example, the use of restraining devices in some prisons was reduced. Prisoners in Cambodia were allowed to spend more time outside their cells.

Discussions on the impact of anti-drug policies on prison management in Thailand, however, were postponed to 2016. The ICRC's dialogue with the Lao and Vietnamese detaining authorities

on prison management remained limited. By mid-year, the ICRC put on hold its assistance to one place of detention in the Lao PDR, pending developments in this dialogue.

Nonetheless, Lao and Thai authorities added to their knowledge of prison infrastructure and management standards by participating, with ICRC support, in regional conferences on these topics (see *Kuala Lumpur and Myanmar*).

### Some detainees in Cambodia have their sentences finalized, thanks to follow-up by the authorities

Representatives of the General Department of Prisons (GDP) and Appeals Court in Cambodia, accompanied by the ICRC, followed up some cases that had been pending for several years at two provincial courts. As a result, 174 detainees had their sentences finalized.

At an ICRC-facilitated round-table, officials from the interior ministry and other ministries discussed vocational training and post-release opportunities for inmates, to reduce the likelihood of recidivism.

In Thailand, detainees, including foreigners, restored/maintained contact with their families through the Movement's family-links network. Detained migrants made phone calls or sent short oral messages to relatives – for some of them, the first opportunity since their detention to inform their families of their whereabouts. Some inmates held far from their homes received ICRC-facilitated family visits.

### Detainees benefit from improvements in the provision of health care

Particularly at certain prisons, authorities in Cambodia and Thailand drew on technical/material support from the ICRC to improve facilities and the provision of health care. Some 16,000 detainees in five Thai prisons had more reliable access to health services, owing to weekly visits from hospital doctors/specialists facilitated by the Department of Corrections and the public health ministry, with ICRC encouragement.

In Cambodia, the health ministry, the GDP and the ICRC continued to work towards standardizing the provision of health-care services to detainees. With a view to creating a national model for primary health-care services and hygiene practices in prison, they launched a pilot project to improve access to health care at a facility housing over 700 female and juvenile inmates.

PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM		Cambodia	Thailand
<b>ICRC visits</b>			
Detainees visited		10,946	57,673
	<i>of whom women</i>	387	3,934
	<i>of whom minors</i>	157	206
Detainees visited and monitored individually		28	476
	<i>of whom women</i>		3
	<i>of whom boys</i>		3
Detainees newly registered			236
	<i>of whom women</i>		3
	<i>of whom boys</i>		3
Number of visits carried out		27	80
Number of places of detention visited		15	38
<b>Restoring family links</b>			
RCMs collected		1,556	357
RCMs distributed		819	248
Phone calls made to families to inform them of the whereabouts of a detained relative		44	627
Detainees visited by their relatives with ICRC/National Society support			173

Such efforts to ensure the health of detainees were supplemented by distributions of hygiene items, clothes and/or recreational items to some 8,500 detainees and prison guards in Cambodia and around 10,400 detainees in Thailand.

### **Cambodian and Thai authorities upgrade prison infrastructure**

GDP engineers inspecting prison facilities in Cambodia, and technical working groups in Thailand, made use of ICRC expertise to help Cambodian and Thai penitentiary authorities manage infrastructural issues. Some improvements were jointly carried out with the ICRC. These included: in Cambodia, the construction/renovation of living and common areas, water/sanitation facilities and, in one prison, a more secure outdoor area, benefiting around 5,000 detainees in ten prisons; and in Thailand, the upgrading of water storage/filtering systems, which increased the supply of clean drinking water for over 26,000 inmates in 11 prisons. In three of these Thai prisons, detainees also had more sanitary surroundings following improvements in waste management and the installation of mosquito nets. Migrants in one detention facility had more opportunities for physical exercise after the construction of an outdoor recreational area.

### **WOUNDED AND SICK**

#### **Disabled people in Cambodia and the Lao PDR receive quality care from ICRC-supported services**

Fifteen weapon-wounded people from Myanmar received treatment in Thai hospitals; their medical costs were covered by the ICRC. There were fewer instances of such people crossing the border into Thailand after the ceasefire between the Myanmar government and armed groups. Several medical professionals honed their skills in emergency surgery at advanced training sessions organized jointly by international NGOs and the ICRC.

Around 11,200 disabled people in Cambodia restored/improved their mobility through quality care at ICRC-supported physical rehabilitation centres in Battambang and Kompong Speu. Some 80 people in Siem Reap province, who were unable to travel to these centres, obtained physical rehabilitation services, including repairs to their mobility devices, through an outreach project implemented by WHO, an NGO and the ICRC. The national orthopaedic component factory in Phnom Penh continued to supply both centres with prostheses/orthoses and walking aids. The preliminary findings of a study on how the factory could be enabled to operate independently were being reviewed with the authorities.

In the Lao PDR, some 270 disabled persons, including victims of mines/ERW, received prostheses/orthoses and/or physiotherapy at three centres that began to receive ICRC support in 2015. Cooperation between the health ministry, a local organization and the ICRC helped ensure the quality and sustainability of these services.

#### **Women's wheelchair basketball teams help raise awareness of the situation of disabled people**

In Cambodia, several women improved their physical and psychological well-being, with the help of their involvement in ICRC-supported wheelchair basketball teams; their participation in local/international competitions helped to broaden acceptance for disabled people in their communities. Nine disabled people began to increase their self-sufficiency by engaging in income-generating activities, with ICRC livelihood assistance. One ran a solar-powered mobile coffee stall in cooperation with a local NGO.

### **ACTORS OF INFLUENCE**

#### **Weapon bearers in the region learn more about applying humanitarian principles in their operations**

Through various ICRC workshops in Cambodia and Thailand, officers of the armed/security forces enhanced their understanding of international standards for law enforcement and the application of humanitarian principles in their operations. These officers included police personnel from the Bodyguard Headquarters (BHQ) unit for the Cambodian prime minister's protection – the workshop for the BHQ used virtual scenarios as training aids – and members of the police/military involved in law enforcement operations in southern Thailand.

Thai military units stationed along the border with Myanmar, armed groups from Myanmar and Vietnamese army/naval officers familiarized themselves with the basic provisions of IHL at ICRC-conducted training sessions. During briefings, Cambodian troops bound for Lebanon and Mali, and Thai military officers scheduled for deployment as observers to UN peacekeeping missions, learnt more about IHL and the legal framework governing the use of force. A senior official from Cambodia's national body for peacekeeping and mines/ERW clearance supplemented his knowledge of IHL at a regional seminar (see *New Delhi*).

Representatives of two armed groups from Myanmar continued to consult with the ICRC to ensure that the revision of their codes of conduct conformed to principles of IHL (see *Civilians*).

Dialogue was pursued with the Vietnamese authorities on the incorporation of IHL in soldiers' training, through the newly opened ICRC office in Hanoi.

#### **Foreign affairs ministry officials study the ratification of weapon-related treaties**

At a course abroad (see *International law and policy*), high-ranking officers from Cambodia, Thailand and Viet Nam shared best practices in incorporating IHL in military operations. At a workshop organized jointly by the Royal Thai Navy and the ICRC, naval officers from 14 countries in the Asia-Pacific region examined the humanitarian rules applicable to warfare at sea; they also discussed the lessons learnt in handling maritime security issues in the region.

In the Lao PDR, Thailand and Viet Nam, foreign affairs ministry officials made use of ICRC expertise in studying the ratification of weapon-related treaties and, where applicable, ratification of/accession to Additional Protocols I, II and III. At an ICRC-organized conference in Malaysia (see *Kuala Lumpur*), government officials and members of National Societies from the three countries furthered their understanding of the Arms Trade Treaty and the Strengthening IHL process. In preparation for the 32nd International Conference, representatives from the Vietnamese foreign affairs ministry attended workshops – in Geneva, Switzerland – on internationally recognized detention standards and compliance with IHL; briefing sessions on the International Conference were also held for Lao and Thai government officials.

#### **Academic institutions support activities to stimulate interest in IHL among their students**

University students throughout the region demonstrated their grasp of IHL at national and international competitions (see *Beijing*); one Cambodian university sent a team to the 2015 Jean Pictet



Competition on IHL in the United States of America. Students furthered their understanding of IHL at ICRC seminars/lectures.

The heads of several academic institutions in Viet Nam and the ICRC discussed the implementation of future IHL-related activities, including the translation of an IHL book. In Cambodia, one university set up an IHL course with ICRC support.

The general public learnt more about the Movement's neutral, impartial and independent humanitarian action in the region through regular updates on the delegation's website and Thai language blog, National Society communication campaigns and media coverage of National Society/ICRC events. The Thai National Society created 3-D animated infographics to educate the public in the proper use of the red cross emblem.

## RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

National Societies in the region continued to work with the ICRC and to draw on its support for reinforcing their capacities – particularly in restoring family links, assisting communities affected by the presence of mines/ERW and promoting humanitarian principles – for instance, by participating in events abroad, including training. Of note, the Thai National Society trained new trainers on IHL basics and the Movement. The Red Cross of Viet Nam continued to explore possible areas of cooperation with the ICRC, particularly in increasing mine/ERW-risk awareness. Workshops on the Safer Access Framework helped the Cambodian Red Cross Society and Vietnamese National Society strengthen their ability to operate safely during emergencies.

MAIN FIGURES AND INDICATORS: PROTECTION		Total			
<b>CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)</b>					
<b>Red Cross messages (RCMs)</b>			UAMs/SC*		
RCMs collected		1,560			
RCMs distributed		2,290	1		
Phone calls facilitated between family members		608			
<b>Tracing requests, including cases of missing persons</b>			Women	Girls	Boys
People for whom a tracing request was newly registered		27	9	6	
People located (tracing cases closed positively)		3			
Tracing cases still being handled at the end of the reporting period (people)		25	7	8	
<b>PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)</b>					
<b>ICRC visits</b>			Women	Minors	
Detainees visited		68,619	4,321	363	
			Women	Girls	Boys
Detainees visited and monitored individually		504	3		3
Detainees newly registered		236	3		3
Number of visits carried out		107			
Number of places of detention visited		53			
<b>Restoring family links</b>					
RCMs collected		1,913			
RCMs distributed		1,067			
Phone calls made to families to inform them of the whereabouts of a detained relative		671			
Detainees visited by their relatives with ICRC/National Society support		173			

\*Unaccompanied minors/separated children

MAIN FIGURES AND INDICATORS: ASSISTANCE		Total	Women	Children
<b>CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)</b>				
<b>Economic security (in some cases provided within a protection or cooperation programme)</b>				
Essential household items	Beneficiaries	102	12%	
Productive inputs	Beneficiaries	481	37%	29%
<b>Water and habitat (in some cases provided within a protection or cooperation programme)</b>				
Water and habitat activities	Beneficiaries	3,872	30%	35%
<b>PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)</b>				
<b>Economic security (in some cases provided within a protection programme)</b>				
Food commodities	Beneficiaries	296		
Essential household items	Beneficiaries	22,060		
<b>Water and habitat (in some cases provided within a protection or cooperation programme)</b>				
Water and habitat activities	Beneficiaries	31,202		
<b>Health</b>				
Number of visits carried out by health staff		22		
Number of places of detention visited by health staff		12		
Number of health facilities supported in places of detention visited by health staff		1		
<b>WOUNDED AND SICK</b>				
<b>Hospitals</b>				
Patients whose hospital treatment has been paid for by the ICRC	Patients	15		
<b>Physical rehabilitation</b>				
Projects supported	Structures	6		
Patients receiving services	Patients	11,490	1,609	1,065
New patients fitted with prostheses	Patients	296	39	14
Prostheses delivered	Units	1,759	191	48
	<i>of which for victims of mines or explosive remnants of war</i>	1,224		
New patients fitted with orthoses	Patients	418	89	181
Orthoses delivered	Units	1,228	209	596
	<i>of which for victims of mines or explosive remnants of war</i>	1		
Patients receiving physiotherapy	Patients	3,092	461	655
Crutches delivered	Units	1,678		
Wheelchairs delivered	Units	500		