

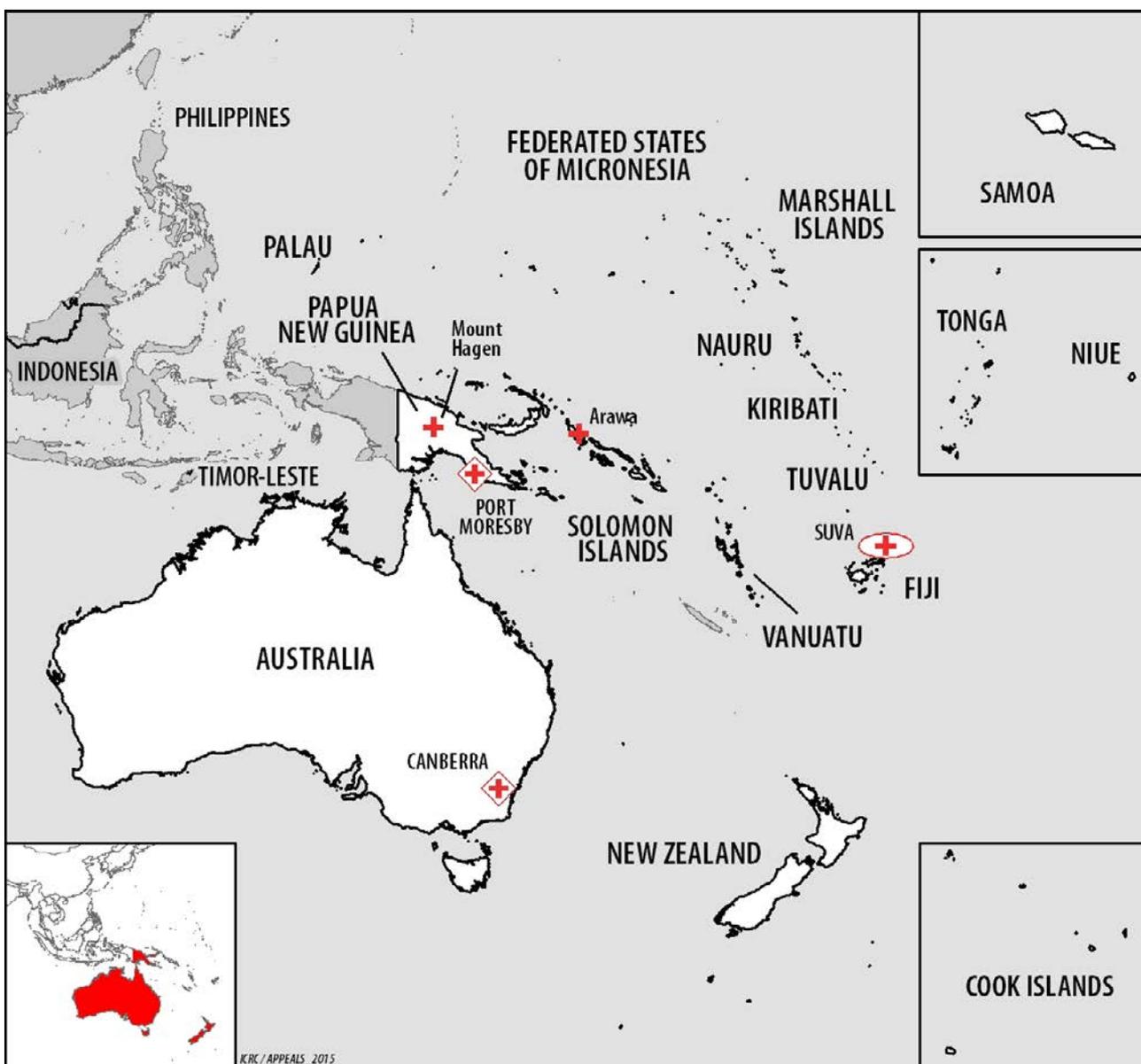
# SUVA (REGIONAL)

**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

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, as well as 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, while it visits detainees there and elsewhere in the region. It helps National Societies build their emergency response capacities.

BUDGET IN KCHF	
Protection	1,443
Assistance	1,831
Prevention	2,099
Cooperation with National Societies	1,403
General	90
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,867</b>
<i>Of which: Overheads</i>	<i>419</i>

PERSONNEL	
Mobile staff	11
Resident staff (daily workers not included)	38



+ ICRC regional delegation    
 ◇ ICRC mission    
 + ICRC office

## MAIN TARGETS FOR 2015

- ▶ in Papua New Guinea’s Highlands region, violence-affected people, including IDPs, receive relief, have better access to safe water, and get treatment/care from ICRC-supported community first-aiders and health centres
- ▶ families of persons who went missing during past conflict in Bougainville, Papua New Guinea, benefit from psychological and other forms of support and steps taken by authorities enabling them to recover their relatives’ remains
- ▶ the region’s governments and other stakeholders demonstrate a clear commitment to the prevention of sexual violence during conflict/violence
- ▶ detainees benefit from improved living conditions and treatment – for instance, enhanced procedural safeguards for detained migrants – as a result of dialogue and cooperation between detaining authorities in the region and the ICRC
- ▶ with the support of the Australian and New Zealand Red Cross Societies, Pacific Island National Societies incorporate the Safer Access Framework in their response to violence, disasters and other emergencies

ASSISTANCE		Targets (up to)
<b>CIVILIANS (RESIDENTS, IDPs, RETURNEES, ETC.)</b>		
<b>Economic security, water and habitat (in some cases provided within a protection or cooperation programme)</b>		
Essential household items	Beneficiaries	15,000
Water and habitat activities	Beneficiaries	4,000
<b>Health</b>		
Health centres supported	Structures	2

## CONTEXT

The persistent threat of natural disasters and issues arising from fragile national economies remain matters of concern in the Pacific Islands region. Tropical cyclones regularly cause flooding and damage property; they also lead to injuries/death and displacement, and disperse families.

In Papua New Guinea, criminality and intercommunal fighting necessitated ad hoc deployments of additional police forces to enforce law and order in the Highlands region, including around gas/gold extraction sites, where tensions persist. The governments of Papua New Guinea and the Autonomous Region of Bougainville have held activities promoting reconciliation after the 1989–2001 crisis and armed conflict, including peacemaking ceremonies involving former parties to the conflict.

In September 2014, Fiji held its first general elections in eight years to select the members of its parliament.

Thousands of asylum seekers at processing centres in Nauru and in Manus Island, Papua New Guinea, are still awaiting resolution of their cases; the Nauru government has started granting refugee status to some of them; in Papua New Guinea, plans for the migrants’ resettlement are still being finalized.

Countries in the region continue to provide troops for peacekeeping operations and/or international coalitions.

## HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

The ICRC regional delegation in the Pacific, with the National Societies, will continue to promote humanitarian principles and IHL and other international norms among the authorities, armed forces/police and other stakeholders. In Papua New Guinea, it will work particularly on addressing humanitarian needs arising from past conflict and ongoing situations of violence.

With the Papua New Guinea Red Cross Society, the ICRC will focus on four provinces in the Highlands region, where villagers are suffering the consequences of intercommunal violence. During its evolving dialogue with the local authorities and leaders/members of fighting groups, the ICRC will remind them of principles of humanity – *inter alia*, facilitating people’s access to health care and other es-

sential services – and urge them to abide by these principles during clashes. The National Society/ICRC will help people deal with the effects of the fighting, providing them with emergency relief and facilitating their access to safe water. People wounded in violence will benefit from the services of a growing pool of trained/well-equipped first responders and ICRC-supported health centres.

The ICRC will continue to make its technical expertise available to the authorities for dealing with missing-persons cases from past conflict in Bougainville. It will support both the national and local authorities in setting up a mechanism for addressing the issue of missing persons. It will raise awareness of the plight of the families of missing persons, as well as help these families cope by giving them ad hoc financial assistance, organizing commemorative events and facilitating referrals to services that meet their specific needs.

The ICRC will visit people deprived of their freedom in Fiji, Nauru, Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, including migrants held at processing centres, to check their treatment and living conditions. It will communicate its findings and recommendations confidentially to the authorities, and help them ensure that detainees’ treatment and living conditions meet internationally recognized standards. The ICRC will continue to assist the Papua New Guinea detaining authorities in following up the cases of people on lengthy remand, and in improving infrastructure, health care and hygiene in prisons and police lock-ups. In Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands, National Society/ICRC family-links services will remain available for people deprived of their freedom, migrants, and their relatives.

With Movement partners, the ICRC will provide financial/material/technical support and training to help the National Societies respond to the needs of victims of violence/disasters more effectively – by institutionalizing the Safer Access Framework, drafting contingency plans and developing family-links and first-aid capacities, for instance – and enhance their governance and communication strategies.

With the National Societies, the ICRC will foster dialogue and participate in joint activities with government representatives, regional bodies, community leaders, media,

academics, think-tanks and NGOs, including those in violence-prone areas, to further understanding of and support for humanitarian principles, IHL and other relevant norms and Movement activities. It will do the same with the armed/police forces, including during presentations at their training establishments and at predeployment briefings. In Papua New Guinea, the ICRC will hold training sessions/events with police units and correctional services staff on internationally recognized policing standards, and discussions with private security companies, with a view to helping them minimize the adverse impact of their operations on communities.

The region's governments will be encouraged to demonstrate a clear commitment to the prevention of sexual violence during conflict/violence. The ICRC will continue to provide them with technical support for acceding to IHL instruments and incorporating IHL provisions in domestic legislation. With the National Societies, it will help them prepare for the 32nd International Conference, by following up pledges in relation to the "Strengthening IHL" process and on initiatives linked to the Health Care in Danger project.

## HUMANITARIAN ISSUES AND ICRC OBJECTIVES

### CIVILIANS

In the Highlands region of Papua New Guinea, intercommunal fighting often causes injuries/deaths, displacement and damage to homes/farmlands. Women and children are reportedly among those abused during clashes. Availability of and access to basic services, including health care, are often impaired by the tensions, especially in remote districts. People have also been injured or killed, or have had their homes/property damaged, during law enforcement/security operations launched to restore order.

In Bougainville, many families still have no news of relatives missing since the 1989–2001 crisis and armed conflict; their specific needs are often unmet. Dilapidated/conflict-damaged infrastructure and proliferation of weapons continue to disrupt daily life.

#### Objective

People are protected from violence and their basic needs, including access to vital services, are met, regardless of their ethnic identity/affiliation. People involved in intercommunal fighting respect principles of humanity. Families who have lost touch with relatives owing to conflict/violence receive news of their whereabouts.

#### Plan of action and indicators

*Papua New Guinea*

#### Protection

With the National Society:

- ▶ continue to develop dialogue with people involved in intercommunal conflicts in the Highlands and encourage leaders, fighters and other community members concerned to abide by basic principles of humanity, in particular, facilitating access to health care for the wounded and the sick, including victims of sexual abuse, during clashes; and ensuring uninterrupted access for communities to essential goods and services
- ▶ document the consequences of the fighting, such as disruption of water/food supply and of education/social

services, incidents of sexual violence, and reduced access to health care; share the findings with local and national authorities, and encourage them to restore these services and address people's needs, notably by providing medical treatment for everyone who is injured, regardless of ethnic identity/affiliation

- ▶ encourage security forces in preventing adverse consequences of law enforcement operations on the communities concerned (see *Actors of influence*)
- ▶ to help families clarify the fate of relatives missing since the 1989–2001 crisis/armed conflict in Bougainville, and meet their specific needs:
  - offer to act as a neutral intermediary and provide technical expertise for the Bougainville and Papua New Guinea authorities to set up a mechanism for addressing the issue of missing persons, particularly for facilitating the location and identification of human remains, and their return to the families; within the framework of such a mechanism and at the request of all stakeholders, facilitate collection and management of related data
  - raise awareness among government officials, medical staff, the families and other parties concerned of the principles of human remains management, through information sessions and, where possible, demonstrations of best practices during ICRC handling of select cases
  - help the families of missing persons in Bougainville cope, by providing ad hoc financial assistance, organizing commemorative ceremonies and facilitating referrals to local sources of psychological support

#### Assistance

- ▶ through training and support for covering running costs, help the Papua New Guinean Red Cross strengthen the capacities of its branches in Bougainville and in the eastern and western Highlands to deliver humanitarian services, particularly in the areas of relief distribution and water/sanitation initiatives in the Highlands

With the National Society:

- ▶ work with the local authorities and communities to help reduce the vulnerability of fighting-affected people in 4 provinces in the Highlands; in particular:
  - build a pool of emergency responders by training/equipping up to 90 community responders to deliver first aid and by providing refresher courses for previously trained first-aiders
  - rehabilitate infrastructure, train staff of and donate equipment and medical supplies to 2 health care centres serving some 315,000 people; provide ad hoc supplies/furnishings to help up to 20 other health centres respond to casualty influxes
  - facilitate access to safe drinking water for up to 800 households (some 4,000 people) in 4 communities
- ▶ in the event of mass displacement owing to violence, natural disasters or other emergencies, distribute hygiene kits and other essentials to help up to 15,000 people (3,000 households) ease their circumstances

## PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM

Fiji and the Solomon Islands are holding a few people in connection with past unrest. In Papua New Guinea, police stations and prisons are old and ill-equipped, and lack of

maintenance contributes to detainees having to endure insufficient access to clean water and unsanitary conditions. Health care services are not always available. Legal and procedural frameworks on judicial guarantees and protection from abuse are inadequately enforced.

Migrants/asylum seekers intercepted off Australia's coasts are held at processing centres in Nauru and Papua New Guinea. Violent incidents at the centres have caused deaths and injuries.

Some states in Australia hold people in connection with federal anti-terrorism laws.

In Bougainville and in the Solomon Islands, families are often unable to maintain contact with or visit detained relatives because of a lack of means, exacerbated by the distance involved in travelling from outlying islands.

### Objective

People deprived of their freedom, including migrants, are afforded treatment and living conditions that meet internationally recognized standards. They can keep in touch with their families.

### Plan of action and indicators

#### Protection

- ▶ visit detainees in Fiji, Nauru, Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, according to the ICRC's standard procedures, to assess their treatment and living conditions, including during arrest and interrogation at police stations; in Papua New Guinea, visit people held in Bougainville and in the Highlands as a matter of priority; share findings confidentially with the authorities and where necessary, recommend improvements and follow up specific concerns, such as the cases of people on lengthy remand at police stations
- ▶ visit migrants held at 2 processing centres (jointly with the Australian Red Cross in Nauru, and with the latter in a supporting role in Papua New Guinea); discuss their treatment and living conditions with the authorities concerned, including in relation to procedural safeguards; encourage the authorities to address the specific needs of particularly vulnerable persons by taking such measures as ensuring medical screening before transfers, and providing treatment for traumatized and mentally ill persons and suitable care and protection for pregnant women and minors
- ▶ through dialogue with state authorities in Australia, explore possible cooperation with them to ensure the welfare of persons arrested/convicted on "terrorism" offences
- ▶ in Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands, with the National Society concerned, offer family-links services to people deprived of their freedom and migrants and their relatives; in Bougainville and in the Solomon Islands, enable detainees to receive visits from relatives living in remote areas
- ▶ to promote penitentiary reform, sponsor detaining authorities' participation in seminars abroad on internationally recognized standards regulating detainees' treatment and living conditions

#### Assistance

##### Papua New Guinea

- ▶ working with the local authorities, support the improvement of detainees' living conditions; in particular:
  - carry out rehabilitation work on detainees' living quarters and on water/sanitation facilities, to benefit

some 300 detainees at up to 3 police lock-ups and 1 correctional institution

- provide up to 3 correctional institutions with medical equipment and furnishings to enhance health care provision for some 700 inmates
- provide ad hoc assistance – hygiene or recreational items, for instance – for detainees visited to ease their living conditions

## ACTORS OF INFLUENCE

The Australian and New Zealand authorities show strong support for IHL and contribute to legal developments in this area. Humanitarian issues are widely discussed in the Pacific region – among governments, and among influential organizations, think-tanks and training facilities established under university, government and military partnerships.

Nevertheless, progress in implementing IHL is slow, in part owing to a lack of legal capacity and the necessary expertise in some government departments.

Australia and New Zealand play a significant role in training the security forces of Pacific Island countries. The Fijian and Papua New Guinean military contribute to UN peace-keeping missions.

In Papua New Guinea, the armed forces are sometimes deployed on law enforcement operations in tension-prone areas. Security companies, employed mostly by resource-extraction companies, outnumber and sometimes stand in for local police forces. Both lack trained personnel, and this has reportedly had adverse consequences for people during law enforcement/security operations. Communities in the Highlands also feel the effects of the violence perpetrated by feuding groups.

### Objective

The region's authorities, armed forces, police and other weapon bearers understand and respect IHL and other relevant international rules and standards, and incorporate these in their decision-making processes. Civil society organizations, academics and the media help foster public awareness of humanitarian issues and IHL, thus securing greater respect for human dignity. All actors understand the ICRC's mandate and support its work.

### Plan of action and indicators

#### Prevention

- ▶ promote respect for humanitarian principles, IHL and other internationally recognized standards among the region's armed forces, police and other weapon bearers through regular dialogue and various initiatives; in particular:
  - offer training in IHL and applicable internationally recognized standards for armed forces and police personnel, notably during courses at military/police training establishments and at predeployment briefings for peacekeepers; sponsor senior officers' participation in IHL training seminars/courses abroad
  - in Papua New Guinea: engage in dialogue on principles of humanity with people involved in intercommunal fighting (see *Civilians*); organize discussions, workshops/round-tables and/or train-the-trainer courses for police units, security companies and correctional services staff on internationally recognized standards applicable to their duties

- work with the Australian armed forces to incorporate in their training and doctrine lessons learnt from their operations in Afghanistan and from an experts' workshop on the Health Care in Danger project, as well as provisions related to the application of IHL during armed conflict at sea

With the National Society concerned:

- ▶ to enhance understanding of and support for IHL, neutral, impartial and independent humanitarian action and the Movement's activities:
  - engage in dialogue and organize training sessions, briefings and other events with government representatives, regional bodies, community leaders, the media, academics, think-tanks and NGOs on such matters as: the needs of the families of missing persons, application of IHL to new means and methods of warfare, and protection for health services
  - encourage the authorities to facilitate humanitarian access to people in need, specifically discussing in Papua New Guinea a headquarters agreement between the government and the ICRC
  - develop printed/audiovisual materials on IHL and Movement activities and distribute them through on-line and other channels
  - provide training and reference materials for university lecturers teaching law, journalism and related disciplines; provide support for organizing student competitions
  - harmonize communication strategies with those of the region's National Societies, and provide support for their implementation
- ▶ through bilateral meetings, sponsorship for officials to participate in regional events/seminars, and provision of technical support (including for the work of existing national IHL committees), encourage governments to:
  - ratify/accede to IHL treaties and incorporate their provisions in domestic legislation, particularly the Arms Trade Treaty and other weapon-related instruments, the Rome Statute and the Additional Protocols
  - enact/update legislation on the status of the National Society and on protection for the Movement's emblems
  - demonstrate a clear commitment to the prevention of sexual violence during conflict/violence
  - prepare for the 32nd International Conference, by following up pledges made in relation to the "Strengthening IHL" process and the experts' meetings/workshops associated with the Health Care in Danger project

- in Papua New Guinea, work with the National Society to revitalize the national IHL committee and help it carry out its tasks

## RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

The Pacific Island National Societies are pursuing efforts to strengthen their capacities to respond to natural disasters and other emergencies, and to promote humanitarian principles. The Papua New Guinean Red Cross is in a transitional phase, following a change in leadership.

The Australian and New Zealand National Societies are leaders in the region in the fields of restoring family links and first-aid training, respectively, and directly support ICRC operations.

### Objective

The National Societies have a strong legal basis for independent action. They are able to conduct their core activities effectively. The activities of all components of the Movement are well coordinated.

### Plan of action and indicators

#### Cooperation

Within the framework of partnerships with the Australian and New Zealand National Societies:

- ▶ provide Pacific Island National Societies with financial/material/technical/support and training to help them to:
  - apply the Safer Access Framework and respond more effectively to the needs of victims of violence/natural disasters, particularly in Papua New Guinea (see *Civilians*), notably by drawing up contingency plans and developing their family-links and first-aid capacities
  - enhance their governance – including within a support framework of the International Federation – and, particularly for the Papua New Guinea Red Cross, their management and fundraising capacities
  - promote IHL, humanitarian principles and their own roles and activities, including through communication campaigns and materials, such as IHL handbooks for parliamentarians
- ▶ help National Societies prepare, with their governments, for the 32nd International Conference (see *Actors of influence*)
- ▶ contribute to training Australian and New Zealand National Society staff wishing to work internationally
- ▶ support/facilitate the recognition of National Societies in the Marshall Islands and Tuvalu
- ▶ help strengthen Movement coordination by participating in multilateral meetings