



ICRC

ICRC IN UGANDA

fact sheet 2009



A Red Cross volunteer inspects seeds during a seed fair at Agoro market, Kitgum district in March. Through the seed fairs initiative, the ICRC supported over 107,000 people in Amuru, Pader and Kitgum districts to boost agricultural productivity.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is an impartial, neutral and independent organisation whose exclusively humanitarian mission is to protect the lives and dignity of victims of armed conflict and internal violence, and to provide them with assistance. The ICRC is present in Uganda since 1979, protecting and assisting people affected by armed conflicts. Presently, the ICRC has a permanent field presence in Gulu and Kitgum in northern Uganda, and whenever necessary, operates in other parts of the country from its operational hub in Kampala.

To enhance the rehabilitation process of IDPs the ICRC continued to support farming households in Amuru and Kitgum districts to restore their livelihoods by providing them with agricultural inputs

such as seeds and tools. As part of efforts to boost the economic security of the local communities, the ICRC implemented Cash-For-Work and Micro-Economic Initiatives in the four districts of Acholiland.

The ICRC continued to support the efforts of the Ministry of Health (MoH) and assisted 13 health centres in remote rural areas as well as 2 hospitals in northern Uganda (Kalongo and Kitgum Government Hospitals). In addition, the ICRC maintained its support to the orthopaedic centre at Fort Portal Referral Hospital. In close coordination with district water authorities and other humanitarian organisations, access to safe water was improved.

Nationwide, the ICRC continued to visit detainees and worked with the authorities

in improving conditions of detention. The ICRC registered 270 unaccompanied refugee minors (UAM) separated from their families due to armed conflict in the DR Congo, with a view to help those in need to re-establish contacts with their relatives. The ICRC successfully reunited 33 Congolese unaccompanied minors with their family members in the DRC. The ICRC continued to support the integration of Humanitarian Principles into the Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF) and the Uganda Police Force (UPF) training and standard operating procedures.

Cooperation in the form of technical, material and financial support to the Uganda Red Cross Society (URCS) for the delivery of humanitarian services continued.

In accordance with its internationally recognised mandate and in agreement with the Ugandan authorities, the ICRC continued to visit places of detention (including those in Karamoja), to monitor treatment, judicial guarantees and material conditions of those arrested in connection with armed conflict and other situations of violence. Observations and recommendations were discussed confidentially with concerned authorities. Between January and September 2009:

- The ICRC carried out 90 visits to 48 places of detention, including prisons, police stations and military barracks.
- The ICRC provided assistance to 15,169 detainees in 28 places of detention. The targeted assistance - including blankets, bunk beds, sleeping mats, cleaning materials, personal hygiene items, as well as leisure and recreation items - was delivered following a needs assessment in the prisons and police stations. The assistance aimed to complement the effort of the Uganda Prisons Service (UPS) and the Uganda Police Force (UPF) to improve the detainees' living conditions.



UPS officers salute during the inauguration of the ICRC-constructed water tank at Luzira Prison complex in Kampala.

- To improve environmental health and hygiene conditions in Fort Portal prison, the ICRC rehabilitated its sanitary facilities. In addition, the ICRC trained about 800 detainees and staff in the prison in hygiene promotion. This activity was part of a pilot project designed to boost the capacity of the UPS and the Ministry of Health to prevent and respond to HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis (TB) and malaria in prisons.

- The ICRC also provided material assistance to the three pilot sites of Gulu, Fort Portal and Luzira Upper prisons, to improve environmental health and hygiene conditions.
- The ICRC completed renovation of the sickbay at Luzira Upper Prison and repaired the X-ray machine at Murchison Bay Hospital.
- To enhance awareness among staff and detainees on prevention, transmission and treatment of TB in prisons, the ICRC commenced on a joint programme of TB mass screening in Luzira Upper, Gulu and Fort Portal prisons.
- In Kitgum prison, the ICRC provided the UPS with materials to build a fence designed to extend the prison compound and thereby to enhance detainees' access to open air, leisure and recreational activities.
- The ICRC supported the UPS to construct a new water supply system in Kitaliya prison farm, which now benefits about 700 detainees as well as UPS staff, their families and local schoolchildren.
- At least 2,400 inmates in Luzira Upper Maximum Security Prison enjoyed improved access to sufficient health care after the ICRC rehabilitated the Sick Bay at the facility.

Restoring/Maintaining Family Links

The ICRC continued to build the capacity of the Uganda Red Cross Society (URCS) to address needs related to re-establishing family links. Between January and September 2009:

- The ICRC and the URCS jointly registered and followed up on 270 refugees unaccompanied minors (UAMs) separated from their families due to armed conflict. These included 17 Rwandans, 1 Sudanese and 258 Congolese. The families of 115 Congolese UAMs were successfully located in the DR Congo.



Red Cross volunteers help a refugee at Kyaka II Refugee Settlement camp in Kyenjojo District in western Uganda to write a Red Cross Message to his wife

- In May, following successful cross-border tracing, the ICRC facilitated the repatriation and family reunification of one Sudanese UAM (formerly associated with an armed group) from northern Uganda to Juba.
- The ICRC also facilitated the repatriation and family reunification for 32 Congolese UAMs from Uganda to the DR Congo.
- As part of a pilot project benefiting Congolese women and their children without legal status in Acholiland, the ICRC helped 34 Congolese women in the north to re-establish contact with their relatives in the DR Congo.
- 1,319 Red Cross Messages (RCMs) were collected from civilians and 619 RCMs were distributed by the URCS during this period.
- Latrines digging tool kits have been distributed by the URCS to the communities of 36 villages in the 4 districts of Gulu, Kitgum, Amuru and Pader.
- The ICRC completed the rehabilitation of 14 health centres as well as Kitgum Governmental Hospital (KGH).
- The ICRC supported the construction of 917 energy-saving stoves, which will benefit 5'502 people. Of the 917 stoves, 849 were constructed in 41 return villages in Gulu and Amuru, while the other 68 were constructed in Kitgum and Pader.

Health

The health programs aimed at allowing access to essential, preventive and curative healthcare in 13 health centres in Acholiland, on which about 122'500 returnees, residents and remaining IDPs rely on for services. In addition, the ICRC maintained its support to the orthopaedic centre at Fort Portal Referral Hospital.



An ICRC Health Delegate trains a technician on cast modification at Fort Portal Orthopaedic Workshop

Between January and September 2009:

- 166 patients, mainly coming from western Uganda and the eastern parts of the DR Congo, received services from this orthopaedic centre.
- The 13 health centres above have delivered 65,345 curative consultations, 5,368 ante-natal care (ANC) and postnatal consultations. In addition, 75,830 doses were delivered during immunisation activities. The strategy is to reinforce the efforts made by district health authorities and to build the capacity of health staff by offering better supervision and training facilities, as well as supporting regular refurbishment of essential medicines.

Water, Sanitation, Hygiene and Construction

The ICRC continued to improve the provision of safe water and worked to improve hygiene conditions in villages of origin and transit camps. From January to September:

- The ICRC commissioned 32 new water points with manual pumps, with 16 of these in Gulu and Amuru while the other 16 are in Kitgum and Pader.
- Another 20 water points were rehabilitated: 7 in Gulu and Amuru, while the other 13 are in Kitgum and Pader. In total, these water points will serve 38,991 people.
- 3,425 people have benefited from improved hygiene and sanitation in the form of 365 newly constructed pit latrine stances, as well as through hygiene promotion activities, achieved in partnership with the URCS. 269 of these latrines were constructed in Gulu and Amuru, while the other 96 are in Kitgum and Pader.



A woman uses an energy saving stove in Labworoyeng in Kitgum district.

- The ICRC continued to support Kitgum Government Hospital (KGH) in terms of managerial counselling, clinical assistance and construction/rehabilitation projects.
- The construction of the operating theatre at KGH was completed and the new facility handed over to the local authorities.



A Nurse demonstrates the use of a machine in the new theatre at Kitgum Government Hospital.

- During this period, the KGH registered 9,528 admissions. Of these admissions, 2,184 were obstetric/gynaecological cases while 364 were surgical cases.
- The OPD at KGH treated 52,166 cases. Of these, 49,151 were medical cases, 1,660 were surgical and 1,355 were obstetric/gynaecological.
- Regular replacement of torn insecticide treated mosquito nets (ITNs) with new ones was conducted in the 13 ICRC-supported health centres.
- In order to reinforce the link between communities and the health centres, the ICRC supported 169 traditional birth attendants (TBAs) through refresher training and provision of incentives like soap. These included 132 from Gulu and 37 in Kitgum.



A woman tills her field under an ICRC Cash for Work Project in Apyeta, Kitgum district

- Two dams were rehabilitated and approximately 16,000 acres of farmland were cleared for 1 9903 beneficiary households (54,466 persons).
- 915 households (5,033 persons) in Gulu and Kitgum were supported with treadle pumps for irrigation. The households received assorted vegetable seeds for planting during the dry season, in order to increase their income capacities.
- 757 households (4,164 people) in Kitgum, Gulu and Amuru received manual oil presses, aimed at boosting their incomes from the sale of the extracted oil.
- Another 180 families received improved beehives and accessories.



Beneficiaries of a micro-economic initiative project in Abok village, Oyam district

Economic Security

The ICRC continued to support farming households in Amuru, Kitgum and Pader districts to restore their livelihoods by providing them with agricultural inputs such as seeds and tools. Between January and September 2009:

- 927 households (5'099 people) from 34 return sites in Acholiland were assisted with Essential Household Items (EHI) as an emergency response to fire outbreaks.
- 107'201 people (19'491 households) were supported in Amuru, Kitgum and Pader districts with agricultural input in order to increase production capacity by 50%. This was done through direct seeds distributions, agro vouchers and seed fairs – an initiative that brought together seed traders and buyers – in which the ICRC paid for the seeds sold in these markets.
- Cash-for-Work projects (aimed at supporting communities to increase their land-opening potential and to rehabilitate important infrastructures), were implemented in 40 return sites in Amuru, Kitgum and Pader. As a result, at least 39.8 kilometres of community access routes were opened.

Prevention Action

The ICRC continued to promote the implementation of International Humanitarian Law (IHL) – a set of rules that seek to limit the effects of armed conflict for humanitarian reasons - with Uganda's armed and police forces, universities and political authorities.

6.1 The Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF) and the Uganda Police Force (UPF)

The ICRC signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the UPDF in 2005, to integrate IHL into military training, doctrine and procedures. The ICRC and the UPDF agreed to create an IHL Integration Team (IIT) to review the UPDF's standard operating procedures and key documents like training manuals and doctrine. As part of the MoU implementation, the ICRC supported the UPDF to train its officers in IHL. Between January and September 2009, these training/information sessions included:

- 60 officers of the Third and Fourth Divisions attending a basic course on IHL in Arua and Moroto.
- 38 officers, including 10 from the armed forces of four neighbouring countries, attending the Senior Command Course.
- 35 officers from the Chieftaincy of Military Intelligence who attended a one-day information session on ICRC activities.
- 585 Somali Armed Forces (Government) who interacted with the ICRC on IHL at Bihanga Training School.
- 28 officers attending a Training of Trainers course in Jinja.
- 2 UPDF officers sponsored to attend the San Remo Law of Armed Conflict course and 1 senior officer sponsored to attend the SWIRMO course in Geneva.



UPDF Soldiers and Red Cross volunteers evacuate and administer First Aid to wounded soldiers during a field exercise of an IHL Training in Jinja.

The ICRC signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the UPF in 2005, to integrate human rights into professional policing. It is on this basis that the ICRC continued to support the UPF to conduct human rights training for its personnel. Between January and September 2009, these training included:

- 32 Police instructors at Masindi Police Training School, attending a one-week training of trainers (ToT) course on International Human Rights Law.
- 52 Mobile Police Patrol Unit (MPPU) officers attending a two-day dissemination.

- 1,500 former Local Administration Police officers, due for integration into the UPF, participating in a three-day dissemination.
- 217 Anti-Stock Theft Unit (ASTU) officers attending an information session in Kitgum.



A UPF Officer teaches Human Rights Principles in a training for ASTUs at Lugore Training Centre in Gulu

6.2 Political Authorities

- The ICRC contributed to the drafting of three legal documents, by sharing its comments with the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, and members of the Justice, Law and Order Sector. These documents are: the Amendments to the Geneva Conventions Act 1964, the International Criminal Court Bill 2006 and the Draft Bill on Prevention of Torture (UNCAT).



A cross section of participants attending an IHL implementation seminar in Kampala in May.

- 31 participants attended a seminar on national implementation of IHL in Uganda. These included policy makers from different ministries, the Judiciary, the Military, the Police, the Academia and the Civil Society. The seminar, organised jointly with the URCS and the Office of the Prime Minister, was part of the global celebration of 60 years of the Geneva Conventions.
- The ICRC donated over 200 IHL publications to the War Crimes Division of the High Court that was set up in 2008. According to the registrar, this was the first donation of books made to the court.

6.3 Universities

- In February, the ICRC signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Islamic University in Uganda (IUIU) in Mbale, to support the teaching of IHL. On this occasion, the ICRC donated over 1'000 books to the four different campuses of the university.
- Five university students (4 from Makerere and 1 from the Uganda Christian University –UCU Mukono) participated in the 2009 regional IHL essay competitions.
- Four university lecturers (3 from the IUIU and 1 from Uganda Christian University) were supported to attend the Round Table meeting for IHL lecturers in East Africa, in Nairobi.
- The ICRC donated over 2,000 IHL publications to 4 universities and 1 institute. The beneficiaries included IUIU (1,000 publications), Uganda Martyrs University Nkozi (309 publications), UCU Mukono (489 publications), Gulu University (96 publications) and the International Law Institute (104 publications).

Cooperation with Uganda Red Cross Society (URCS)

The ICRC continued to support the URCS to enable the re-establishment of family links for persons separated by armed conflicts and other situations of violence, promote the ideals and principles of the Red Cross Movement to the Ugandan public as well as prepare for and deliver humanitarian services. Between January and September:

- Dissemination training was organised for 17 branch coordinators, 23 Focal Persons and 20 Community Disseminators from Moroto, Kotido and Jinja branches.
- Dissemination sessions were carried out in 35 branches with special high-level sessions targeting 6 branches.
- The ICRC continued to support the revival of URCS structures in Karamoja region in eastern Uganda, with the completion of the office structure in Kotido. Additionally, work commenced on the office block in Abim.
- 3,261 households in Loyor sub-county in Karamoja benefited from distribution of Non-Food Items (NFI) donated through the URCS.
- Provision of safe water and hygiene promotion continues in Karamoja with the rehabilitation of 4 malfunctioning and drilling of 4 new boreholes, protection of 4 spring-wells, distribution of 400 latrine digging kits and 9'783 bars of soap.
- The ICRC supported URCS preparedness levels for emergency response with a donation of radio communication equipment and related repairs/maintenance, kits for 6 branch Red Cross Action Teams, 300 Pinafores and 1,500 NFI kits.
- Together with the URCS, the ICRC joined the rest of the world to mark the 150th anniversary of the battle of Solferino on May 8 2009.



Red Cross staff and well-wishers march in Kampala city streets during the Solferino day on 8 May 2009. The occasion marked 150 years since the founding of the Red Cross Movement.

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ICRC staff drilling a borehole at Laminajiko in Pader District



Participants and Judges that attended the first National Moot Competition on IHL at Makerere University on 16 October.



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