



The Humanitarian

A Uganda Red Cross Society quarterly publication

April-June 2010



A URCS volunteer demonstrating to communities of Kapelebyong, Amuria District how to properly hang a mosquito net

In this Issue

19,800 to access safe water
Page 5



More landslides in Mbale
Page 10



Youth in Apac receive farm inputs
Page 21



OUR MISSION

To improve the quality of life of the most vulnerable people in Uganda as an effective and efficient humanitarian organization

OUR VISION

An empowered, healthy and self-sustaining community that responds to the needs of the most vulnerable

A Word from Editor

It is now half of the year for the Uganda Red Cross Society (URCS) activity implementation. Good news that a lot has been achieved in these six months.

We now share with you some of the activities URCS has implemented between the period of April-June 2010.

We are all aware that Malaria is the number one killer disease not only in Uganda but all over the world. According to the World Health Organisation and Ministry of Health statistics, 340 Ugandans die everyday as a result of malaria. To avoid such scenarios, health experts recommend the use of treated mosquito nets. The Uganda Red Cross Society has over a decade supported government's efforts to fight the disease. And to this, URCS continues to distribute treated mosquito nets to the vulnerable groups; children below 5 years, expectant mothers and the elderly. The recent exercise was conducted in Kapelebyong Sub County in Amuria district.

In this issue, you will read about the cholera outbreak in Moroto and how URCS has intervened through hygiene promotion campaigns and awareness messages to reach 145,000 people. It is hoped through the interventions, people's lives will be saved.

On another sad note, our brothers and sisters in the districts of Mbale, Sironko, Tororo, Rukungiri faced yet another disaster of landslides and disasters. With the increasing rains in the two regions, the only solution is

for the affected communities to vacate to safer zones.

As more disasters surface in the country, there is need for more disaster risk reduction interventions. The Red Cross and Red Crescent worldwide this year celebrated the International Red Cross & Red Crescent Day in commemoration of the late Henry Dunant. In Uganda, the theme of the celebrations was "Strengthening Risk Reduction in communities." The main celebrations took place in URCS Mbale Branch.

In addition, the URCS launched a disaster risk reduction project in Katakwi and Amuria aimed at reducing the risk of disasters by sensitizing communities about the possible dangers, supporting them to form disaster risk reduction groups.

You will also read about the first ever humanitarian chat organized by URCS for Uganda Members of Parliament. The chat focused on three key issues: *Amendment of the Red Cross Act, Tax exemption and zero rating on humanitarian supplies, approval of the disaster management policy.*

The Humanitarian basically highlights a few humanitarian needs URCS responds to. More information about our activities can be accessed on our website www.redcrossug.org

Enjoy this issue. For any feedback, please contact or email sgurcs@redcrossug.org, cntabadde@redcrossug.org

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Message from the Secretary General



The Secretary General (c) at one of the URCS functions, looking on are Hannington Segirinya, Chairman National Youth Council (l) and URCS Board Chairman Tom Buruku (r)

Our second quarter has been eventful. We rolled out on our regular programmes on the one hand and we were there to address the needs of every disaster that befell Ugandans. Our aspirations remained the same and the spirits high.

The Uganda Red Cross Society (URCS) continued to with the process of achieving planned targets for its regular programs for the year 2010. As you will read on, we were very active in the health sector with our programmes in Blood Donor Recruitment, First aid, Road Safety and Emergency Health, HIV/AIDs/TB, Malaria control, Water and Sanitation as well as Reproductive Health. The rains

came with outbreak of diseases which we have been able to contain with the Ministry of Health and various district health authorities.

While we focused on community disaster risk reduction, we were called into action in Eastern and Western Uganda addressing landslides and floods especially those that killed over 350 people in Bududa district. We continued providing relief to those camped in Bulucheke and provided assistance to all other households that were affected in Eastern and Western Uganda.

The support came from everywhere; government, corporate bodies, development partners, individuals and civil society organizations. While we were

the conveyer belt but the assistance was yours.

This gesture should be encouraged and to all those that contributed in one way or the other, URCS extends its gratitude. This spirit is now being nurtured and it should be encouraged to grow.

I also wish to thank all our volunteers, members and staff for the tireless effort put in. Please keep it up as we strive to serve and improve the quality of life of the vulnerable people in Uganda.

Michael Richard Nataka
SECRETARY GENERAL

*The department's objective is to improve the health status of vulnerable and affected communities by reducing morbidity and mortality arising from common diseases and health emergencies. Amuria Sub branch

Expectant mothers, children below 5 years receive mosquito nets

BY CATHERINE NTABADDE

A mosquito net can save a mother and unborn child. With the increasing malaria incidences in the country, the rural communities are incapacitated to afford a mosquito net due to the poverty levels. This means they will spend more money treating Uganda's number one killer disease.

For the people of Kapelebyong Sub County in Amuria district, Eastern Uganda, this won't be the case as the Uganda Red Cross Society (URCS) has provided free long lasting insecticide treated nets. The beneficiaries are mainly pregnant women, children below 5 years and female headed households who are more vulnerable to malaria.

Joy filled the beneficiaries as they received the nets from URCS team that comprised of URCS board health and care committee chairperson Rose Obigah, Northern Eastern Representative on the board Martin Otuba, Secretary General Michael Richard Nataka, and Deputy Secretary General Dr. Bildard Baguma on May 7, 2010.

11,000 mosquito nets were distributed at the function graced by the Amuria LC 5 Chairman Julius Ocen. The distribution was made possible by Danish Red Cross, the funders of the project. Danish Red Cross Country Representative Charlotte Kjoerup attended the function. The

distribution of mosquito nets is part of URCS prevention and home care HIV/AIDS project supported by Danish Red Cross.

Kjoerup said she was happy that Danish Red Cross is supporting the 2 year programme.

Nataka said "We are proud to have continued to support this area especially that the region has experienced a number of problems." He appealed to the beneficiaries to use the nets and sleep under them to avoid contracting malaria. Nataka said URCS volunteers will be moving house-house to educate those that may be ignorant on how to hang the nets.

At the distribution, a demonstration on how the net should be properly hanged was conducted. Nataka hailed Danish Red Cross for its support towards the project and the district for the continued partnership.

Ocen told the gathering that URCS is known on ground for its work. He narrated how the URCS has been a major player in times of need like the 2007 floods, the Karamajong warriors. He encouraged the beneficiaries to become members of URCS Amuria branch.

He also hailed URCS for its extensive interventions towards landslides victims in Bududa. He appealed to the locals to provide support towards URCS interventions.



URCS Deputy Secretary General Dr. Bildard Baguma handing over mosquito nets to some of the beneficiaries in Kapelebyong

Obigah called for continued partnership between the communities and URCS. The goal of the mosquito net distribution is to contribute to the National Malaria Control Programme goal of controlling and preventing malaria morbidity and mortality especially among pregnant women and children under the age of five. The purpose of the project, according to the Malaria Programme Officer Daniel Musoke is to increase household long lasting insecticide net ownership in Kapelebyong County.

URCS proposed intervention in the area will build on the lessons learnt of previous URCS net distribution experience to ensure greater success.

Catherine is the Senior Public Relations Officer

Case Study: How Red Cross mosquito nets have changed lives in Eastern Uganda

Malaria Interventions (Soroti Branch)

BY JULIET NYAKOJJO

August 2009, Ado Jessy of Omarai village, in Oriamo parish, Alwa sub county in Kaberamaido district had the life of her family members improved when she received long lasting insecticide treated mosquito nets.

She is a mother of five; Enamu George 11years, Agweo Charity 12 years, Abilaki Simon 10 years, Akello Jane 3 years and Eyanu Chris 1 and half years.

A few months ago her youngest son was suffering from malaria and had been hospitalised, and she spent about forty thousand shillings (40,000) on hospital bills. A few days later the same son suffered from malaria again even after she was given nets. She did not

know how to use let alone hang them. Being illiterate, she could not read the information written on the flyer she received during the distribution of nets.

Uganda Red Cross volunteers visited her home on one of the days during the house to house visits. She was educated on the causes, treatment/management and effects of malaria. A flyer containing information on the best/proper use and maintenance of treated mosquito nets was given to her. The volunteers also helped to hang the nets that she had received over the available sleeping places in her house. The volunteers also advised her eldest daughter to always read such information for her mother so that it helps her understand more about proper use and maintenance

of treated mosquito nets as the best malaria prevention strategy.

“Thank you very much Red Cross, you saved my children’s lives, you have helped me save my money, I have not spent any money on treating malaria since the nets were put up” said happy Ado. She did not see her children suffering from malaria in a long time and according to her it’s because they have been sleeping under the nets every night.

Ado also said that she was able to save some money to buy some cassava cuttings that she managed to plant during the rainy season. “I will not lack food and I am sure my children are safe from malaria”, said Ado.

Juliet is the Project Officer Hang Up project



Ado Jessy, listens to a Uganda Red Cross volunteer as he explains to her the importance of using long lasting insecticide treated nets.



Ado Jessy being helped by a red cross volunteer to understand the pictorials on best use and maintenance of long lasting treated mosquito nets.

19,800 access safe water in Eastern Uganda

Water and Sanitation (Iganga, Mayuge, Kamuli and Tororo branches)

BY JACQUELINE ZAWEDDE

Up to 19,800 people in the eastern districts of Iganga, Mayuge, Kamuli and Tororo are now able to access safe drinking water from 22 protected springs, thanks to the Uganda Red Cross Society.

According to the Assistant Health Officer, Health and Care department, Rogers Mandu, 3,960 households have benefited from the water and sanitation hygiene promotion project carried out in the region during the period of 2009.

In addition, 27 shallow wells have

been constructed to continue providing safe water to over 6,750 households comprising of 33,750 dwellers. This was made possible through the formation of 144 Participatory, Hygiene and Sanitation Transformation groups who have been trained and followed up to ensure good hygiene and sanitation practices. As a result, 4,320 households have basic household sanitary facilities like latrines, refuse pits and bathing shelters which are in proper use.

Mandu revealed that communities can now properly manage their water sources with trained water user committees and through collection of

operation and maintenance funds from the water users. Safe water practices have been put into consideration through sensitizations. These include boiling water for drinking or treating it with water treatment chemicals at household level.

Community members have also improved on their hygiene practices like washing hands i.e. after using the latrine, before eating food and before handling or serving food.

Jacqueline is the Communications Assistant.



Shallow wells have been constructed to continue providing safe water to over 6,750 households comprising of 33,750 dwellers.

Uganda Red Cross joins Government in Road Safety drive

Road Safety interventions

BY JACQUELINE ZAWEDDE



URCS Staff & volunteer's marching in Kampala during the road safety week.

In support of the Uganda Government road safety efforts through Uganda National Roads Authority (UNRA), the Uganda Red Cross Society participated in this year's National Road Safety Campaign Week from 29th March to 1st April 2010. This was aimed at increasing road safety awareness among primary and nursery school going children and the general public under the representation from four URCS branches of Kampala South, Kampala Central, Kampala West, and Kampala North.

The activities which were held under the theme "Road Safety, our Shared Responsibility", mainly focused on increasing road safety awareness through training children in safer road usage and ensuring safe crossing of roads to schools.

One of the activities which graced the Road Safety Week was the colorful marching procession from Railway Station Park to the launching grounds at Pan African Freedom Square. A total of 20 volunteers from the four participating Red Cross branches and 90 school going children from four member primary schools of the Red

Cross Road Safety Clubs participated in this procession. The schools included Buloba Church of Uganda Primary School, Eliana Junior School, Nakasero Primary School and Josam Primary School.

24 Road safety training sessions were held in schools in the four representative branches reaching a total of 10,096 pupils. Prior to the training sessions, URCS road safety facilitators were oriented on key messages and facilitation skills by their Branch Coordinators to ensure uniformity and common messaging.

The URCS working in collaboration with Kampala Academy and Kiira Road Police was able to paint a zebra crossing at Kampala Academy along Kisaasi road. This was a black spot which had targeted these vulnerable

road users for a long time. On top of this volunteers were deployed at dangerous crossing points at different locations in Kampala during the week to assist school children to safely cross roads to and from their schools. Approximately 34,762 children and adults were helped to safely cross roads at different locations from 30th March to 2nd April 2010.

In his speech at the launch of the week, the Secretary General of URCS Mr. Michael Nataka commended the work that Uganda National Roads Authority and URCS volunteers were doing in safe guarding the lives of all road users in Uganda. He also appreciated the Ministry of Works and Transport, ICCU, AAU and Vachi Communications for their support and cooperation. "We are optimistic that with continued sensitizations, the road carnage in Uganda can be greatly reduced as we look at Road safety as our shared responsibility", he said.

The Uganda Red Cross Society participated in this year's National Road Safety Campaign Week.

Cholera hits Moroto: URCS in hygiene promotion campaign

Emergency Health (Moroto branch)

BY CATHERINE NTABADDE

The cholera outbreak that hit Moroto district recently may not be contained very soon due to the poor latrine coverage. The district health officer Dr. James Elima says latrine coverage in the district is only 10%.

Despite of the poor latrine coverage and cultural beliefs among the Karimojongs, the Uganda Red Cross Society (URCS) is stepping up its efforts to sensitise the affected communities about proper hygiene and sanitation.

URCS committed USD 160, 969 (oversh345m) as part of its humanitarian work to deliver immediate assistance to 145, 000 persons affected by the outbreak in Moroto, Karamoja sub region. The outbreak happened in May 2010.

URCS is supporting the prevention of cholera and control interventions by promoting intensive health and/or hygiene promotion and supporting water safety to over 145,000 beneficiaries from 20 villages in the 3 affected sub-counties of Nadunget, North and South divisions.

Nine people have so far died while over 557 people were affected. Over 70 patients were admitted. However, most of them have since been discharged.

The situation was worsened due to lack of latrines coupled with inadequate safe drinking water, general lack of sanitation-

enabling facilities leading to poor waste disposal especially in the urban areas, where the situation is complicated by poor food handling practices amongst the many road side food vendors.

A cholera treatment centre was established at Moroto hospital, according to URCS Moroto Branch Coordinator Bena Lolem. The affected sub counties are Nadunget, Municipality North, Municipality South, Katikekile, Rupa, Lopei, Matany, Loteme, Irii, Nakapelimen and Lokopo.

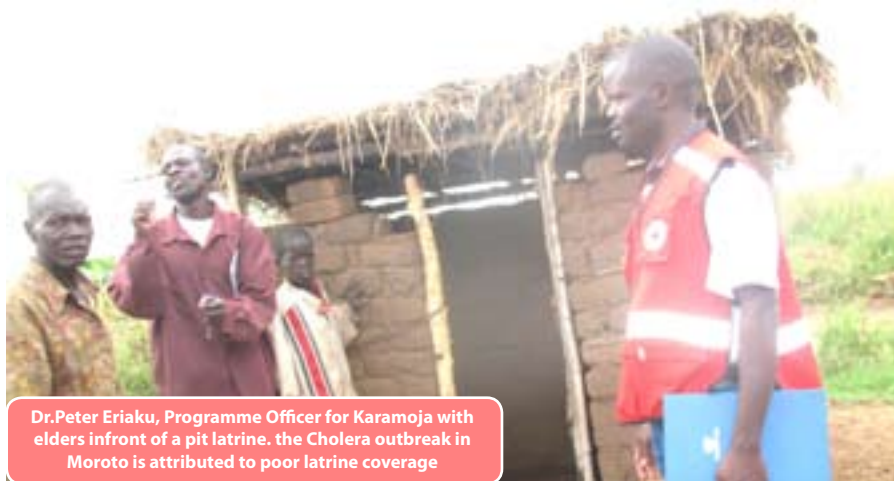
The URCS Secretary General Michael Richard Nataka said the main objective of the URCS interventions is to reduce the spread and transmission of cholera in Moroto by ensuring access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene supplies and raised community awareness leading to improved hygiene behaviour for 145,000 people.

“We supported water quality analysis of 15 water sources in the 20 cholera affected villages in Moroto municipality and Nadunget sub-counties in Moroto district,” Nataka added.

URCS is to procure and distribute 50,000 pieces of water purification chemicals (Aqua Safe tablets) to support purification at source and household levels targeting 2,500 households in the 20 affected villages.

In addition, the organisation will provide 5,000 pieces of clean water containers to maintain safe water chain.

As a way of decreasing the cholera epidemic mortality, URCS is procuring two cholera treatment kits for the treatment of 400 patients. These kits will also be used for future cholera outbreaks in the country.



Dr. Peter Eriaku, Programme Officer for Karamoja with elders in front of a pit latrine. The cholera outbreak in Moroto is attributed to poor latrine coverage

*The major objective of the department is to strengthen community resilience and institutional capacity to respond and reduce the impact of disasters

Red Cross to rehabilitate Northern Uganda through improved livelihoods

Rehabilitation of Northern Uganda (Gulu and Kitgum branches)

BY JACQUELINE ZAWEDDE

As the internally displaced persons return to their communities, water, sanitation and hygiene remain a key challenge to communities in Northern Uganda. But this problem will not last for long, thanks to Uganda Red Cross Society which will be implementing a WASH project. This has been made possible by ECHO.

The beneficiaries of the 10 months project will be conflict affected people that have recently returned to their ancestral villages. These are the sub-counties of Pabo and Amuru in Amuru district, Bungatira, Bardege and Laroo in Gulu district, and

Kitgum Town Council in Kitgum district. The project started off in January this year.

Other partnering institutions in the WASH campaign are UNICEF, AVSI, ACF, CONCERN, CARITAS, ASB, GOAL COOPI, AMREF, AID AFRICA, PSI, OXFAM and LWF, the Uganda Red Cross Society has come up to fully assist the population in Northern Uganda as much as possible to attain conducive standards of living.

Northern Uganda holds a large proportion of the country's population which has been affected by violence and war over the last two decades. The Acholi sub region, covering the four districts of Gulu, Amuru, Pader and

Kitgum has been hit hardest. In turn, there are many latent conflicts which exist between individuals, families, ethnic groups, and between civilians and government authorities. Although the situation has improved lately and many displaced people returned to their homes and livelihoods, it has left long term effects upon them.

Generally, access to basic services remains problematic in the areas of return. Health facilities are in poor condition, there are limited health personnel and medical equipment. HIV/AIDS remains a major challenge as the incidence of infection is estimated at 12% according to the Ministry of Health.

According to URCS Deputy Secretary General Dr. Bildard Baguma, access to essential WASH services in the areas of return is poor and has actually dropped over the past years in some areas as people move away from good facilities in the camps to areas without any facility at all.

In the Acholi sub-region, the most common diseases reported both by district sources and households are respectively malaria, respiratory tract infections and diarrhea disease. The region is also prone to outbreaks of epidemics. In 2008 Hepatitis E hit Kitgum and Pader districts with more than 8200 cumulative cases reported and 126 deaths, 37 weeks after first case was confirmed. Cholera outbreaks also occur, the last one being in 2007.

The URCS intervention will ensure



One of the communities in Northern Uganda which will benefit from the NURO project

▶▶▶ to page 9

Red Cross to rehabilitate Northern Uganda through improved livelihoods

from page 8

that returnees have access to improved water, sanitation and hygiene and adequate amounts of healthy food, to improve the general health status.

Dr. Baguma said the proposed action aim at distributing environmental sanitation kits at parish level to enable interested families to dig their own latrines and address additional needs in the field of sanitation.

Families with their own latrines will get a 3 liters jerrycan to enable them have a hand washing facility on the facility. According to the project document, a very important part of the action is hygiene promotion aiming at people adopting most critical hygiene practices.

This process will be implemented in very close collaboration with the responsible government officials from the different Directorate of Water Development as well as other actors involved in the provision of safe water.

During the subsequent years of conflict the URCS has been able to successfully implement programmes in the areas of Food Security, WASH, HIV and AIDS/Gender Based Violence.

In addition, the URCS has been very active in distribution of essential household items and health interventions. Throughout the implementation of its core activities, the URCS has received technical and financial support from Red Cross partners as British Red Cross, American Red Cross, Germany Red Cross, Danish Red Cross, Swedish Red Cross and Netherlands Red Cross.

The current URCS hygiene promotion program in Acholi (Northern Uganda) is being implemented with the funding support of the Swedish Red Cross (SRC) and the technical support of the ICRC. This proposed action in Acholi is designed in such a way as to



be a continuation of these activities given the fact that many challenges remain to be addressed.

Among the activities to be carried out under the WASH project are developing Participatory Hygiene and Sanitation Transformation (PHAST) tool kits, training of 72 PHAST groups each consisting of 25 members, implementing a mass hygiene promotion campaign using appropriate communication methods, regular village cleaning campaigns organized by URCS volunteers, monthly health inspections and sub-county meetings by hygiene assistants and local authorities among others.

During implementation of the project, URCS volunteers will continue to



Families with their own latrines will get a 3 liters jerrycan to enable them have a hand washing facility.

monitor all field activities and together with assigned project staff prepare the necessary quality documentation and reports on a monthly basis.

Landslides ravage Mbale, Rukungiri

Disaster Response (Mbale, Sironko, Tororo, Rukungiri branches)

BY JACQUELINE ZAWEDDE

At least eight people have been confirmed dead and 1,500 rendered homeless after a new wave of floods and landslides hit their residences in eastern districts of Sironko, Mbale and Tororo as well as western districts of Kabale, Rukungiri and Kanungu.

The landslides have displaced over 400 people and destroyed gardens in Mbale alone. This comes barely two months after another devastating landslide buried three villages in Bududa killing at least 350 people.

Three of the dead were children whose bodies were recovered about two kilometers away from their homes. These were Amina Nandutu 13, Juma Kyikumi 10 and Namusilo Manisula 6 all residents of Makyese village in Mbale district. Nine villages were affected and these are Upper and Lower Bukwana, Upper and Lower Bunabuloli, Bunadudu, Gumu, Bukwaga, Kitumba and Lusamente.

The tragedy took place on 15th May 2010 when torrential rains that lasted three hours from 10:00pm to 1:00am swept through the villages carrying along mud and big stones down the slopes of the hilly area. Kevin Nabutuwa the Uganda Red Cross Society Regional Programme Officer for Disaster Management in Mbale Region said that an additional 150 households are at risk of being swept away by the landslides.



URCS volunteer's distributing relief items in Mbale

Nabutuwa said, “660 survivors are camped at Bumatanda Primary School although we are advising them to go back to their relatives in order to reduce the risks of pandemics like cholera and dysentery”.

In the meantime URCS has beefed up its humanitarian efforts by distributing essential household items to the people in this camp. According to Nabutuwa, the essential household items include 132 jerrycans, 198 bars of soap, 330 plates, 132 mosquito nets, 132 saucepans, 198 blankets and 330 cups have been handed out to the people.

In Sironko, three people were buried by another devastating landslide that struck Bugiboni parish in Bugitimwa Sub-county on the slopes of Mt.

Elgon. Kenneth Nasasa, 39, Akisoferi Nabende and David Masoboni, 27, were walking home after shopping in the near by trading center when landslides buried them. They were only discovered when someone saw a torch and a hand of a human being.

“Immediately I saw a hand of a human being, I made an alarm. People came and we started digging. We retrieved the bodies that had broken limbs and shattered heads,” said Atana Walimbwa, a resident.

300 houses collapsed and are soaked in water. According to Nabutuwa, 10 sub-counties were affected in lower Sironko with the worst being Bukhalu, Muyembe, Samasi, Nabongo and Sironko Town Council. Food crops

▶▶▶ to page 11

Landslides ravage Mbale, Rukungiri

◀◀ from page 10

have been destroyed and three schools flooded.

1,200 people have so far been moved to Bugitimwa Primary School in Sironko. URCS together with Mbale District authorities identified 796 households in Mbale to host more than 4,846 people that were displaced by the landslides.

The evacuation which was ordered by the State Minister for Disaster Preparedness, Musa Ecweru, follow reports of huge cracks in surrounding hills and growing ominous noises of what appears to be separating rocks. 20,000kgs of Maize flour and 6,000kgs of beans were provided to the identified host families by the Office of the Prime Minister. “URCS, the district and government will continue to provide support to the host families” said Michael Nataka the URCS Secretary General.

In a related development, 721 people in Paya Sub County, Tororo district where most of Mbale water drains have been affected as a result of floods washing away their houses. The affected people are now camped at Nawire Primary School. A cholera outbreak has been confirmed in Kirewa village leaving two people dead while three others are being treated in Mbale hospital.

Meanwhile, over 300 people who were traveling to and from Kanungu were stuck in the Enengo gorge at Nyakagyeme after landslides blocked the road at Kamujegye in Rwerere, Rukungiri district.



URCS volunteer's distributing relief items to displaced people in Eastern Uganda



URCS Deputy Secretary General Dr. Bildard Baguma receiving a donation from NSSF for Bududa landslides victims

The Uganda Red Cross official, Edson Turyatemba said that people in a radius of 10Km have been affected. He said, “Several acres of banana, cassava, beans, potatoes, coffee and

maize crops have been destroyed.” The LCI chairperson for Kamujegye village, Domiano Kasigwa said the landslides started at around 10:30pm on Saturday during a heavy downpour that lasted for over eight hours.



In Sironko, three people were buried by another devastating landslide that struck Bugiboni parish in Bugitimwa Sub-county on the slopes of Mt. Elgon.

(Mbale, Sironko, Tororo, Rukungiri branches)

More contributions towards the URCS relief efforts in Eastern Uganda

In our Jan-March 2010 issue, we published some of the companies that donated funds and in kind towards the Uganda Red Cross Society sh2billion appeal. We now bring you more companies that made various donations. The Uganda Red Cross Society is grateful to all companies and individuals for their humanitarian heart towards our interventions.

Cash donations

Name	Amount
Blue Tooth	1,000,000
Glad Tidings Bible College	25,500
NFA staff	205,000
Presbyterian church in Uganda	150,000
IBERA Uganda Ltd	2,000,000
Mrs Amongin Margaret	50,000
Kumi Branch	230,000

In-kind donations

Name	Items
Euroflex Ltd	Mattresses
Zawedde Dorothy	Assorted Items
Go Lotto	soap, blankets
Ericsson Uganda	blankets, tarpaulins, ropes, ITNS
Riley Media	assorted clothes and shoes
Pilot International	assorted clothes and shoes
Catherine Twinomugole	assorted clothes and shoes
Med K	assorted clothes and shoes
Serena Hotel	blankets, linen, wheat flour
Entebbe Branch	assorted clothes and shoes
Nagenda S	assorted clothes and shoes
African Woman Magazine	clothes
Uganda Drug Authority	Jerrycans and Soap
Dan Church Aid	Food Items
Mrs Juliet K Nuwamanya - UBTS	clothes
Fun Factory and Blue Cube	clothes

james Kalengwa and Family	clothes and shoes
Kitante Primary School	basins, clothes, soap, sugar
Kenneth Roy Byangwa	clothes
St Joseph Nagalama	clothes
ICRC	essential household items
Bugisu Cooperative School	assorted clothes
FAO	assorted clothes
Parliament	clothes and cash
Radio Simba	Assorted Items
KIU	Assorted Items
CSF	Assorted Items
Inter -Aid	Cash and clothes
Institute of Internal Auditors	blankets
International School of Uganda	essential household items
Watoto Ministries	clothes
AVSI staff	Cash and clothes
AAR	used clothes and shoes
Infectious Disease Institute	910 dollars, used clothes and shoes
Star Pharmaceuticals	Assorted drugs
Voice Of Africa	essential household items
Indian Community	Mattresses
Development Research and Training	158,000/= and clothes
Cavendish University	assorted clothes
Mildmay	clothes, shoes, toys
House of Eden	Azur water, safi
Mr. Patrick Ndagu	Posho
Faridah Nakigudde	clothes and children's bags
Multichoice	10M
Hurinet	Assorted Clothes
Rainbow International School	Assorted Items
Fotogenix	used clothes
Staff of Care International	assorted clothes and shoes
Miss Christine Bugembe	assorted clothes

▶▶▶ to page 13

More contributions towards the URCS relief efforts in Eastern Uganda

◀◀ from page 12

Name	Items
Bamasaba Tubana Feesi Group	Assorted Items
FMU Sprint	assorted clothes and shoes
Knight Frank	clothes and shoes
Electricity Regulatory Authority	used clothes and blankets
Kampala and Entebbe water	different items
Olam Uganda	maize flour, shoes and clothes
Uganda National Chamber of Commerce & industry	Maize flour, millet flour, sanitary
War Child Holland	assorted clothes
Staff of Uganda Baati	clothes
Shirley Gyera Batungi	50,000/=
NSSF Staff	clothes, maize flour, beans, sugar
Aquaculture Research and Development program	used clothes
Rosette Nakanwagi	mattress, jerrycan and used clothes
The Uganda Golf Union	mosquito nets, powdered milk, clothes
Staff of Naads	mattresses and clothes
Centre for domestic violence	clothes and assorted items
CDC/MDC	clothes, shoes, soap and water vessel
Mrs Musoke IDI	plastic food containers
Lugazi Sugar Works	2700kgs of Sugar
Ankole Diocese	Assorted Items
Mbale Diocese	3700kgs of maize flour
MUBS	Assorted Items
Kumi University	Assorted Items
Step Radio Mbale	Assorted Items
UNICEF	Essential household kits and shelter tents
Hana Secondary School Nsangi	Assorted Items
UNATO	170 blankets and assorted clothes



URCS treasurer Stephen Mutenyo receiving a donation towards the support for Eastern Uganda from Institute of Internal Auditors

PICTORIAL



Prof. Tarsis Kabwegere Minister for Disaster Preparedness inspecting Red Cross stall at Malukhu grounds Mbale during the Red Cross Day Celebrations.



Children washing their hands in Bulucheke camp-Eastern Uganda



Displaced people receive food in Bulucheke camp during Easter time



Speaker Edward Ssekandi speaking to journalists after opening the URCS Humanitarian chat



The Senior public Relations Officer Catherine Ntabadde helping Minister for Disaster Preparedness Prof. Tarsis Kabwegere adon a URCS lapel pin



The URCS Secretary General Michael Nataka presenting to MPs at Parliament. seated are board chairman Tom Buruku and vice chairman Robert Ssebunya



Amuria district LC 5 chairman Julius Onen, URCS Secretary General Michael Nataka in Kapelebyong during the distribution of mosquito nets



Rogers Mandu-Assistant Health project in a community sensitisation in Mayuge



A URCS volunteer talking to children at Bulucheke camp in Eastern Uganda



State Minister for disaster preparedness Musa Ecweru handing over bicycles to communities during the launch of the disaster risk reduction in Katakwi



Some of the participants attending the launch of the Eastern Africa Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Network at Munyonyo

Red Cross launches disaster risk reduction project in Eastern Uganda

Disaster Risk Reduction (Katakwi and Amuria)

BY HASIFA KABEJJA

Uganda Red Cross Society has launched a Disaster Risk Reduction programme in Wera and Kapujan sub counties in Amuria and Katakwi districts respectively.

The Disaster Risk Reduction programme is aimed at reducing the risk of disasters by sensitizing communities about the possible dangers, supporting them to form disaster risk reduction groups and helping them to undertake vulnerability and capacity assessments in order to develop community action plans.

The action plans will outline community based disaster risk reduction activities, including community education and training, setting up of early warning systems and implementation of micro-mitigation activities. The micro-mitigation projects will depend on the needs identified by the communities but could also include reforestation activities, drainage improvement and support for flood resistant housing.

Speaking at the launch of the programme in Kapujan Sub County last week, URCS Vice Chairman Central Governing Board, also head of the Disaster Management subcommittee Robert Ssebunya said URCS will focus on scaling up actions which build capacity and take into consideration priorities of the targeted vulnerable communities with regard to health promotion, disease prevention, food security and other general disaster risk reduction activities.

“Teso sub region has specifically



State Minister for disaster preparedness Musa Ecweru trying out a bicycle given to communities by URCS

faced humanitarian challenges mainly attributed to the current climate change trends. URCS is therefore proud to be working with the American Red Cross to build a culture of safety and resilience towards disaster reduction and climate change adaption within the targeted high risk communities in Teso,” he said.

Mr. Ssebunya urged local governments to be prepared to respond to disasters by allocating sub county emergency evacuation centres. He also called for the speedy approval of the disaster management policy saying it will be key in guiding humanitarian actors in disaster management.

The URCS Deputy Secretary General, also Head of Programmes, Dr. Bildard Baguma, said the National Society will work with communities to identify risks and to decide the course of action.

A total of 126 volunteers in Wera and Kapujan sub counties were given bicycles to undertake disaster risk

reduction sensitization and assessment activities.

The Ugandan Minister of State for Disaster Preparedness and Refugees, Mr. Musa Ecweru, said he was humbled by the URCS decision to start the disaster risk reduction programme in Wera and Kapujan sub counties and the other National Society interventions in various communities. “Ministers take credit for whatever achievement, but it is important to recognize the partnership that make us score, Red Cross inclusive,” he said. He said many hazards can be neutralized if the population is resilient.

Mr. Ecweru cautioned volunteers against taking bicycles to beer parties. He said many companies had donated tree seedlings and promised to work with URCS to undertake an afforestation programme in the country. “We need to repair the planet that has been damaged so as to live a better country for our children,” he said.

Hasifa is the Assistant Communications Officer

The department's major goal is to build and strengthen branch capacity, youth and volunteer management and community development to improve the lives of the vulnerable.

Uganda Red Cross launches countrywide tree planting campaign

Red Cross Red Crescent Week (Mbale branch)

BY JACQUELINE ZAWEDDE

The Uganda Red Cross Society celebrated the 151st Red Cross and Red Crescent day in a glamorous event that took place at Malukhu Grounds in Mbale district on Saturday 8th May 2010. Apart from commemorating of the founder of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement Henry Dunant, this year's celebrations coincided with a period when Eastern Uganda was mourning over 350 people who died from landslides that covered three villages of Nametsi, Kubewo and Bukalasi in the Eastern district of Bududa on 1st March.

The event which was held under the theme, "Strengthening Community Resilience to Disasters", was graced by a big number of participants including volunteers, staff and Central Governing Board members of URCS, corporate companies, political and community leaders of Mbale district, partners and stake holders of URCS, Budada landslide survivors and other well wishers.

A marching procession from URCS Mbale Branch, through Mbale town and ending at the celebration grounds triggered off the function. The participants led by two cheerful bands left a lasting impression on the residents of Mbale town who yearned to join the procession. At the main celebration grounds, it was all pomp and splendor.



Disaster preparedness Minister Prof. Kabwegyere inspecting stalls at the function

Different entertainment groups mainly from the Bamasaba tribe livened up the function with traditional songs and drama depicting the ill fated period when they lost their dear ones in the Bududa landslides.

Among the activities which took place at the occasion were blood donations and exhibition of the different services offered by the partner corporate companies and URCS.

The Minister for Disaster Preparedness and Refugees, Professor Tarsis Kabwegyere presided over the celebrations, representing the Patron of URCS, President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni.

After inspecting the marching brigade and the exhibition stalls, he planted a tree at the celebration grounds to accentuate the tree planting campaign that had started off from 1st May in 19 districts of Eastern Uganda to be

gradually rolled out in other parts of the country. This is being done in a bid to mitigate the impact of natural disasters that are responsible for the lives of the unsuspecting Bududa landslides victims.

In his speech Kabwegyere emphasized the need to reduce the burden on the land by reducing on the population as well as adopting better farming methods to reduce on the natural disasters. "Natural and man-made catastrophes are inevitable but we can do something to reduce the deaths", he said. He blamed the disasters to the rapid population growth coupled with poor agricultural practices which were a risk to human settlement.

"We have adopted poor agricultural practices and these will be our downfall because they have mainly contributed

▶▶▶ to page 18



A volunteer demonstrates how first aid is administered at the Red Cross exhibition stall during the Red Cross week celebrations.

◀◀ from page 17

towards the adverse climatic change. I appeal to all of you to take a lesson from what happened to our friends in Bududa to change the way you till out the land especially around hilly areas.” He said. He further appealed to leaders to mobilize communities to plant trees.

Kabwegyere appreciated the work that URCS had tremendously done towards the Bududa landslide victims. He called upon all organizations in the environmental management field to technically support URCS in the program of planting trees in Eastern Uganda. “The Prime Minister’s Office will continue working with Red Cross to make this a reality.” He said.

The Chairman of the Central Board of Governors Mr. Tom Buruku urged Red Cross branches not to wait for help from other humanitarian organizations or the headquarters when such unpredictable disasters

strike but rather to take the job into their hands to offer relief support to the afflicted. He emphasized that the country needed a policy to regulate environmental activities. He noted that 20,000 seedlings had been raised from the National Forestry Authority, Roofings Company and the society to continue in the tree planting campaign.

Buruku further appreciated the work blood donors were doing in supporting the National Society’s blood donation campaign. He also appreciated government for the efforts towards the same cause. “We thank the government of Uganda which has injected 800,000 million shillings to support blood donation in the country”, he said.

Michael Richard Nataka, URCS Secretary General called for a full disaster analysis for Uganda, including determining priority disaster-risk

themes and geographical zones. Nataka noted that the move to strengthen community resilience of disasters was timely because “these disasters have weakened livelihoods and impoverished communities through dynamics such as increasing food prices, displacement, environmental degradation, asset losses and exposure of disease.”

He said that under the initiative that was launched in Amuria and Katakwi districts recently, communities were sensitized on the dangers of disasters and helped to form disaster risk reduction groups.

Certificates were awarded to companies, stake holders and volunteers in recognition for their contributions towards the landslides and floods relief operations in Eastern Uganda.

URCS Moyo branch builds prison resilience

Red Cross celebrations

BY MAWA ALATAWA

The delectable sun and cooing of birds in the effervescent morning was just another normal day at the Moyo Government penitentiary where over 60 mainly delinquents are incarcerated.

They are under-going rehabilitation so that they could be resettled in the society that once alienated them and condemned them to another community where some rights and privileges are tremendously restricted into becoming responsible and respected citizens once again.

This was the situation URCS Moyo branch experienced during the Red Cross week celebrations to mark the 151st International Red Cross week. The volunteers of Moyo Branch flanked by the BGB Vice Chairperson prioritized the spine chilling government prison as one of the communities where the theme “building community resilience to disaster” could best fit.

The branch planned as core activities for the prison, distribution of essential household items, general cleanness, tree planting and dissemination of URCS ideals and principles.

The branch volunteers and branch governing board arrived at the prison, ready to demystify the perception of perversion and incarceration to the communities around the prison and the entire community in the district so as to impart the sense of acceptance,



Community service at Moyo prison

value and respect of the rights of the prisoners regardless of their hitherto indulgencies and deviations that led them to the dreadful government Prison.

To most of the volunteers, it was their first time to step at the prison, and just like many people with prejudice, were preoccupied with the thought of working with criminals.

The Officer in Charge of the prison James Nzunzu briefed volunteers about the rules and regulations governing the Prison. He said the only organization that can visit and carry out their activities at the Prison

The branch volunteers and branch governing board arrived at the prison, ready to demystify the perception of perversion .

without a formal authorization from the Commissioner General of Uganda Prisons is Red Cross henceforth, welcomed the volunteers to the Prison.

Alawa is the Branch Coordinator-Moyo Branch.

Intensify HIV campaigns, URCS told

Red Cross celebrations (Apac branch)

BY GEOFFREY OMARA

Uganda Red Cross Society Apac Branch joined the rest of the world in celebrating Red Cross and Red Crescent week from May 1st-8th, 2010.

Addressing guests at the climax of the celebrations, the Branch Co-ordinator George Orochi said Red Cross Red Crescent Societies usually celebrate Red Cross Week to remind the whole world of the existence and the duties of the Society in improving the life of the most Vulnerable in the Communities.

“We usually run Red Cross week yearly with a number of activities,” Orochi said. He added that this year the branch conducted community service by cleaning the whole town of Apac, digging the rubbish pits for ten people who are unable to dig, provision of first Aid and blood donor recruitment, erecting shelters and drying racks in the ten household, tree planting, membership recruitment and dissemination.

He said cleaning the town and planting a total of 1,500 trees in the two districts of Apac and Oyam is part of the four youth programmes under URCS aimed at improving the life of the most vulnerable in the communities.

He said URCS Apac Branch also donated cups, plates, soya flour and sugar to over twenty identified most vulnerable people in the communities. The Chief guest at the function, the Resident District Commissioner (RDC) of Apac Alex Jurua hailed Red Cross for selecting the disaster as the theme of this year.

“I want to thank Uganda Red Cross Society for selecting the disaster to be the theme of the year because we have so many disasters affecting the communities like war, Climate change, Earth Quake and even HIV/ Aids is now a disaster in the community” Jurua observed.

Jurua said the prevalence of HIV/ AIDS in Apac is becoming a disaster since over 70% of the pregnant mothers in the district are HIV positive most of these are aged 20 and below of which some of them are on their first pregnancy.

He blamed the high rate of HIV prevalence in the district on mobile business men who lured the poor innocent young girls with gifts to have sex with them and urged URCS to work for the poor and build the strong skills to change the life of the people of across world.

“You need to be advocates on the elements of the group attitudes and integrate what ever you are doing with activities of Red Cross activism and be patriotic in what ever you are doing,” he advised



URCS patron & RDC planting a tree as part of the Red Crescent celebrations in Apac branch.

Youth in Apac receive farm in puts

Youth empowerment

BY GEOFFREY OMARA

Uganda Red Cross Society has donated farm inputs and goats to over sixty youth in the two youth links at Ibuje Sub County in, Apac district

The Focal Person Life Planning Skills (LPS) URCS Apac Branch Samuel Opio while handing over the items to beneficiaries on the 16th April 2010, said a total of 80 kgs of ground nuts, 30 gum boots, hoes, axes, rakes, pangas and goats were given out to the two youth links of Gwokere and Pibok youth with the support from Danish Red Cross Youth (DRCY) under small scales projects.

“We wanted you to keep this items we are giving out well because what Red Cross need is the sustainability of the youth links after LPS projects from these links” he lamented

He said the main aim of the project was to improve the life of out of School youths in the war affected areas

“Make sure that you do not sell the goats which we are giving you today because our Members of the board and others from Branch Youth Council (BYC) will be coming here to monitor this project” he warned.

The Sub County L.C 3 Chairman Geoffrey Oyuru called for



The elderly receive soap from URCS Apac branch

transparency amongst the link members and urged other Civil Society Organizations in the district to follow the example of Uganda Red Cross Society to improve the quality of life of the most vulnerable in Apac.

“If all the NGOs work the way Red Cross carries out its activities, the life of our people will have been improved and our work will be more easier” Oyuru said. He said the sub county council will work jointly with technical staff at the sub county level so that all the Red Cross activities in the Sub County are achieved.



Make sure that you should not sell the goats which we are giving you today because our Members of the board and others from Branch Youth Council (BYC) will be coming here to monitor this project.

The Sub County Chief Nixon Adupa committed himself to make a follow up on the youth funded project in the two youth links

Geoffrey is a youth volunteer in URCS Apac branch

Jinja branch in youth exchange to Dar-es-Salaam

Youth exchange programme

BY WILLIAM MALE



In the effort of Jinja Branch to recruit and retain the youth and volunteers, the branch has continued to organize motivational activities for its members.

The Youth and Volunteer exchange visit to Dar es salaam, Tanzania consisted 30 participants and these included the German youth volunteers, 3 Branch Coordinators i.e. Adjumani, Iganga, and Mbarara, the Branch Treasurer, branch volunteers and the Branch management.

The most interesting activities during the visit included the Radio communication, swimming (life savers) fire fighting and attending the volunteers training camp at Kigomboni Island with over 45 youths and volunteers from with in

and around Dar es Salaam attending.

At Dar es salaam University where we visited the Red Cross Branch is involved in the environmental protection, which is done and managed at the university.

They pick used plastic water bottles, papers, computer accessories etc littered around the compound and pack them for recycling. After packing, they call the companies responsible for recycling to come and pick them at a fee of TSH 300/= per kilogram thus enabling those picking and packing (rehabilitated street boys/men who are trained to do this work) to earn a living.

Another interesting activity about the environmental protection was the planting of trees at the university

and around the city of Dar es salaam. They have three ways of planting these trees which included: - Planting by fashion, planting by Design and planting by campaign.

The entire exchange visit was a learning activity for participants and the visitors.

The OD staff of Tanzania showed interest in collaborating with Uganda red cross society in youth and volunteer programme to train and develop their youth and volunteer programme.

An agreement was reached with the branch to further this relationship in planning and carrying out joint youth activities.

William is the Branch Coordinator URCS Jinja Branch



Another interesting activity about the environmental protection was the planting of trees at the university and around the city of Dar es salaam.

URCS Jinja branch in an exchange visit to Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania Red Cross

Hoima Region intensifies membership recruitment

Regionalisation (Hoima Region)

BY JACQUELINE ZAWEDDE

Hoima Region has involved itself in a massive campaign to mobilize, recruit and develop members as active participants in the communities of the region through the different Uganda Red Cross Society branches in the region which include Arua, Nebbi, Moyo, Masindi, Nakasongola, Kibaale and Hoima.

It has continued to strengthen organizational capacity in communication, information, dissemination, advocacy and resource mobilization in order to enhance the good corporate image and self-sustenance.

Over 1, 000 people were recruited as life members, youth senior, youth junior, women groups and youth links, according to the Hoima Report by the Regional Programme Officer for Disaster Management/Organisational Development Terrence Omonya.

Activities carried out to ensure sustainable improvement in the quality of life of the most vulnerable in the region included training Branch Youth Coordinators, exchange visits, training on Life Planning Skills and Project Planning and Management



Distribution of essential household items in the region

as well as dissemination sessions. In Arua Branch blood donation was carried out and 1025 units of blood were collected.

The branches in the region built community capacity to help in managing human health emergencies and diseases, road safety, improve access to safe and adequate water, and improve sanitation at household and community levels in targeted areas.

In Moyo district for example, 10721 condoms were distributed to young people to prevent the prevalence of Sexually Transmitted Infections and the branch participated in a 3 days malaria prevention sensitization workshop in the district.

The region also realized tremendous results in the field of disaster

preparedness and response. There was effective preparation for timely and appropriate responses to man-made and natural disasters. Tracing services and mitigation mechanisms came in handy to bring scattered families back together.

Non Food Items as well as Food Relief Items were distributed to the affected areas. In Masindi for example 31 bags of posho, two boxes of soap, 13 cartons of salt, four bales of used clothes, one bag of ground nuts and six mattresses were mobilized for the Bududa landslide victims. Over 20 Red Cross Messages were collected and sent to headquarters during the quarter.

The successes of the programmes/ activities were possible due to team work with Branch, regional and national headquarters and network with relevant stakeholders in the District even with the many challenges met. The quarter served as an orientation period for the new staff and the second quarter will hopefully be for taking off.



Non Food Items as well as Food Relief Items were distributed to the affected areas.

*The goal of the department is to strengthen organizational capacity in planning, monitoring and evaluation and reporting for effective service delivery

Eastern Africa Red Cross Red Crescent Planning network launched

Networking

BY CATHERINE NTABADDE

The Red Cross Eastern Africa Planning Monitoring Evaluation and Reporting (PMER) Network was launched on April 30, 2010.

The aim of the network is to build capacities and provide coordination within the East African Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

The network which was created in December 2009 is to enable Red Cross and Red Crescent Planning units link up to mutually support each other and address continuing professional and career development issues. The network is part of the Red Cross & Red Crescent for East Africa. Other networks include Lake Victoria Project, Communication, Health and Disaster Management.

Launching the PMER network at Speke Resort Munyonyo, Kampala, URCS Vice-Chairman Mr. Robert Ssebunya said the Red Cross/Red Crescent movement is undergoing growth in programming and at the same time they are faced with growing humanitarian needs and challenges that require their interventions through programmes.

“Worldwide the Red Cross and Red Crescent has been at the fore front to effectively respond to the needs of the most vulnerable communities in our countries,” he said. Ssebunya added that it is through such networks

and efforts of the Red Cross and Red Crescent that will make a difference in the lives of the most vulnerable people in this World.

The Chairperson of the Red Cross/Red Crescent East African Network Mr. Michael Richard Nataka said planning, monitoring and evaluation are very vital for any given institution. “When you implement activities, it is through monitoring and evaluation that you can gauge the progress, make adjustments for effective implementation,” he said.

Nataka is also the Secretary General of Uganda Red Cross Society. The PMER network comprises of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies of Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Eriteria, Sudan, Comoros, Seychelles, Djibouti, Madagascar, Mauritius, Somalia and Burundi.

“The Red Cross and Red Crescent world wide relies on networks to intervene in its work. We are the largest humanitarian agency in the world and everywhere we operate, the Red Cross/Red Crescent faces similar humanitarian needs like disasters,” Nataka explained.

With PMER, Red Cross and Red Crescent will be able to enhance the quality of programming in each of the countries they operate in.

In organizations, the planning, monitoring and evaluation systems help



URCS Vice Chairman Robert Ssebunya (centre) with some of the participants

coordinate program planning processes, implementation activities and evaluation guidelines in an integrated and coherent way.

The PMER network will have to work with the Red Cross and Red Crescent Network to provide technical support on decisions related to monitoring and evaluation in the Red Cross societies.

The chairperson of the PMER network Mr. Lawrence Lutaaya said the committee has been tasked to develop monitoring and evaluation mechanism for Red Cross and Red Crescent activities in addition to building capacity of the organizations in PMER by stabilizing professional and intellectual links.

He said one of the key tasks for the committee was to organize the launch. The launch was supported financially by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC).

*The goal of the department is to strengthen organizational capacity in communication and information for a good corporate image.

MPs applaud URCS interventions

Humanitarian Chat

BY CATHERINE NTABADDE

“For all of us who are here, there is no one that has not had an interface with the Uganda Red Cross in our constituencies. So when the issues raised by Uganda Red Cross come to Parliament, I am sure the MPs will overwhelmingly support them,” David Ebong, MP for Maruzi County noted.

This was on May 6, 2010 at the Parliament Lounge when a team from Uganda Red Cross Society (URCS) meet MPs for a humanitarian chat. The session was chaired by the Speaker of Parliament Edward Ssekandi. The humanitarian chat was organized by URCS to further create awareness about Uganda’s humanitarian needs and also garner support from the MPs towards URCS humanitarian work.

The URCS team was led by the Board Chairperson Tom Buruku accompanied by board members, Secretary General Michael Richard Nataka and Deputy Secretary General Dr. Bildard Baguma.

In his presentation, Nataka explained to the MPs the various interventions spearheaded by URCS, its level of programming and nature of partnerships with the respective government ministries. He said URCS has a big focus for developing a comprehensive humanitarian preparedness and response mechanism for disasters in the country.



However for this to happen, the following need to be put in place:

- Establishing regional disaster centres in identified high risk areas.
- Stockpiling preparedness of essential household items for response
- Disaster preparedness
- Environmental management
- Strengthening the ambulance service systems in the country with special focus on major high ways, city and town services
- Disaster risk reduction

The Speaker hailed URCS for its interventions countrywide. “In most cases when such organizations are set up, they collapse immediately but am happy that the Uganda Red Cross Society has survived and is strong till this date,” Ssekandi said.

He added that URCS being a non-commercial organisation that supports government’s work all over the country deserves adequate support from government. “If these people

are carrying out tasks that government may not be in position to perform, why not support them?” he asked.

The issues presented to the MPs by URCS are:

Amendment of the Red Cross Act

The Red Cross Act was enacted in 1964 and since then several changes have happened that impact on the mandate and the way Red Cross works. URCS therefore requests for a speedy process in the amendments of the various sections of the act.

Tax exemption and zero rating on humanitarian supplies

Nataka expressed URCS gratitude to government for the support in paying for taxes on supplies and equipment procured by and donated to URCS for its humanitarian work through the Office of the Prime Minister.

Whereas this is a good gesture but still taxes are paid on the humanitarian services. URCS appealed to the MPs to consider a proposal to exempt taxes on all humanitarian supplies. Nataka said the taxes paid by government can instead enable URCS reach more communities affected by disasters.

URCS also proposed a tax exemption on all fuel bought by URCS. This is based on the fact that URCS incurs substantial operation costs arising from taxes levied on the fuel. This money can be used to reach out to Uganda’s vulnerable people.

▶▶▶ to page 26

MPs applaud URCS interventions

◀◀ from page 25

Approval of the Disaster Management Policy

URCS called for the speedy approval for the Disaster Management Policy which is being formulated as this will strengthen the environment for provision of humanitarian services in Uganda.

Government budgetary allocation to the Red Cross Activities

As the leading humanitarian organisation in Uganda, the URCS is operating under a very meager budget as compared to the mandate and the humanitarian needs in the country. Over 95% of the support for the humanitarian activities is funded by Sister Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in developed countries.

In times of a major disaster, URCS makes special appeal both locally and internationally for support.

URCS therefore appeals for government consideration through a direct budgetary allocation to the URCS to enable it increase on humanitarian service provision in areas of preparedness, risk reduction and response to disasters.

Speaker Ssekandi hoped that the issues raised by URCS can be passed when they get to Parliament.

The Board Chairman Buruku appreciated MPs for availing their time for the humanitarian chat and for their approval of a supplementary budget to the Uganda Blood Transfusion Services and URCS for blood safety that will increase the availability of safe blood in the country.

Kabakumba Matsiko MP for Bujenje County and Minister for Information said at the time of the Humanitarian Chat, the people concerned about the Disaster Management Policy were in a

retreat to finalise its formulation. She said that when URCS seeks support in Parliament, the MPs will support the requests because every MP has a story to tell about URCS.

Baba Fred MP for Koboko County and State Minister in the Vice President's office applauded URCS for its good move on risk mapping and risk reduction strategies. "I want to thank the Red Cross for this important strategic move in these areas," he said.

On issues of tax exemption, Baba said it is only the Finance Ministry that can provide the tax exemption. He advised the URCS to make a special request to the Finance Ministry through the Office of the Prime Minister for the tax exemption. The minister however cautioned URCS about the fuel zero rating whereby if granted it should not be abused by non members of URCS.

To this, the Secretary General explained that URCS is installing a tracking system in all its cars which can monitor actions of drivers wherever they may be.

Betty Anywar, Woman Representative Kitgum hailed URCS for its work. "The Red Cross has always been there for our people in every part of the country and I appreciate your efforts," she added.

She appealed to her colleagues to find mechanisms of contributing a percentage to URCS, adding that the sh20, 000 fee charged for life membership by URCS "is too little for an MP."

Barbara Kawuki, MP for Busiro North recognized URCS efforts in the country. She however appealed to URCS partner with MPs in the localities where Red Cross activities are being implemented.

Rukia Chekamondo,, Woman representative Kapchorwa and State Minister for Investment also hailed URCS for its work in her constituency. She informed URCS that in the Finance Ministry, there is a public-private partnership through which URCS can benefit. "We should involve everybody to support the work of URCS," the minister stated.



Some of the MPs during the session

*The goal of the department is to strengthen procurement, transport and warehousing management systems within the National Society structures.

Red Cross acquires state of art trucks

Transport

BY JACQUELINE ZAWEDDE

Five new state of the art trucks have been received by the Uganda Red Cross Society to be part of the ever growing National Society's transport fleet. The trucks were supplied by the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent fleet base from Dubai.

The Scania model trucks will be used for URCS' relief operations and

activities in the country. In addition, they will be used to beef up the URCS 3rd party transport provision to other humanitarian agencies for example WFP and UNICEF.

The acquisition of these trucks is an indication of the trust and confidence that the federation has in Uganda Red Cross. URCS is the only National Society with such state of the art trucks in the movement. These trucks

will build the capacity of drivers by driving the latest models in trends of trucks. Jeff Serunjogi the Head of Logistics said,

“The trucks are fitted with a satellite monitoring system which means that the fleet manager will be able to monitor the location of the trucks throughout the country and immediately detect any abuse of office at the click of the mouse!”.



One of the New Scania Trucks received by URCS

RED CROSS PLAZA.

URCS is to embark on the construction of its headquarter master plan in August 2010. Construction will last for 2 years.

Our readers are encouraged to book space in this magnificent building to be

located at the current URCS premises on plot 28/30 Lumumba Avenue.

For details, contact the Secretary General's Office: sgurcs@redcrossug.org, 0776- 312001



Ordina/Netherlands Red Cross Mission

A team of 9 experts from Ordina, Esteem work and Netherlands Red Cross were in the country for one and half week to support Uganda Red Cross Society build its capacity in ICT, Planning, monitoring and evaluation and setting up income generating activities like Internet Café for Hoima region.



A cross section of URCS management team and members of the Ordina team attending a debriefing session at URCS headquarters.



URCS Secretary General (in middle) Michael Nataka and other staff attending the debrief session.

URCS vice chairman Robert Ssebunya handing over a gift to Esther Vonk, Quality Assurance Ordina.



THE SEVEN FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF THE

RED CROSS MOVEMENT

1

Humanity

The Red Cross movement aims at providing assistance to the vulnerable without discrimination to prevent and alleviate human suffering. Its purpose is to protect life and health and to ensure respect for human dignity. The movement also promotes mutual understanding and lasting cooperation.

2

Impartiality

It makes no discrimination as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions. It endeavours to relieve the suffering of individuals, being guided solely by their needs, and to give priority to the most urgent cases of distress.

3

Neutrality

To earn the confidence of all, the movement takes no side in hostilities nor does it engage in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.

4

Independence

The National Societies, while auxiliaries in the humanitarian services of their governments and subject to the laws of their respective countries, must always maintain their autonomy so that they may be able at all times to act in accordance with the principles of the movement.

5

Voluntary Service

As a humanitarian organization, the Red Cross is a voluntary relief movement not prompted to all and carry on humanitarian work throughout its territory.

6

Unity

There can be only one Red Cross and one Red Crescent society in any one country. It must be open to all and carry on humanitarian work throughout its territory.

7

Universality

The International Red Cross Crescent Movement, in which all Societies have equal status and share responsibilities and duties in helping each other, is worldwide.



THE UGANDA RED CROSS SOCIETY

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