



uganda

The ICRC has been active in Uganda since 1979. Following the killing of six ICRC staff members in April 2001 in neighbouring Democratic Republic of the Congo, it suspended its operations in Uganda, maintaining only an expatriate presence in Kampala. Late in 2003, given the dramatic needs of the victims of armed conflict in the north of the country, the ICRC resumed its field action, with a view to protecting and assisting those affected. These activities soon expanded into a major operation which has continued ever since. The ICRC also visits detainees falling within its mandate and strives to raise awareness of IHL and humanitarian principles among the armed and police forces.

⊕ ICRC delegation ⊕ ICRC sub-delegation

EXPENDITURE (IN KCHF)

Protection	1,497
Assistance	14,065
Prevention	1,155
Cooperation with National Societies	2,200
General	-

► **18,917**

of which: *Overheads* 1,155

IMPLEMENTATION RATE

Expenditure/yearly budget	91%
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PERSONNEL

27 expatriates
174 national staff (daily workers not included)

KEY POINTS

In 2006, the ICRC:

- ▶ provided economic assistance to nearly 700,000 people (over 126,700 households) who had been displaced by insecurity related to the non-international armed conflict;
- ▶ increased the water supply for 265,906 people in 24 IDP camps in northern Uganda by 32% through the drilling of boreholes and the installation or rehabilitation of hand pumps;
- ▶ set up a cholera treatment unit in the Padibe IDP camp housing 50,000 people and ran cholera prevention campaigns in 10 other camps in Kitgum and Pader districts with the district health authorities, the National Society and “community-owned resource persons”;
- ▶ held a two-week surgical training course for 4 doctors from 3 main hospitals in northern Uganda;
- ▶ continued to visit detainees countrywide and, jointly with the Ugandan Prison Service, conducted an infrastructure survey and a nutrition survey in prisons to help find ways to improve general conditions of detention;
- ▶ conducted 5 train-the-trainer courses on IHL and human rights standards in cooperation with the Ugandan army and police force, in line with memoranda of understanding signed in 2005.

CONTEXT

In Uganda’s first multi-party elections in more than 20 years, Yoweri Museveni won a third five-year term as president of Uganda, and his party won a majority of seats in the national assembly.

Security in northern Uganda improved throughout 2006. In July, a new peace initiative between the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) and the government of Uganda was launched in Juba, under the mediation of the government of southern Sudan. Negotiations led to the signature of a Cessation of Hostilities Agreement on 26 August, which was renewed and further elaborated by an addendum signed on 1 November. In line with the terms of the agreement, the LRA moved out of northern Uganda in order to assemble in two designated locations in Eastern and Western Equatoria in southern Sudan. Few LRA rebels remained in northern Uganda at the end of the year, and the peace process continued.

With the LRA largely outside the country and the security situation improving, some of northern Uganda’s nearly 1.7 million IDPs began to move from the more than 200 crowded camps scattered along main roads, towards new sites closer to their traditional homes and land. This trend was particularly marked in the Lango and Teso regions, where the general security environment had begun to improve earlier in the year.

In the second half of the year, military operations by the Uganda People’s Defence Forces (UPDF) to disarm traditional warriors in the Karamoja region led to an increase in violent confrontations there.

Uganda’s economy was hit by a general power crisis as water shortages reduced hydro-electric power generation. Industrial production declined steeply, and thousands of workers were laid off.

MAIN FIGURES AND INDICATORS

PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)		CIVILIANS AND PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM		
Detainees visited and monitored individually	509	<i>Economic security, water and habitat</i>		
Number of visits carried out	189	Food	Beneficiaries	5,383
Number of places of detention visited	71	Essential household items	Beneficiaries	703,326
RESTORING FAMILY LINKS		Agricultural inputs and micro-economic initiatives	Beneficiaries	584,235
<i>Red Cross messages (RCMs) and reunifications</i>		Water supply schemes and sanitation systems (completed projects)	Beneficiaries	450,701
RCMs collected	3,756	Habitat structures	Beneficiaries	2,060
RCMs distributed	1,895	Health		
<i>Tracing requests, including cases of missing persons</i>		Health centres supported	Structures	15
People for whom a tracing request was newly registered	50	Consultations	Patients	144,106
Tracing requests closed positively (persons located)	18	Immunizations	Activities	70,841
Tracing requests still being handled at 31 December 2006	37	WOUNDED AND SICK		
<i>Unaccompanied minors (UAMs) and separated children (SCs), including unaccompanied demobilized child soldiers</i>		Hospitals supported	Structures	7
UAMs/SCs newly registered by the ICRC	5	Admissions	Patients	93,612
UAMs/SCs reunited with their families by the ICRC	1	Operations	Operations performed	6,160
UAMs/SCs cases still being handled at 31 December 2006	12			
DOCUMENTS ISSUED				
People to whom travel documents were issued	16			

ICRC ACTION

The ICRC maintained its lead role in providing assistance and protection to IDPs in Acholiland, while adjusting its strategy to suit the new dynamics of the situation in order to ensure a sustainable response to IDPs' changing needs.

Early in 2006, having failed to establish direct contact with the LRA in Uganda, the ICRC stepped up its efforts to pass messages by other means to the rebel group, calling on it to respect the red cross emblem and humanitarian workers. However, in the middle of 2006, on the sidelines of the peace negotiations in Juba, the ICRC was able to independently initiate a direct dialogue with LRA representatives on humanitarian issues.

As the year went by, improving security allowed the ICRC to access all IDP camps in northern Uganda. Families received essential household items, such as jerrycans, soap and blankets. As IDPs gained greater access to their own land, the ICRC supported their farming activities by providing them with seeds and tools, thus helping to improve their diet, income and self-sufficiency.

IDPs' access to water was enhanced by the drilling of new boreholes and the rehabilitation of non-functional water distribution points. IDPs also benefited from efforts to improve sanitation facilities and promote hygiene in the camps, thereby preventing cholera and meningitis outbreaks.

The ICRC continued to work closely with national and local health authorities. To

build the capacity of the health system, staff ranging from doctors to traditional birth attendants received targeted training, while health facilities serving the population of northern Uganda continued to receive medicines, basic medical equipment and other items.

Detainees held in civilian and military places of detention received ICRC visits to check on their treatment and conditions of detention. Where necessary, recommendations for improvements were made as part of an ongoing confidential dialogue with the authorities. People held in places of detention in Karamoja were also visited, given the increase in arrests related to the upsurge of violence there. The Ugandan Prison Service (UPS) reform process benefited from ICRC support through a series of joint assessments, including a technical survey of the infrastructure of the country's prisons and an assessment of the nutritional situation of the prison population.

Military and police forces at the national and district level received support from the ICRC in their efforts to foster respect for IHL and human rights.

The ICRC coordinated with other humanitarian agencies operating locally, including those participating in the emerging UN cluster system, in order to strengthen complementarity and avoid duplication or gaps in protecting and assisting those most in need.

The National Society and the ICRC continued to work closely together and conducted

activities in northern and eastern Uganda according to agreed guidelines on the division of labour.

CIVILIANS

Despite improved security, the civilian population remained at risk of IHL and human rights violations at the hands of the various weapon bearers involved in the conflict. Inside the IDP camps, overcrowding, lack of clean water, poor sanitation and substandard health care continued to create an environment highly conducive to the spread of infectious diseases.

An estimated 200,000 refugees, mostly from Sudan but with some also originating from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Rwanda, continued to live in camps in Uganda. Some could not re-establish family links and many had no means to maintain contact. Some children separated from their families needed help in tracing them.

Protection activities for IDPs

Alleged IHL and human rights violations were documented by delegates during regular visits to IDP camps. The findings were discussed confidentially with the local or regional commander, as well as with top UPDF officers in Kampala, with a view to putting a stop to such incidents.

Improving IDPs' living conditions

Since IDPs had greater access to their farmland, they were given seeds and tools by the ICRC, as well as essential household

items, such as jerrycans, soap and blankets, to help them rebuild their livelihoods. The most vulnerable households, often headed by women, in 23 camps received approximately 38 kg of soap each over the year through monthly distributions, decreasing household expenses and providing a small surplus that could be bartered for other items.

IDPs in 24 camps where fire outbreaks had occurred received essential household goods, including tarpaulins for shelter, where necessary; some of these families also received food rations, in line with an agreement between the ICRC and WFP, where food supplies had been burned.

- ▶ 697,113 people (126,747 households) in 62 IDP camps received essential household items
- ▶ 5,383 people (978 households) received one emergency food ration
- ▶ 575,560 people (104,647 households) received vegetable and staple crop seeds, soap for pesticide production, and tools to enhance their diet, income and self-sufficiency

Improving IDPs' health

In addition to support provided to referral hospitals (see *Wounded and sick*), health services at district and community level in Gulu, Kitgum and Pader received regular and ad hoc ICRC assistance.

Fifteen district health centres, serving a combined population of some 200,000, were supported with on-the-job training, essential medicines and basic medical equipment. They provided 144,106 consultations (8,127 ante- or postnatal, 135,979 curative). They conducted 70,841 immunizations, including 50,152 for children not older than 5 years.

In Kitgum and Pader, 54,698 children were treated for intestinal parasites in 12 camps.

In Kitgum, two maternity services were reactivated. Some 250 traditional birth attendants associated with the 15 ICRC-supported health centres were trained. Ninety-two cholera cases were treated at a newly set up cholera treatment unit in Padibe camp.

Some 900 health education sessions were held. They included information sessions for 50 district health centre staff and some 200 community health workers regarding the prevention of the most prevalent diseases, the use of essential drugs, first aid and emergency preparedness.

An extensive cholera prevention programme was conducted by district health authorities, the National Society and “community-owned resource persons”, together with the ICRC, in 10 IDP camps.

Insecticide-treated mosquito nets were distributed in five IDP camps as part of a malaria prevention campaign.

Improving water and sanitation for IDPs

The lack of clean water and adequate sanitation in the camps posed a major health threat.

- ▶ 265,906 people in 24 camps in northern Uganda gained a 32% increase in their water supply through 61 boreholes either drilled and equipped or rehabilitated with hand pumps
- ▶ 54,160 residents of Pabbo IDP camp gained a 25% increase in their water supply through the installation of 1 submersible pump and a distribution network
- ▶ IDPs in 15 camps with a combined population of 114,500 people built 1,965 latrines with technical and material support; additional latrines were being built in Pabbo IDP camp and in 6 camps in Pader district
- ▶ 15,791 IDPs in 4 camps in Pader learned about hygiene and public health at regular information sessions supported by the ICRC; a similar campaign for 21,059 IDPs in 7 additional camps in Gulu was ongoing
- ▶ 344 IDPs trained in the use and maintenance of hand pumps in Pader

Restoring family links

Refugees and IDPs were able to re-establish communication with their families after long periods without news through the RCM and tracing services provided by the National Society, with technical and financial support from the ICRC.

An assessment of tracing and family reunification needs over a six-month period, taking into account plans for the voluntary repatriation of Sudanese refugees, led to updated guidelines, a revised training strategy and some recommendations for relevant National Society activities.

- ▶ 2,927 RCMs collected from and 1,278 RCMs distributed to people separated from their families, including 9 collected from and 9 distributed to unaccompanied children

- ▶ 5 unaccompanied children newly registered, 1 child reunited with its family by the ICRC and 12 cases still being processed
- ▶ new tracing requests registered for 50 people (20 females, 21 minors at the time of disappearance); 18 people located; 37 people (17 females, 15 minors at the time of disappearance) still being sought
- ▶ 16 people issued with ICRC travel documents

PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM

Throughout the year, alleged members or sympathizers of various Ugandan armed groups were arrested by Ugandan security forces, especially in areas close to the DRC and southern Sudan. Arrests were also carried out in connection with the presidential elections or on “terrorism”-related charges.

The cases of detainees about whom there were particular protection concerns, including those mentioned above, were followed individually by the ICRC. Their treatment and detention conditions and respect for their judicial guarantees were assessed during ICRC visits to military barracks, police stations and central and local prisons. The findings from these visits were discussed confidentially with the authorities and recommendations were made for improvements.

Key documents submitted to the authorities concerned included a report on respect for the judicial guarantees of persons detained under the military justice system and an annual report on the treatment and conditions of detention of persons detained under the authority of the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

The poor state of Uganda's prisons, combined with overcrowding, continued to adversely affect detainees' well-being. The prison service was supported by the ICRC in its efforts to improve conditions. Based on joint assessments of the infrastructure and water and sanitation facilities conducted in ten prisons and of the nutritional situation in nine other prisons, the ICRC proposed several projects. It planned to carry out some of the projects itself, while assisting the authorities in seeking funding from donors for the rest.

Specific departments of the UPS, such as the engineering and medical departments, were able to draw on technical support and

advice from the ICRC. Where needed, detainees received blankets, mats, clothes, eating utensils, water containers and hygiene and recreational items.

Detainees and their families used the RCM service to correspond with each other, and detainees, including those on death row, received family visits facilitated by the ICRC.

- ▶ 509 detainees monitored individually, including 404 newly registered, during 189 visits to 71 places of detention
- ▶ 829 RCMs collected from and 617 RCMs distributed to detainees
- ▶ 74 detainees received family visits facilitated by the ICRC
- ▶ 101 released detainees had their transport/accommodation costs covered to return home
- ▶ 610 detainees in Gulu district prison benefited from the ICRC's renovation of the sewage system
- ▶ 1,450 detainees and prison staff and their families living in Ibuga and Rwimi prison compounds benefited from improved quality and quantity of water, thanks to 3 newly-drilled boreholes
- ▶ 6,213 detainees in 16 prisons received material assistance, such as blankets or hygiene kits
- ▶ 8,675 inmates in 5 prisons received seeds, pesticides, tools and technical support to cultivate kitchen gardens
- ▶ work to improve the water supply at Gulu and Luzira central prisons (10,970 inmates) was ongoing

WOUNDED AND SICK

Government medical facilities in northern Uganda were poorly maintained and lacked funds, qualified staff, management capacity and supplies.

Seven hospitals in Gulu, Kitgum and Pader districts continued to receive medicines, sundry other supplies and training from the ICRC. These hospitals served as referral facilities for a catchment population of some 1.1 million people, 80% of them IDPs.

- ▶ 93,612 patients admitted among whom: 269 weapon-wounded surgical cases (including 42 mine/other explosive remnant of war injuries); 9,896 other surgical cases; 17,039 gynaecological/obstetric patients; 45,366 paediatric patients
- ▶ 6,160 surgical operations performed
- ▶ 277,536 outpatients received medical attention

Missionary medical facilities received ad hoc ICRC assistance to make up for reduced funding from the Ministry of Health.

An average of 500 IDPs per month were able to use the facilities of a military hospital near their camps in Pader district, thanks in part to medicines and training in first aid and antenatal care provided to the hospital by the ICRC.

LRA returnees/ex-abductees received improved medical treatment at two reception centres in Gulu town following training in first aid and triage given to 23 staff, the provision of medicines and the strengthening of the referral system to the Lacor Missionary Hospital.

Four doctors from three hospitals in Gulu took part in a two-week surgical training course, supported by the ICRC's regional surgeon based in Nairobi. Lectures on the management of general and trauma surgical cases and IHL were also conducted for students, doctors and lecturers at Gulu University's medical school.

- ▶ 7 hospitals supplied with medicines and sundries on an ad hoc basis, including 2 government hospitals supplied with surgical and medical equipment
- ▶ Anaka Hospital (a referral facility for 80,000 people in Amuru district) received an operating theatre, surgical material and equipment
- ▶ a new pharmacy constructed at Kitgum Government Hospital (100 beds); hospital staff learned about pharmacy and stock management during a four-week ICRC-sponsored training course
- ▶ a monthly average of 10 evacuations/medical transfers from the camps to referral hospitals in the Acholi district carried out

AUTHORITIES

A national IHL committee was established in March under the auspices of the Foreign Affairs Ministry but could not be sustained owing to key personnel changes. The ICRC therefore focused on ongoing bilateral legislative initiatives.

The Minister of Gender, Labour and Social Development invited the ICRC to comment on draft legislation on the Chemical Weapons Convention Bill.

The Uganda Law Reform Commission invited the ICRC to join a task force reviewing the Children's Act. The ICRC also approached the commission regarding a study to be carried out on the compatibility of national legislation with IHL.

In June, a Ugandan delegation participated in the 6th annual regional seminar on IHL implementation organized by the ICRC in Pretoria, South Africa.

ARMED FORCES AND OTHER BEARERS OF WEAPONS

Armed forces

The first year of a three-year cooperation programme with the Ugandan army was completed as scheduled, and the chief of operations and training, in the presence of the chief of defence forces, commended the ICRC for its part in developing national IHL capacities.

Soldiers from the third military division (Karamoja region), the fourth and fifth military divisions (northern Uganda), the Chieftaincy of Military Intelligence and a battalion departing on peacekeeping duties abroad attended basic dissemination sessions on IHL and the Movement.

- ▶ 91 army officers participated in 3 IHL train-the-trainer courses
- ▶ 76 selected officers attended 3 basic IHL courses
- ▶ 72 officers and 1,039 soldiers training for missions abroad attended a week-long dissemination session
- ▶ 4 officers sponsored to attend an IHL course in San Remo, Italy
- ▶ 4,063 officers and soldiers and local defence units took part in introductory IHL sessions in the field

Police force

Forty-six officers participated in two train-the-trainer courses on integrating international human rights standards and humanitarian principles into police doctrine, training and operations, concluding the first year of the cooperation agreement with the Ugandan police force.

- ▶ 2 police officers took part in an ICRC-organized workshop in Pretoria
- ▶ 40 officers assigned to peace-support operations in Darfur attended a pre-departure IHL/ICRC dissemination session
- ▶ 1,274 police officers and 27 prison warders briefed on ICRC activities and humanitarian principles

CIVIL SOCIETY

The ICRC delegation maintained close contact with three universities, as well as the media, to promote awareness of IHL, the ICRC and humanitarian issues.

- 3 lecturers from 2 universities attended an IHL training session in Geneva, Switzerland, and 4 lecturers from 2 universities attended an advanced IHL seminar in Pretoria, South Africa
- 239 students from the country's 3 main law faculties attended an IHL lecture
- 2 student teams from 2 universities participated in an ICRC-organized regional IHL moot court competition in Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania
- 2 round-table talks on IHL organized, one for 7 lecturers from 2 universities and one for 20 journalists
- 50 paralegals from 10 IDP camps in Kitgum briefed on IHL and the ICRC
- 103 ICRC news items featured in the media

RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

The Uganda Red Cross Society and the ICRC continued to work in close coordination, particularly in their complementary assistance operations in northern Uganda. The ICRC provided the National Society with advice, training and logistics, and maintained substantial technical and financial support to its emergency preparedness, communication and tracing activities. The standard operational procedures developed jointly in 2005 continued to guide the National Society's work in conflict situations and other emergencies.

In April, the National Society organized an extraordinary National Council to discuss fundamental issues of governance and management. During the second half of the year, it conducted an extensive review of the 2002–06 Strategic Plan and developed a new one for 2007–10. The plan included streamlining its programmes, decentralizing its operations and slimming down its headquarters.

The National Society continued to shift the focus of its operations in northern Uganda from relief distributions to basic health, hygiene and sanitation programmes, supported in Kitgum and Pader by the Danish Red Cross/European Commission's Humanitarian Aid Office and in Amuria/Katakwi and Lira by the British Red Cross/UK Department for International Development. The German Red Cross received funds from the German government for a four-month assistance project in Apac.

Over 60 Red Cross volunteers in IDP camps and sub-counties in five districts were coached by five National Society dissemination officers who had been trained in 2005. New modular flipcharts in Luo, covering various subjects on the National Society, the Movement and basic IHL, were used.

Twenty-three tracing assistants and volunteers from eight Red Cross branches in the West Nile region and western Uganda attended ICRC-organized training, using new course modules developed with the organization's technical support.

The ICRC continued to coordinate its activities with partner National Societies supporting the Ugandan Red Cross and with the International Federation.