

UGANDA RED CROSS SOCIETY



YOUTH POLICY

March 2004

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BGB	Branch Governing Board
BYC	Branch Youth Council
CBG	Central Governing Board
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
NC	National Council
NCE	National Council Executive
NS	National Society
NYC	National Youth Council
RC/RC	Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement
URCS	Uganda Red Cross Society
WHO	World Health Organisation

INTRODUCTION:

The foregoing is a revised version of the URCS Youth Policy, which was first developed in 1997 and revised in 1999. It is structured and linked to the Youth Policy and Strategy of the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC); this enables the URCS Youth to be part of the global Red Cross and Red Crescent youth Movement and operating as part of the Federation.

Uganda Red Cross Youth constitute a substantial membership of the National Society. The Uganda Red Cross Society has recognised the importance of this group, through various policies such as the URCS constitution (representation at various levels of policy making and involvement).

This policy will guide both the National Headquarters and the Branches to plan for the development of Red Cross Youth. It will enable the Branches to use their energy motivation and idealism.

DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Young people: Both youth members of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (RC/RC) Movement and young people from the wider community. World Health Organisation (WHO) defines young people as those aged between 10 and 24 years

Youth leaders: Adults and young people working as leaders in youth groups and structures.

Branches: Branches constitute both management and governance structures, usually created to operate around established Government District structures. However, other (newly established) Districts may be URCS Sub-Branched until they are duly constituted/gazetted by the National Council.

Youth Link: This is the smallest youth unit in the society of 20 to 25 members

Governance: The policy making organs of Uganda Red Cross Society; these include the BYC, BGB, National Youth Council, Central Governing Board (Development subcommittee): these organs will monitor the implementation of the policy.

Management: Uganda Red Cross headquarters and its programmes/ departments, field staff and volunteers that ensure the implementation of this policy.

The key objective of the Youth Policy is to provide direction and guidance on the roles, rights, duties and responsibilities of Uganda Red Cross Youth members. The policy also spells out how the Youth members operate and relate with other stakeholders within the structures of URCS while carrying out voluntary services.

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The Red Cross Youth Coordination Programme aims to involve young people in URCS' activities as the most active volunteer force, to reach the vulnerable communities and disseminate the International Humanitarian Law, plus the Red Cross Principles and ideals.

The Red Cross youth activities worldwide focus on four main areas:

- Protection of health and life
- Community services
- Promotion of friendship and understanding at Local, National and International levels
- Dissemination of the International Humanitarian Law, Red Cross principles and Ideals.

The Red Cross youth activities implemented in Uganda are designed to meet the above aims.

Definition of Youth:

The URCS Constitution (2002) defines Red Cross Youth as young people aged 30 years and below.

According to the Government of Uganda Youth Policy (2001), Youth are defined as young people, male or female, aged between 12 and 30 years.

POLICY STATEMENTS.

1. Young people have a key role to play in the provision of the URCS services.

Young people have proven over the years to be an exceptionally good volunteer force within the URCS. They bring energy and motivation to relief operation, emergency services, health services provision and means of reaching the vulnerable in their communities. They youth hold the future functioning of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement at a global level and the Uganda Red Cross Society in particular.

As a result youth shall be engaged in providing the appropriate voluntary services under the relevant line programmes (health, disaster preparedness, tracing, dissemination etc). The youth bring credibility to the movement's work in programmes such as community mobilisation, social welfare and health campaigns. They are in an ideal position to identify the ways and means of reaching the vulnerable in their communities.

- 2. Young people are an important target group, both as members and volunteers, and also in their community; they are involved in service delivery and leadership/governance of the URCS at all levels.***

To succeed in all of its programmes, the URCS needs to work with young people. Because of their links with the community through their family and peer group contacts, young people can spread the Red Cross message widely and effectively.

- 3. Young people have a role in the leadership and management of the movement and the National society in particular.***

Young people should be fully involved in decision-making and in leadership, both in their own affairs and those of URCS generally because they bring a special creativity and idealism, which compliments the maturity and experience of other members. To support this, URCS shall continually establish leadership structures that will allow for youth involvement and representation at various policy-making levels.

Working side by side with the older members of the URCS in service programmes, emergency actions, governance and in the management of the society, young people should be given skills through training to enable them participate in URCS leadership. The society will give equal opportunities and considerations to young people who are competent and qualified for various positions of responsibility in the URCS.

- 4. There is need to empower young people.***

Young people should be empowered with skills that are appropriate to their personal growth and development needs, plus the service delivery needs of the National Society. Appropriate structures and policies need to be provided at each level of the society to guarantee that; the potential and creativity of young people within the URCS is realised, and the provision of relevant services to young people by the society is assured. The society will support youth initiatives within its existing framework and strategy, so as to enable them to contribute to the society's mission.

YOUTH STRATEGY

1. YOUTH MEMBERS Should:

- Pass on the message and provide the services of the Red Cross to their peers and to the rest of the community.
- Recruit new people as members of the movement.
- Let the rest of the movement know their needs, their interests and their abilities,

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- d) Use their peer and community contacts; identify areas where Red Cross services are needed.
- e) Be willing to take on responsibility within the movement.
- f) Be involved in resource mobilisation.

2. YOUTH LEADERS Should:

- a) Act as a link to enable young people to work with other members at different levels of the movement,
- b) Encourage young people to take a leadership role in the youth group,
- c) Guide young people to identify their real needs and those of their community,
- d) Create an atmosphere where young people work as equal partners in the movement,
- e) Be involved in problem solving on youth related issues,
- f) Be accountable to the Uganda Red Cross Society,
- g) Disseminate the International Humanitarian Law, Red Cross principles and Ideals,
- h) Be exemplary to the youth and the wider community,
- i) Identify activities that motivate and retain youth members,

3. BRANCHES Should:

- a) Provide national support for youth in a form appropriate for the structure and according to the resources available at the Branch.
- b) Analyse the needs and potential of young people in its membership and in the general community, and use this information to:
 - i) Involve young people in each of the society's programmes, and
 - ii) Initiating appropriate youth activities/programmes.
- c) Ensure that young people are involved in decision making at every level of the society. This can be done by involving them in structures such as: youth link / group executive committee, branch youth committee, national youth committee or by having youth representation on existing branch and national councils and working groups etc.
- d) Implement a leadership training programme for both youth members and their adult leaders to ensure that both have the skills to implement this policy,

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- e) Encourage other members at all levels to involve young people in their work, to share their skills, knowledge and guide.
- f) Establish contacts with sister Branches to share resources, learn from one another and to provide a structure whereby young people can meet their counterparts from other branches and experience true National friendship in the spirit of the movement.
- g) Guide and develop young people to identify their real needs and those of their communities.
- h) Identify activities that motivate and retain youth members.

4. THE NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS should:

- a) Ensure that youth issues are considered in relation to each of its operational areas and programmes,
- b) Encourage and support the development of the branches' youth services in line with its overall organisational development programmes.
- c) Ensure that its youth department is well resourced and prepared for its role.

5. THE YOUTH DEPARTMENT AT THE NATIONAL HEADQUARTER should:

- a) Provide support to branches as required to facilitate development of their youth service and structures,
- b) Participate in the development of model programmes and resources relating to key youth issues, which can be adapted or used directly by branches,
- c) Coordinate the exchange of programmes, ideas and resources nationwide to avoid unnecessary duplication of work between branches and to facilitate programme development,
- d) Organise national and international meetings and events to encourage young people, and adults working with young people, to meet and exchange ideas and experiences,
- e) Provide technical assistance to branch and regional meetings and events which are organised at that level,
- f) Advise and cooperate with other departments of the society on youth issues relating to their work,
- g) Promote networking and collaboration with sister organisations.
- h) Identify the necessary training and resources to meet the needs mentioned in (d) above,

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- i) Support youth initiated programmes and activities that motivate and retain youth members.
- j) In case of breach of the policy, matters will be referred to the CGB.

6. THE CENTRAL GOVERNING BOARD Should:

- a) Seek youth opinions countrywide on the implementation of the National Red Cross Policies and programmes and ensure that these opinions are considered in the statutory bodies of the movement,
- b) Promote and assess the progress of the implementation of the youth policy Nationwide,
- c) Report to each meeting of the Central Governing Board on this progress,
- d) Propose priorities for work in the youth programme, for example young women's issues, young people with disabilities, out of school youth etc.
- e) Identify branches where help is needed in the development of the youth programme and structures.
- f) Propose priority areas of work for the national secretariat, and in particular the youth department of the national society, in line with the content of the youth policy, and taking into account all other policies and priorities of the movement.

7. THE NATIONAL YOUTH COUNCIL Should:

- a) Support the activities of the Uganda Red Cross Youth through the existing structures.
- b) Play any delegated roles of the Development sub-committee that are particularly relevant to the youth.
- c) Work under guidance and direction of the CGB or Development sub-committee in matters related to youth.
- d) Propose priorities for work in the youth programme, for example young women's issues, young people with disabilities, out of school youth etc.
- e) Identify tasks for NYC executives

8. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

To ensure the continued relevance and progress of the youth policy, regular monitoring and evaluation will be carried out at all levels of the URCS. Young people in particular will be involved in this monitoring and evaluation process.

Evaluation of the youth policy will partly be the responsibility of the young people, the branches and with technical guidance from management.

9. POLICY REVIEW

The Uganda Red Cross Youth Policy shall be reviewed as need arises or according to URCS developments basing on other policies and evaluations carried out.

10. BREACH OF THE POLICY

All stakeholders and volunteers **MUST** abide by the youth policy. In case of indiscipline or breach of the policy, the URCS Constitution, Volunteer policy and any other relevant policies shall prevail.

Annex 1

GLOSSARY

YOUTH

A category of membership of Uganda Red Cross Society male or female aged 30 years and below (URCS constitution).

Youth shall be registered under youth links (groups)

MOVEMENT:

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent movement of which the Uganda Red Cross Society is a member (Act of parliament 1964).

YOUTH LEADERSHIP:

The hierarchy of youth leadership structure from link level up to the National council level. This includes youth link executive committees, Branch Youth Councils and National Youth Executive.

MANAGEMENT:

The Executive organ of the Uganda Red Cross Society, which is headed by the Secretary General and includes other top managers under supervision of the Secretary General. These are policy implementors.

GOVERNANCE:

The Policy-Making Organ of the society at all levels. It includes: BYC, BGB, NYC and CGB which acts on behalf of National Council at all levels. The Central Governing board is the policy-making organ of the Uganda Red Cross Society. The CGB sometimes delegates powers to its relevant sub committees.

Annex 2

Programme Goal

To mobilise Youth as the most active volunteer force (resource) to respond to the needs of the vulnerable in the community and to disseminate the International Humanitarian Law, Red Cross Principles and Ideals.

Specific objectives:

1. To support branches in their task of mobilising the youth as the most active volunteer force (resource) so as to respond to the needs of the vulnerable people in Uganda or in their communities.
2. Support Branches to strengthen the Youth volunteer capacity in their areas through training in skills appropriate to their future roles as Red Cross volunteers for URCS programmes.

The Youth policy has been adopted this day of -----Month-----Year----- and it takes immediate effect on the day and date signed here under.

Secretary General URCS

Chairman Uganda Red Cross Society

Signature-----

Signature-----

Date -----

Date -----

President Uganda Red Cross Society

Signature -----

Date -----