

UGANDA

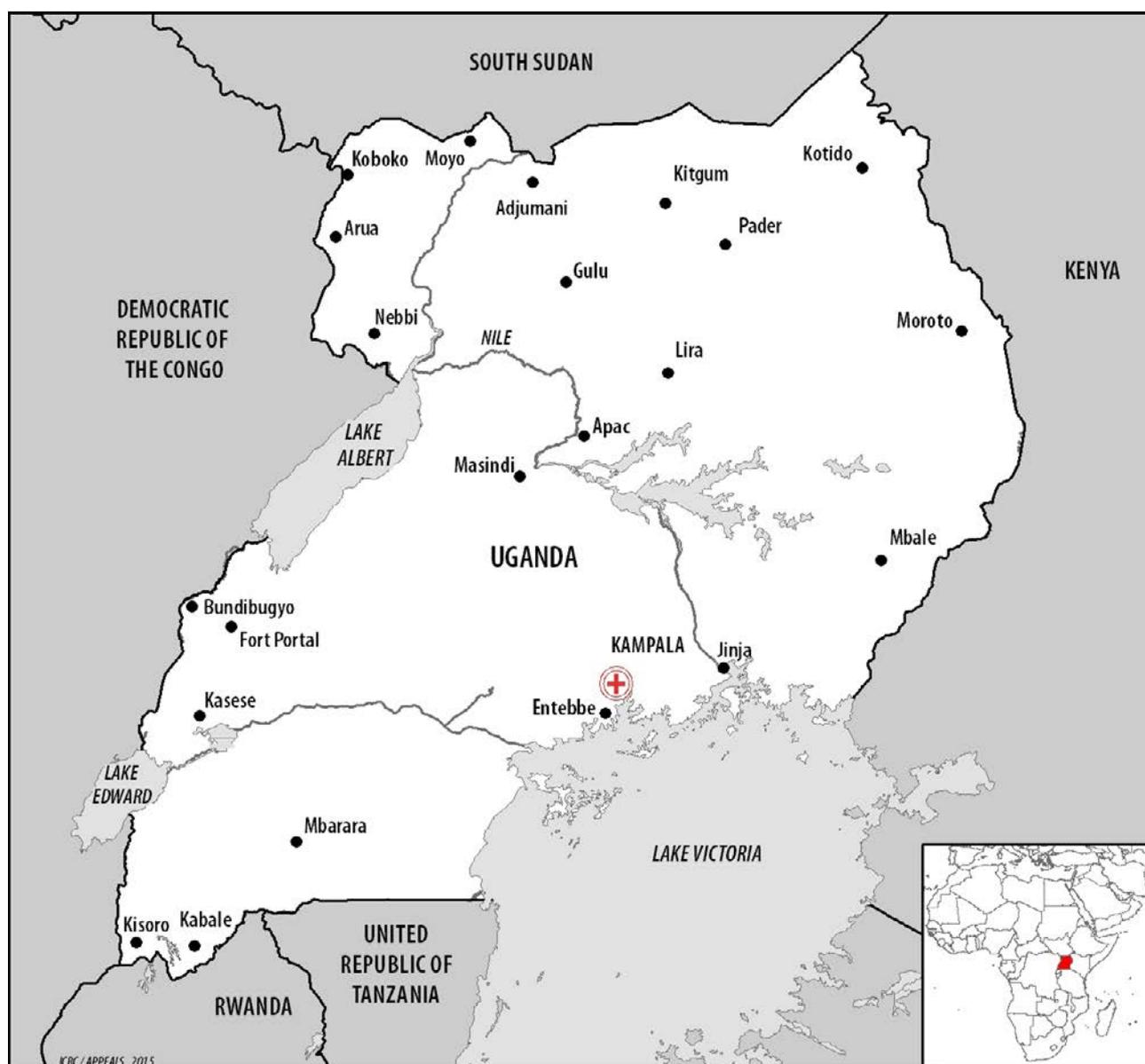
The ICRC has been present in Uganda since 1979. Given the progress towards peace in the north of the country, ICRC assistance activities, many of which are implemented in partnership with the Uganda Red Cross Society and State institutions, have been adapted to decreasing humanitarian needs. In parallel, the ICRC continues to monitor the treatment of detainees and strives to raise awareness of IHL and humanitarian principles among the armed and police forces.

BUDGET IN KCHF

Protection	2,415
Assistance	-
Prevention	944
Cooperation with National Societies	849
General	34
Total	4,242
<i>Of which: Overheads</i>	<i>259</i>

PERSONNEL

Mobile staff	9
Resident staff (daily workers not included)	31



 ICRC delegation

MAIN TARGETS FOR 2015

- ▶ the families of missing persons in northern Uganda find relief through a network of trained accompaniers and referrals to the ICRC's partner agencies for livelihood support and health care, including mental-health services
- ▶ detainees restore/maintain contact with their families through the ICRC's delivery of RCMs and, in one prison, coverage of transport expenses for family visits
- ▶ following the provision of training and material assistance for the prison authorities, detainees in one prison benefit from better individual file management, which helps ensure respect for their judicial guarantees
- ▶ the armed/police forces incorporate IHL/other applicable norms in their work, notably by revising the army's training curricula and through dissemination sessions for those participating in peacekeeping/law enforcement operations
- ▶ through Uganda Red Cross Society/ICRC family-links services, people restore or maintain contact with relatives dispersed by armed conflict or other situations of violence
- ▶ the Uganda Red Cross strengthens its organizational and operational capacities, notably in emergency preparedness and restoring family links, via technical, material and financial support from Movement partners

CONTEXT

The Uganda People's Defence Force (UPDF) continues its military operations against the Lord's Resistance Army in the Central African Republic, and contributes troops to several African Union and UN peacekeeping missions in the region, including in Somalia and in South Sudan.

Refugees arrive in Uganda regularly, driven there by ongoing conflict in South Sudan and violence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The strain on Uganda's resources is significant.

Intercommunal hostilities and attacks against the armed/police forces in western Uganda allegedly result in casualties. In Karamoja, the situation is generally calm, primarily owing to disarmament operations by the UPDF.

Political tensions tied to the upcoming 2016 elections lead to intermittent clashes between government forces and the opposition in urban areas. Socio-economic problems hinder the delivery of public services, including those related to prison administration and human remains management.

HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

In Uganda, the ICRC will continue to work for the protection of conflict-affected people and of those deprived of their freedom.

The ICRC's dialogue with prison authorities will focus on gaining access to all detainees under its purview, and on reminding the authorities of their responsibility under domestic and international law to hold inmates in gazetted (officially recognized) places of detention. Visits to detainees, to monitor their treatment and living conditions, will continue; they will be conducted according to the ICRC's standard procedures. RCMs – and, in one prison, family visits – will enable detainees to restore/maintain contact with their relatives. When necessary, delegates will make confidential representations to the prison authorities regarding their findings, particularly in connection with respect for judicial guarantees, the principle of *non-refoulement*, and allegations of ill-treatment, including sexual violence. Detainees in one prison stand to benefit from the ICRC's technical and material support for improving the prison's file management system. Rehabilitation of selected prison facilities and ad hoc distributions of hygiene/leisure items will also help enhance detainees' well-being.

Via Movement family-links services, people dispersed by conflict or other situations of violence will be able to re-establish contact with relatives; where appropriate, unaccompanied minors, including those formerly associated with weapon bearers, will be reunited with their families. To help boost the country's capacities in human remains management, the ICRC will sponsor the participation of National Society and government representatives in local and international training courses. In northern Uganda, the families of persons missing owing to conflict will receive psychosocial support from a network of accompaniers trained/supported by the Movement. The ICRC will, through dialogue with the pertinent authorities, encourage the establishment of legislative and administrative measures that respond to these families' needs.

The ICRC will remind the authorities and weapon bearers of the need to respect and protect civilians. It will help the UPDF and the Uganda Police Force (UPF) conduct dissemination sessions on IHL/international human rights norms for their personnel, including those about to be deployed on peacekeeping missions. The UPDF and UPF will also receive support to further incorporate IHL/international human rights norms in their doctrine, training and operations, as well as to facilitate their independent delivery of IHL instruction. The ICRC, together with the national IHL committee, will encourage the authorities to ratify IHL treaties, including the Arms Trade Treaty, and enshrine their provisions in domestic law. It will maintain regular contact with the government, religious/community leaders, academics and journalists – to refine their understanding of humanitarian concerns and raise support for the Movement and its work.

The ICRC will – through training and financial, technical and material assistance – help the National Society boost its capacities, particularly in emergency preparedness and restoring family links, and raise the public's awareness of its work in order to increase access and acceptance for it. Cooperation with other Movement partners will facilitate the continued development of the National Society's activities.

The ICRC will continue to coordinate its activities with those of Movement partners, UN agencies and other humanitarian actors in areas of common interest, in order to maximize impact, identify unmet needs and avoid duplication.

HUMANITARIAN ISSUES AND ICRC OBJECTIVES

CIVILIANS

During clashes, including those related to intercommunal and pre-election tensions, civilians are allegedly subjected to excessive force by the police and the military. People in Karamoja report decreased security concerns (see *Context*).

Refugees report abuses, including sexual violence, committed by weapon bearers in their countries of origin. Many of them, as well as people of Ugandan origin – including minors formerly associated with armed groups such as the Lord's Resistance Army – need assistance in restoring/maintaining contact with relatives. The families of persons missing in connection with past conflict struggle to cope with their situation. In addition, their attempts to clarify the fates of their missing relatives are hampered by poor management of human remains.

Objective

Civilians are respected and protected in accordance with IHL and other relevant provisions of international law. Separated family members, particularly children, re-establish/maintain contact and are reunited when appropriate. Families of missing persons receive support.

Plan of action and indicators

Protection

- ▶ encourage the authorities, weapon bearers and communities, through dialogue and dissemination sessions on IHL and other relevant norms, to respect and protect asylum seekers, refugees and all other civilians affected by armed conflict or other situations of violence; if necessary, and on the basis of allegations of abuse (including sexual violence), make confidential representations to the authorities concerned, reminding them to take the requisite preventive and corrective measures; provide information to the ICRC delegations concerned on allegations gathered from refugees (see *South Sudan and Congo, Democratic Republic of the*)

Restoring family links

- ▶ enable separated relatives, including refugees, to restore/maintain contact through Movement family-links services, such as RCMs and phone calls
- ▶ help the Uganda Red Cross Society, via technical, material and financial support, independently manage tracing and other family-links services, by using Family-links Answers online services in particular
- ▶ help the authorities and the National Society boost their capacities in human remains management by supporting their participation in training sessions, locally and abroad
- ▶ via ICRC-trained community members, provide psychosocial support for up to 400 families of missing persons in northern Uganda during peer-support sessions and refer those in need of livelihood support or health care, including mental-health services, to partner agencies; assist in organizing commemorations, if requested, and in coordination with Movement partners, help strengthen the sustainability of the project
- ▶ engage the authorities in dialogue on addressing the needs of the families of missing persons, and support the establishment of a national register of missing persons (see *Actors of influence*)

With the National Society:

- ▶ where appropriate, reunite unaccompanied minors, including refugees and those formerly associated with armed groups, with relatives; provide them with hygiene items, clothing or other suitable assistance

PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM

Among people detained in Uganda are those arrested in connection with “terrorism”, during disarmament operations in Karamoja, or for suspected links to armed groups. Allegations of ill-treatment are reported, as well as disregard for judicial guarantees. Some detainees are said to be held outside the existing legal framework in non-gazetted places of detention.

Overcrowding in most detention facilities, particularly in police stations, adversely affects health and sanitation conditions. Mainly because they lack the money to do so, detainees are often unable to notify their families of their arrest, receive visits from relatives or pay for their transport home upon release.

Objective

All detainees are afforded treatment and living conditions that comply with national law and internationally recognized standards.

Plan of action and indicators

Protection

- ▶ through dialogue and dissemination sessions with the authorities concerned:
 - remind them of their obligation to hold detainees in gazetted places of detention and to uphold respect for judicial guarantees, including access to legal aid, and with regard to foreign detainees, respect for the principle of *non-refoulement*
 - seek access to all detainees falling within the ICRC's mandate
- ▶ visit detainees in accordance with standard ICRC procedures and, on this basis, provide the authorities with confidential feedback and recommendations
- ▶ help improve management of inmates' files at Luzira Upper Prison by training reception officers in digital file management and by sponsoring the participation of key prison officials in a regional meeting on the subject
- ▶ enable inmates to restore/maintain contact with their families by informing relatives by phone of detainees' arrest or transfer, facilitating the exchange of RCMs, and covering transport expenses for family visits
- ▶ help released detainees return home by covering their transport expenses; refer them to the appropriate organizations for support in social reintegration

Assistance

- ▶ together with the authorities, help enhance detainees' well-being by rehabilitating living areas and sanitation infrastructure at up to two police-run detention facilities; supply hygiene and recreational items, on an ad hoc basis, to up to 1,000 detainees

ACTORS OF INFLUENCE

The UPDF and the UPF work to curb violence in Uganda, occasionally through joint operations; both are involved in peacekeeping missions abroad. The UPDF has included IHL in the curricula of its training schools.

Uganda has acceded to many IHL instruments, but most of these have not been implemented through domestic legislation. The national IHL committee plays a significant role in promoting the passage and implementation of IHL-related bills, including on the use of weapons.

Politicians, journalists and religious/traditional leaders exercise influence in Ugandan society, but not all are familiar with IHL and the work of the Movement. Some universities offer IHL courses.

Objective

The authorities, security forces and other weapon bearers know and respect IHL and other fundamental rules protecting people in armed conflict and other situations of violence, and incorporate these into their decision-making processes. The media, religious/community leaders and academic circles help foster awareness of humanitarian issues and IHL among all those involved in these situations and among the wider public, thus achieving greater respect for human dignity. All actors understand the ICRC’s mandate and support the work of the Movement.

Plan of action and indicators

Prevention

- ▶ to help raise awareness of IHL/international human rights norms among the armed/police forces:
 - support the UPDF in conducting basic IHL courses, including predeployment briefings for up to 7,000 UPDF personnel, by providing teaching materials and technical advice for instructors
 - with the National Society, conduct dissemination sessions for officers of the UPDF, UPF and local defence units on IHL and international human rights norms, including in relation to detention, and on humanitarian principles applicable to law enforcement
- ▶ assist the UPDF in its efforts to incorporate IHL in its doctrine, training and operations by:
 - conducting advanced and train-the-trainer courses
 - sponsoring the participation of selected military/government officials in workshops abroad
 - contributing to efforts to complete the revision of their IHL curricula, and by introducing an IHL module at its Senior Command and Staff College
- ▶ support the government in heeding humanitarian principles, integrating IHL and other applicable norms into domestic legislation, and ratifying/implementing IHL instruments, by:
 - encouraging them to fulfil their obligation to address the concerns of the families of people missing in relation to conflict (see *Civilians*); and by organizing a national conference on the subject
 - providing financial assistance, and technical support via an ICRC legal adviser, for the national IHL committee
 - sponsoring the participation of key government officials in regional (see *Nairobi*) and local events, including a national seminar on cluster munitions

- ▶ support IHL instruction at universities by providing academic materials, sponsoring the participation of students/teachers at courses and competitions in IHL/international human rights law locally and abroad, and organizing dissemination sessions
- ▶ help the National Society promote understanding and acceptance of its role and activities through technical, financial and material support for its first-aid training programmes and awareness-raising initiatives

With the National Society:

- ▶ raise awareness and support among the general public for IHL, humanitarian principles and the Movement’s work, specifically:
 - through dialogue, briefings, workshops and other events, such as a conference on IHL in Islamic contexts, and by engaging with traditional, religious and other civil society leaders, including those of the Islamic community, and with representatives of key international organizations
 - use workshops and field visits for journalists and television/radio spots to encourage accurate reporting on humanitarian issues and to reinforce public awareness of these matters, including those covered by the Health Care in Danger project

RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

Despite its limited financial resources, the Uganda Red Cross Society remains a major provider of first aid and other assistance during emergencies. It is the ICRC’s main operational partner in the country (see above) and receives support from other Movement components. It is working to strengthen its financial management, internal governance and organizational integrity. It is also pursuing efforts to increase public acceptance for its role and activities, and to become more independent in delivering family-links and other services.

Objective

The National Society has a strong legal basis for independent action. It is able to carry out its core activities effectively. The activities of all components of the Movement are coordinated.

Plan of action and indicators

Cooperation

- ▶ work with Movement partners to provide training and technical, financial and material support so that the National Society can improve its delivery of humanitarian assistance and its organizational set-up; following which, assist them in improving their capacities to:
 - deliver, in accordance with the Safer Access Framework, first aid, relief and other assistance during emergencies, particularly in areas vulnerable to election-related violence
 - carry out family-links services and other activities for the families of missing persons
- ▶ promote Movement coordination, encouraging the National Society to take active part in Movement meetings