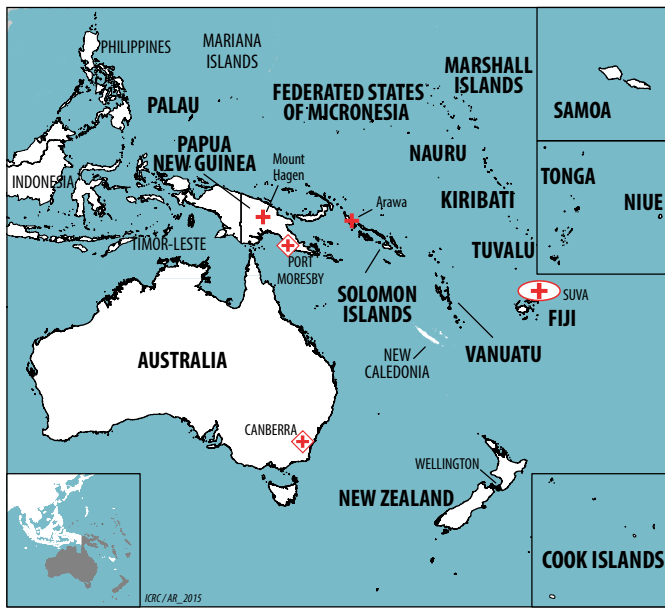


# SUVA (regional)

**COVERING:** Australia, Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu and the territories of the Pacific



ICRC regional delegation ICRC mission ICRC office

Since 2001, ICRC operations in the Pacific have been carried out by the Suva regional delegation. With the National Societies, it assists governments in ratifying and implementing IHL treaties, and promotes respect for IHL and other international norms among armed and security forces and awareness of such among academic circles, the media and civil society. The ICRC works to ensure that victims of violence in Papua New Guinea receive emergency aid and medical care; it visits detainees there and elsewhere in the region. It helps National Societies build their emergency-response capacities.

## KEY RESULTS/CONSTRAINTS IN 2015

- ▶ Some violence-affected communities in Papua New Guinea stood to benefit from a health post built by the ICRC with local partners; it had not yet begun to function, owing to staffing constraints.
- ▶ The families of missing persons in the Autonomous Region of Bougainville drew support for their plight during commemorative events. Papua New Guinean authorities finalized a policy on missing persons.
- ▶ Some detainees received family visits facilitated by National Societies/the ICRC. Reports submitted to the authorities concerned drew their attention to persistent issues faced by migrants in processing centres.
- ▶ States and National Societies tackled IHL/humanitarian issues at regional meetings. Commonwealth States made pledges on sexual violence and protecting health-care delivery at the 32nd International Conference.
- ▶ Armed forces personnel in Australia, Fiji and New Zealand furthered their understanding of IHL through ICRC presentations, including at high-level military training exercises.
- ▶ With support from Movement partners, National Societies built their capacities and distributed relief items after natural disasters. The Tuvalu Red Cross Society was recognized as the 190th National Society.

## EXPENDITURE IN KCHF

Protection	1,855
Assistance	1,566
Prevention	1,858
Cooperation with National Societies	1,229
General	75
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,583</b>
<i>Of which: Overheads</i>	<b>402</b>

## IMPLEMENTATION RATE

Expenditure/yearly budget	96%
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## PERSONNEL

Mobile staff	12
Resident staff (daily workers not included)	34

## 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
RCMs distributed	4
Phone calls facilitated between family members	29
People located (tracing cases closed positively)	60
<b>PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)</b>	
<b>ICRC visits</b>	
Detainees visited	3,789
Detainees visited and monitored individually	119
Number of visits carried out	47
Number of places of detention visited	25
<b>Restoring family links</b>	
RCMs collected	4
RCMs distributed	6
Phone calls made to families to inform them of the whereabouts of a detained relative	1

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 <sup>1</sup>	Beneficiaries	15,000
<b>Water and habitat (in some cases provided within a protection or cooperation programme)</b>		
Water and habitat activities	Beneficiaries	4,000
		5,165
<b>Health</b>		
Health centres supported	Structures	2
		1

1. Owing to operational and management constraints, figures presented in this table and in the narrative part of this report may not reflect the extent of the activities carried out during the reporting period.

## CONTEXT

In Papua New Guinea, communal fighting and criminality persisted, particularly in the Highlands region, causing casualties and displacement, and disrupting basic services; reportedly, hundreds of people were arrested during law enforcement operations. The authorities took initial steps towards addressing the needs of people whose relatives had gone missing during the armed conflict and crisis in the 1990s. Local elections in the Autonomous Region of Bougainville took place peacefully.

Asylum seekers and other migrants intercepted off the Australian coast were reportedly turned back. Hundreds awaited the resolution of their cases in processing centres: in the facility on Manus Island, Papua New Guinea, some staged hunger strikes in January, demanding speedier processing of their applications; in Nauru, some former asylum seekers who had opted for refugee status there protested their uncertain resettlement prospects.

Migration policy and security concerns related to foreign fighters and domestic radicalization were at the forefront of public debate in Australia. The country took part in an international military coalition (see *Iraq* and *Syrian Arab Republic*), and with New Zealand, helped the Iraqi government train its forces. Australia and Fiji provided troops for international peacekeeping operations. Fiji continued to position itself as the hub of the Pacific, including through the Pacific Islands Development Forum.

Natural disasters and El Niño weather patterns were a major cause of casualties, displacement and/or property damage in the region.

## ICRC ACTION AND RESULTS

In 2015, the ICRC's delegation in the Pacific worked to protect and assist violence-affected people and people deprived of their freedom, helped National Societies build their capacities – particularly in responding to natural disasters – and supported efforts to advance IHL implementation.

In Papua New Guinea's Highlands region, the ICRC kept up its multidisciplinary efforts to mitigate the effects of communal violence, including instances of sexual violence, on communities. Members of clashing communities were urged, through briefings and communication materials, to respect basic principles of humanity; the delegation documented a few allegations of abuse and shared them with the parties concerned. Some community members and first-responders strengthened their ability to treat people wounded during violence through first-aid training. One health post in the Southern Highlands continued to offer curative and preventive care with ICRC support; a new health post was constructed in another village, but had yet to start functioning. People in the Southern Highlands and Hela had better access to water after the ICRC installed pumps, water tanks or rainwater harvesting systems in their communities. People affected by floods in the Highlands received urgent aid delivered by the Papua New Guinea Red Cross Society, which received training in the Safer Access Framework and logistical support from the ICRC.

Detainees throughout the region received visits conducted in accordance with standard ICRC procedures. The ICRC shared its findings confidentially with the detaining authorities and provided technical advice/material support to help them improve detainees' treatment and living conditions. The pertinent authorities received feedback on the specific vulnerabilities of migrants held at the

Manus Island and Nauru processing centres, and on persistent issues of humanitarian concern at the centres.

Members of families separated by detention, migration, natural disasters or other circumstances re-established contact through National Society/ICRC family-links services. Some migrants at the above-mentioned processing centres filed tracing requests to locate their relatives. Inmates in detention facilities in Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands received family visits. In Vanuatu, some civilians and detainees sought the Movement's help to restore contact with relatives after a tropical cyclone.

Regular contact with the authorities, armed/security forces and members of civil society, as well as regional/international conferences, fostered support for IHL and Movement action. States worked with National Societies and the ICRC to advance implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty and prepare pledges for the 32nd International Conference, covering priority issues linked to IHL compliance, sexual violence and the protection of health-care personnel/facilities. Civil society and the general public in Australia gained a better understanding of IHL and the ICRC's work through IHL-themed events and media coverage of global humanitarian crises. In Papua New Guinea, dialogue with the authorities centred on securing a headquarters agreement. The authorities concerned drew on ICRC expertise as they took preliminary measures to clarify the fate of people missing since the armed conflict/crisis in Bougainville in the 1990s.

At ICRC-organized briefings and workshops, military personnel from Australia, Fiji and New Zealand, and law enforcement officers from Fiji and Papua New Guinea, added to their knowledge of international norms applicable to their work.

Pacific Island National Societies enhanced their organizational and emergency response capacities with support from Movement partners, including the National Societies of Australia and New Zealand. This helped the National Societies of Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu assist people affected by a tropical cyclone. After fulfilling the requirements for recognition, the Tuvalu Red Cross Society became the Movement's 190th National Society.

## CIVILIANS

### Highlanders learn more about basic principles of humanity and report abuses to the ICRC

In Papua New Guinea, the ICRC continued to promote respect for basic principles of humanity, with a view to mitigating the effects of communal violence in the Highlands. A few people reported instances of abuse they had encountered during law enforcement operations and cases of perceived partiality in health-care facilities; the ICRC documented these allegations and shared them with the parties concerned, urging them to prevent their recurrence.

Almost 100 leaders or members of clashing communities, mediators and others affected by communal violence learnt about respect for basic principles of humanity at briefings conducted by the ICRC (see also *Actors of influence*). The ICRC conducted an assessment of the incidence of sexual violence, with a view to shaping its response to the issue.

### Residents of one village in the Southern Highlands gain a new health post

In the village of Uma in the Southern Highlands province, around 30,000 people continued to have access to preventive and curative

health care at an ICRC-supported health post. Residents in the village of Kalolo stood to benefit from a new health post constructed by the ICRC in partnership with the provincial health authority, an NGO and the local community; the facility had not yet begun to function, owing to staffing constraints. Staff of the Mendi Family Support Centre drew on the advice of a visiting ICRC specialist to improve their ability to address sexual violence and implement outreach programmes. The Mendi hospital replenished its medical stocks with a one-off donation of dressing materials.

In the Southern Highlands and Hela, some 5,000 people had better access to water after the ICRC installed water pumps, tanks and rainwater harvesting systems in their communities, including at health centres and schools.

Over 200 members of violence-affected communities, including some 70 women, and Papua New Guinea Red Cross Society volunteers boosted their first-aid skills through 11 National Society/ICRC-organized training sessions; this increased the likelihood of on-site treatment and/or evacuation to hospital for people wounded during clashes, including victims of sexual violence.

### Authorities take steps to clarify the fate of missing persons

With the ICRC's encouragement, Papua New Guinean authorities formed a working group on missing persons, which drafted a policy for facilitating and coordinating government agencies' efforts to ascertain the fate of missing persons. The policy was finalized and prepared for submission to the National Executive Council.

Election-related concerns delayed the Bougainville government's implementation of its policy on missing persons (adopted in 2014) and, in particular, the progress of the consultative committee overseeing the process. Nevertheless, meetings/events and communication materials organized/produced by the ICRC broadened awareness of the issue among government officials, members of civil society and the public. In particular, the International Day of the Disappeared was marked by two ceremonies organized by the families of missing persons and the National Society branch in Bougainville, with ICRC support. The president and the vice-president of Bougainville participated in the events and met with representatives of the families, demonstrating support for their cause. The events received significant coverage in the local and the national press.

### Disaster-affected Papua New Guineans and Vanuatuans receive emergency assistance

People affected by floods in five provinces of Papua New Guinea met some of their most pressing needs with food and household essentials distributed by the National Society, which carried out emergency response activities with support from other Movement partners. Volunteers reached remote areas in Bougainville and the Western Highlands in ICRC-provided vehicles, and drew on ICRC training to minimize the risk to their safety in violence-prone areas (see *Red Cross and Red Cross Movement*). The ICRC supported the Movement's response to food and water shortages caused by El Niño-related drought and frost conditions in the Highlands by providing logistical support to the National Society and the International Federation, and donating water containers to health facilities and schools.

In Vanuatu, families affected by a tropical cyclone alleviated their situation with help from the Vanuatu Red Cross Society and other Movement components working there; some people restored contact with their families through the Movement's family-links services, including listings on the ICRC's family-links website ([familylinks.icrc.org](http://familylinks.icrc.org)).

### PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM

#### ICRC reports draw attention to humanitarian issues faced by detained migrants

Detainees in Fiji, Nauru and Papua New Guinea received visits from the ICRC, conducted in line with its standard procedures. Visits to migrants held in processing centres in Nauru and on Manus Island were conducted with Australian Red Cross support; some of the migrants were also visited by the ICRC when they were at medical transit facilities in Port Moresby. People held in police stations and in the Highlands were paid particular attention.

Confidentially shared findings and recommendations from ICRC visits helped the detaining authorities take steps to improve detainees' treatment and living conditions. Reports submitted to the pertinent authorities in Australia, Nauru and Papua New Guinea drew their attention to: the specific vulnerabilities of migrants in processing centers, including mental health issues; international guidelines for dealing with hunger strikes; and persistent issues of humanitarian concern, including uncertainty regarding procedural safeguards. Dialogue with police commands in Papua New Guinea focused on international standards applicable to arrest and detention

PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM	Fiji	Nauru	Papua New Guinea	Solomon Islands
<b>ICRC visits</b>				
Detainees visited	412	696	2,681	
<i>of whom women</i>		117	104	
<i>of whom minors</i>	2	96	54	
Detainees visited and monitored individually	58	20	41	
<i>of whom women</i>		7		
<i>of whom boys</i>	2		1	
Detainees newly registered	54	7	25	
<i>of whom women</i>		2		
<i>of whom boys</i>	2			
Number of visits carried out	7	4	36	
Number of places of detention visited	5	2	18	
<b>Restoring family links</b>				
RCMs collected			4	
RCMs distributed			5	1
Phone calls made to families to inform them of the whereabouts of a detained relative			1	
Detainees visited by their relatives with ICRC/National Society support			40	19
People to whom a detention attestation was issued	1		1	

procedures (see *Actors of influence*); in Fiji, the government began investigating several cases of alleged ill-treatment.

Two Fijian prison officers and the Papua New Guinean commissioner of corrections exchanged best practices in prison management with their peers at a regional ICRC seminar (see *Kuala Lumpur*).

In Palau, ICRC delegates checked on the situation of a former internee of the US internment facility at Guantanamo Bay Naval Station in Cuba; he had emigrated by the end of the year.

### **Inmates and detained migrants contact their families**

Partly as a result of an ICRC/Australian Red Cross report on family-links needs among refugees in the Nauru community, the government of Nauru agreed to allow the Australian Red Cross to provide tracing services for these people, in addition to those still detained. In the Manus Island processing centre, migrants sought the ICRC's help to locate relatives separated from them; 15 tracing cases were opened.

Detainees in two places of detention in Papua New Guinea spent time with their families during visits facilitated by the ICRC. Nearly half of all the detainees serving life sentences in the Solomon Islands received family visits financed by the Solomon Islands Red Cross with ICRC support.

### **Disaster-affected detainees maintain adequate living conditions**

After a tropical cyclone damaged some places of detention, the Vanuatu penitentiary services requested the Movement's assistance: some detainees slept more comfortably and/or restored contact with their families with blankets/bedding and family-links services provided by the Australian, New Zealand and Vanuatuan National Societies and coordinated by the ICRC.

Over 1,800 detainees in Papua New Guinea had better access to water and more sanitary conditions after the ICRC installed water pumps and tanks, complemented by distributions of hygiene kits. Some also received recreational materials to promote their general well-being. The ICRC assessed the accessibility of health care in places of detention throughout the country, with a view to bolstering its support for the detaining authorities in this area.

## **ACTORS OF INFLUENCE**

### **States make varying levels of progress in IHL implementation**

With technical advice from their National Societies/the ICRC, New Zealand took steps towards implementing a UN resolution pertaining to women in armed conflict, and the the Fijian parliament endorsed ratification of the UN Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. Over 20 parliamentarians from the region participated in an ICRC-led seminar on implementing the Rome Statute. Representatives from Australia, Fiji and New Zealand discussed progress in implementing the Arms Trade Treaty at a conference abroad (see *Kuala Lumpur*); Tuvalu ratified the treaty in September. States in the region were encouraged to ratify Additional Protocols I, II and III; however, resource constraints/other government priorities prevented many States from doing so.

National IHL committees continued to receive support from the ICRC. No progress was made in establishing an IHL committee in Papua New Guinea.

### **States pledge support for addressing humanitarian issues**

Dialogue with authorities tackled humanitarian issues and the ICRC's response. For example, dialogue with the Australian authorities centred on migration-related issues, Australia's counter-terrorism efforts, and the ICRC's work in related contexts; some officials made public statements in support of the ICRC.

The region's States and National Societies contributed to the 32nd International Conference, notably by advocating support for a resolution on strengthening compliance with IHL. Pledges from Australia and New Zealand also addressed other areas of ICRC concern, including sexual violence in armed conflict, assistance for persons with disabilities, and access to detainees.

In Canberra, government officials and Movement representatives from over 30 countries – 11 from the region – convened at the 4th Commonwealth Red Cross and Red Crescent Conference on IHL, hosted by the Australian Red Cross and the ICRC; they discussed, among other issues, IHL compliance, sanctions for IHL violations, the protection of cultural property in armed conflict, the Health Care in Danger project and sexual violence in armed conflict. The conference resulted in joint Commonwealth pledges at the 32nd International Conference covering the last two subjects.

In Papua New Guinea, the authorities and the ICRC finalized the text of a headquarters agreement, to be signed in 2016.

### **Weapon bearers learn more about international norms applicable to their duties**

In Australia, Fiji and New Zealand, defence ministry officials and armed forces personnel added to their knowledge of IHL and the ICRC's mandate through ICRC presentations, including at major military training exercises and staff/command colleges. Senior officers from Australia and New Zealand enriched their understanding of IHL at sea during a regional workshop (see *Bangkok*). A Fijian officer attended an ICRC-sponsored workshop on rules of engagement at the Asia Pacific Centre for Military Law.

Fijian police personnel and Papua New Guinean constabulary officers, particularly those from the Highlands, learnt more about international norms applicable to their work during ICRC briefings and, for the latter, workshops/round-tables on good policing practices and train-the-trainer courses. Meetings with the commissioner of police in Fiji covered detention issues and forthcoming cooperation in incorporating applicable international human rights standards in police curricula.

Members of clashing communities in Papua New Guinea were encouraged to respect principles of humanity, through such means as theatrical shows and a comic strip on humanitarian issues and detention.

### **Medical practitioners tackle challenges confronting health-care delivery during emergencies**

Civil society learnt more about the Fundamental Principles, the impact of armed conflict and other matters of humanitarian concern through various initiatives undertaken by the National Societies/ICRC.

In Australia, round-tables and seminars with academics covered topics such as the Health Care in Danger project, non-State armed groups, the militarization of aid, and principled humanitarian action. With ICRC support, six Australian academic

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institutions organized briefings on IHL/humanitarian action for over 290 humanitarian workers and military personnel. At an Australian Red Cross course, 40 people learnt about challenges impeding the safe delivery of health/medical care in conflict using an ICRC-produced module. Medical professionals discussed the same at the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons' annual conference; ICRC participation was again requested for 2016.

Regular interaction with the media, in conjunction with National Societies, led to coverage of global humanitarian crises and greater awareness of such matters among stakeholders and the wider public. Updates on the Canberra mission's online channels, and ICRC materials published on the external platforms of universities and think-tanks, contributed to the same end. A briefing for foreign media correspondents encouraged accurate reporting on IHL/humanitarian issues.

Australia and New Zealand organized moot court competitions and sent teams to compete overseas (see *Beijing*).

## **RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT**

### **Tuvalu Red Cross Society receives formal recognition**

After it had fulfilled all the requirements, the Tuvalu Red Cross Society was recognized by the ICRC Assembly as the 190th National Society in November, enabling it to participate in the 32nd International Conference. To help the Marshall Islands progress along the same path, the International Federation and the ICRC organized a workshop on the governance and legal bases of National Societies, which was also attended by the Red Cross Society of Micronesia and the Palau Red Cross Society. The ICRC's vice-president delivered the keynote address at an event marking the New Zealand Red Cross's 100th anniversary.

National Societies in the region gained a venue to learn from each other's experiences and discuss common challenges with the creation of a Pacific Island National Societies leadership forum, with International Federation/ICRC support.

### **National Societies bolster their capacities**

National Societies built their capacities with support from other Movement partners, notably the Australian Red Cross and the New Zealand Red Cross. National Society volunteers in Papua New Guinea and Tonga were trained to provide first aid in situations of violence, in accordance with the Safer Access Framework; the Vanuatu Red Cross Society assisted people affected by a tropical cyclone (see *Civilians*) and launched an IHL handbook for parliamentarians, while other National Societies continued to prepare their own such handbooks; and personnel from six National Societies were trained to disseminate humanitarian principles. The Papua New Guinea Red Cross undertook organizational and financial reforms, which helped open up new funding opportunities.

MAIN FIGURES AND INDICATORS: PROTECTION		Total			
<b>CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)</b>					
<b>Red Cross messages (RCMs)</b>			UAMs/SC*		
RCMs collected		1			
RCMs distributed		4			
Phone calls facilitated between family members		29			
Names published on the ICRC family-links website		107			
<b>Tracing requests, including cases of missing persons</b>			Women	Girls	Boys
People for whom a tracing request was newly registered		69	13	18	
<i>including people for whom tracing requests were registered by another delegation</i>		1			
People located (tracing cases closed positively)		60			
Tracing cases still being handled at the end of the reporting period (people)		37	10	6	4
<b>PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)</b>					
<b>ICRC visits</b>			Women	Minors	
Detainees visited		3,789	221	152	
			Women	Girls	Boys
Detainees visited and monitored individually		119	7		3
Detainees newly registered		86	2		2
Number of visits carried out		47			
Number of places of detention visited		25			
<b>Restoring family links</b>					
RCMs collected		4			
RCMs distributed		6			
Phone calls made to families to inform them of the whereabouts of a detained relative		1			
Detainees visited by their relatives with ICRC/National Society support		59			
People to whom a detention attestation was issued		2			

\*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 <sup>1</sup>	Beneficiaries			
<b>Water and habitat (in some cases provided within a protection or cooperation programme)</b>				
Water and habitat activities	Beneficiaries	5,165		
<b>Health</b>				
Health centres supported	Structures	1		
Average catchment population		30,000		
Consultations	Patients	7,129		
	<i>of which curative</i>		2,093	2,886
	<i>of which ante/post-natal</i>		492	
Immunizations	Doses	5,406		
Referrals to a second level of care	Patients	56		
<b>PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)</b>				
<b>Water and habitat (in some cases provided within a protection programme)</b>				
Water and habitat activities	Beneficiaries	1,885		

1. Owing to operational and management constraints, figures presented in this table and in the narrative part of this report may not reflect the extent of the activities carried out during the reporting period.