ICCA project: Karamoja and Teso regions making great strides towards food security

Goat rearing Project

Cassava Multiplication Project

Village Saving and Loans Associations

Flood resistant huts

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- Response to Cholera outbreak in Kampala
- West Nile Refugee Response (WASH)
- World Refugee Day celebrations
- World Blood Donor Day 2018
Dear Readers,

The Humanitarian is here again. It is a quarterly Newsletter publication of this National Society. Thank you for your commitment to read and continue following the new developments happening at Uganda Red Cross.

A lot of positive change has taken place and strategic partnerships have been sealed to support the ever growing humanitarian need in Uganda, like our ongoing refugee operations in Northern Uganda (West Nile) and the DRC refugee response in Western Uganda.

Uganda Red Cross continues to be a partner of choice in saving lives and promoting human dignity. We alleviate the suffering of people through emergency response that aims at saving people’s lives.

I therefore invite you to read the details and appreciate the tremendous work done by our staff and Volunteers and how their efforts contribute to the well-being of the vulnerable people we serve in various communities.

I hope you enjoy this second issue of the year 2018 and feel free to share any feedback with us through the contacts provided at the back of this publication.
Dear Red Cross friends,

It is my pleasure addressing you again. It is already half way the year and we have a lot to share with you since the last quarter updates.

This is the second year of implementing our strategic plan 2015-2020. The funding portfolio has grown, our operations are bigger than before and our beneficiaries have increased from 1.5 - 2 million people.

The Red Cross has continued to respond to all emergencies in form of disasters, offering emergency health services and supporting the population movement which has seen many refugees flock Uganda from our neighbors, South Sudan and DRC since 2016. We have continued to reunite separated families, to provide clean and safe water and respond to disease outbreaks in the country.

In partnership with the Ministry of Health and the Uganda Blood transfusion services, Uganda Red Cross mobilizes voluntary blood donors. We have empowered our 51 branch network to mobilize all the 360,000 volunteers and members of the National Society to donate blood as a way of addressing the blood need in Uganda.

In partnership with the Ministry of Works and transport, Red Cross has tabled the Good Samaritan law which will see fast responders protected in a bid to give first aid during that critical hour when causalities are stranded on roads. We strive to promote road safety and uphold the spirit of service to the wounded and injured. We commit to train more first aiders, sensitize motorists and pedestrians on road safety issues to ensure we live in communities that have skilled life savers.

Uganda Red Cross is also involved in developing the Disaster Law together with the office of the Prime Minister (Disaster Preparedness and Response), which will facilitate fast emergency response in case of any eventualities that happen in our communities.

On 31st May this year, Uganda Red Cross launched an epidemic and pandemic preparedness program (CP3) to empower communities with skills, knowledge and tools needed to detect, prepare for and respond to disease outbreaks affecting them in their communities.

We have the Volunteer and Branch network repositioned to be able to deliver on the URCS key mandates. Management has finalized placements for most of the branch managers who are supporting the implementation of the core activities of Blood donor recruitment, first aid, membership and volunteer recruitment, disaster response and management, among others.

Other than these few highlighted here, I encourage you to read the Humanitarian, and learn more of what Red Cross is doing in communities where we operate.

Thank you and enjoy this publication.
Goat rearing sustaining Sabina’s household in Abim District, North Eastern Uganda

Sabina Menhya, 40, beams with a smile as she receives us in her home. She is a mother of 10 children between 2 to 21 years of age. The family was even bigger before, but sadly, Sabina lost two of her children to malaria.

For a living Sabina and her husband Mathias Okiru, 44 grow beans, maize and sunflowers in a small garden in their home in a small village called Nyakwae, in North Eastern Uganda. They earn less than a dollar a day, since the harvest is seasonal.

Sabina is among the women Uganda Red Cross targeted to empower through a sustainable livelihood goat rearing project, to support her large family. Sabina was vulnerable. She lived in a dilapidated, grass thatched hut that housed her and her children. Her children had very little food to survive on and were very malnourished.

Uganda Red Cross, with funding from the German Federal Government through the German Red Cross, started implementing livelihood programs targeting vulnerable women in East and North eastern Uganda. Abim district was chosen among the project implementation areas. Unique to mention, women in this part of the country are bread winners in their homes.

“I was selected to benefit from this project of rearing goats. The goats were 30 and we formed a group to rear them as a team. Feeding them was not easy, but when we collect feeds as a team, it is easier.

When the goats multiplied, each family took their share equally and now Sabina takes care of her goats together with her family members. She has given her goats names. They remind her of joy, development, change and the improved life that the family has attained.

“I call my favorite goat “Bia konyi” which means come and I help you. These goats have helped me. I can’t lack anything now, since they are a source of my joy,” Sabina smiles.

In Sabina’s family, children play a vital role in caring for the animals too. During school holidays, the boys take them to graze, the girls ensure that they have peelings and the parents provide water.

The Red Cross introduced a new way of building in the community and Sabina’s family now has more than three flood resistant huts. They no longer build weak huts that can submerge in water when it rains.

“When we selected the needy families to benefit from, we took them for a training in farming and helped them to become more sustainable, and to plant crops in and out of season. We also taught them how to build strong huts since this place is prone to floods. , says Stephen Opolot, Uganda Red Cross Climate Change and Adaptation Project Officer.

Today Sabina is happy. Her children are in school and the family is able to meet other needs as well. “I look at the goats as source of wealth. When our son is going to marry, we will use some of the goats to pay the bride price,” says Mathias, Sabina’s husband.
Uganda Red Cross responds to Cholera Outbreak in Kampala

With the rainy season worsening slum conditions in and around Kampala district, this has greatly contributed to a number of disease outbreaks, including cholera.

On Friday 4th May 2018, the Ministry of Health in Uganda declared a cholera outbreak in Kampala. This followed suspected cases identified by Uganda Red Cross volunteers through the Community based fast responders messaging platform, commonly known as the U-Report. The humanitarian agency was triggered to take action instantly in a bid to save lives.

“Through our U-Report system, we were able to track the first suspected cases and we had to respond quickly by sending our Red Cross Action Teams (RCATs) on ground. The U-Report surveillance has enabled early detection, triggering early response and action” said Paul Okot, the Uganda Red Cross Emergency Response Manager.

The Ministry of Health carried out tests on 8 (eight) cases that turned out positive. The affected persons were admitted at Naguru referral hospital and an isolation center was set up to handle the victims. Cholera is believed to have started in Makindye division around Kiruddu area. Some cases however were traced in Kaleerwe, Wakiso and Mpigi districts.

“We have admitted seven patients since Friday. We have however not received any other cholera cases since. We have also not yet registered any death and all the patients are responding well to treatment” said Dr. Henry Mwebesa, the acting director health services Ministry of health.

On Wednesday 9th May, Uganda Red Cross deployed a well-trained and competent team of volunteers to respond to the outbreak through community mobilization and sensitizing the public. In partnership with Ministry of Health and UNICEF Uganda, over 20,000 posters, 14,400 brochures and 14,000 Aqua tabs were given to the Uganda Red Cross Society and Kampala Capital City Authority to be distributed during cholera sensitization.

Uganda Red Cross Volunteers moved door to door in areas around Kampala city especially those at high risk,
sensitizing communities on cholera outbreak, signs and symptoms, how to avoid it and how to support those suspected to be affected.

“The Red Cross people have come to us to talk about the cholera outbreak and how we can stay safe. We appreciate it and hope to survive, especially during this time of heavy rains. Our children play in very many dirty places. We will try our best, now that we know how to keep safe”, said Abdu Rahim Busingye, a resident of Kisenyi, Kampala City.

“We actually didn't know that there was cholera in Kampala. I thank the Red Cross for the effort, I would not have known if you people hadn’t knocked on my door. I will put everything you have taught me in practice so that I don't fall victim to cholera” said Darlene Atuha, a resident of Kiwatule, a Kampala suburb.

Uganda has been grappling with floods in most parts of the country. Kampala city has many blocked drainage channels and when it rains, the city floods and causes water logging in many parts, thereby exposing the public to many Public Health risks.

A lot of contaminated water is always observed escaping from nearby communities into people's homes and to open water sources like springs, exposing people to risks of coming into contact with feaces and other waste that carries the cholera bacteria.

According to the World Health Organization, cholera is an acute diarrheal infection caused by ingestion of food or water contaminated with bacterium Vibrio Cholera. The disease is spread through drinking un-boiled water, eating cold food that is exposed to dust, flies or cockroaches, not washing hands with soap after visiting the latrine, eating unwashed fruits and so many other hygiene and sanitation related weaknesses. The symptoms of the epidemic include vomiting, diarrhea, general body weakness, thirst and failure to urinate due to reduced body fluids.

Uganda Red Cross remains committed to saving people's lives, in this case bringing cholera related messages closer to the people through a vigorous community mobilization campaign, targeting to bring cholera prevalence to zero.

“We encourage all people to use latrines properly, dispose off feaces and other waste well, boil drinking water, eat hot food and, clean around their premises to ensure they observe proper hygiene and sanitation during this rainy season. I also call upon the regulators around Kampala to improve and expand the drainage systems so that we see proper channels carrying water. The sewerage system should be expanded for proper waste management around the city and this will help reduce such cases of cholera prevalence around the towns”, said Jimmy Asea, URCS Wash Manager Kampala cholera response.
On 31st May, 2018, Uganda Red Cross launched the Community Preparedness for Epidemics and Pandemics (CP3 Project.) The project focuses on helping communities in Uganda to prevent, detect and respond to disease threats.

This pilot program in Uganda focuses on improving community-level disease surveillance, alert systems, contingency planning and engagement, while building the capacity of community health teams. The project relies on extensive training for and by Red Cross staff and volunteers, reinforces existing national health emergency action plans and coordinates closely with the government and other health partners as part of the Global Health Security Agenda.

The program was launched at Hotel Africana in Kampala with representation from different Sectors and Ministries that directly manage disease surveillance and response in Uganda. These included the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Water, Makerere University College of Veterinary Medicine, the US Embassy in Uganda, district officials, Kampala Capital City Authority, among other participants.

Uganda is one of eight countries selected for the Community Epidemic and Pandemic Preparedness Program, which is led by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and funded by the US Agency for International Development (USAID).

While addressing participants at the launch, Robert Kwesiga, Uganda Red Cross Secretary General emphasized the role of the Red Cross in building the capacity of communities and supporting them to manage health risks. “Our volunteers are based in local communities and skilled in helping communities to respond to disease outbreaks” he said.

Pointing to the recent cholera outbreak in Kasese District and the Marburg outbreak in Kween and Kapchorwa Districts, Kwesiga said the Uganda Red Cross, through its local volunteers, launched successful social mobilization campaigns that helped scale down these epidemics to zero cases.

“Without community participation, government efforts to detect and contain infectious disease threats can be delayed and negatively impacted,” he emphasized. “But communities need knowledge and tools to identify, communicate and help manage disease outbreaks before they become deadly. This new program will enable the Uganda Red Cross to support high-risk districts with limited capacity and resources to prevent and respond to outbreaks. We are very grateful for the partnership and support of IFRC and USAID.”

“We are pleased to partner with the Red Cross globally, a trusted Humanitarian partner and we are sure through this project, they will work to build epidemic preparedness capacity in communities. We appreciate the effective and efficient approach.
to saving lives and increasing local and global health services.” Gregory Adams, USAID GHSA- Advisor.

“Recent epidemics have shown that communities have an integral role in identifying and responding to disease threats and minimizing their effect, in conjunction with government, civil society and the private sector,” said Deborah Malac, the US Ambassador to Uganda, at the program launch in Kampala. “We are pleased to support the Uganda Red Cross and IFRC in their work to build epidemic preparedness capacity in communities. It is an effective and efficient approach to saving lives and increasing local and global health security.”

Uganda has been exposed to a number of infectious disease threats in recent years, including outbreaks of cholera and Marburg virus disease in 2017 that triggered swift responses from Uganda’s Ministry of Health and its health partners, including the Uganda Red Cross.

IFRC’s global CP3 coordinator, Jeffrey Gilbert, at the launch event emphasized the importance of equipping communities with the knowledge and resources to prevent pandemics. “Our aim is to ensure communities are equipped to play a central role in detecting and responding to disease outbreaks, speeding recovery, building resilience and preparing for future risks.” he said.

Without community participation, government efforts to detect and contain infectious diseases are delayed and negatively impacted. But communities need knowledge and tools to identify, communicate and help manage disease outbreaks before it’s too late. 

Robert Kwesiga
URCS joins the rest of the world to celebrate World Blood Donor Day 2018

On June 14th, 2018, Uganda Red Cross joined the rest of the world to commemorate the International Blood donor day. The theme this year was ‘Blood connects us all’. World over, blood is a unique component of human life and every living being has Red blood. This is the power of humanity and thus connects us all.

The WHO standards require countries to raise at least 1% of the Country’s total population to have sufficient blood that can sustain the blood needs of the country. In Uganda, the Uganda Red Cross in partnership with the Uganda Blood Transfusion Services through the Ministry of Health have the mandate of mobilizing Voluntary blood donors. The Uganda Blood transfusion services takes on the technical processes until safe blood is availed to hospitals to carry out blood transfusions.

Uganda Red Cross employs the new Blood donor recruitment strategy 2020 which focusses on targeting Red Cross volunteers, members and staff who live by example. “This is like preaching to the converted. It is easier to mobilize internal people first who already know what our mission and vision requires of us and then the rest of the people can learn from us. This is how we manage to collect enough blood.” Said Sarah Mutegombwa, Blood donor recruitment manager, URCS.

Every year, Uganda needs over 340,000 units of blood to cover the blood gap in the country. However, many people have not embraced the culture of donating blood which brings about a shortage especially during the peak seasons like Christmas when accidents and emergencies are on the rise.

“Annually, Uganda collects only about 240,000. We always have a gap of about 120,000. I encourage all Ugandans to always donate blood. It shouldn’t be once, twice but more times as long as they are eligible. Blood has shelf life. We keep asking for more when some goes stale.” Said Ms. Dorothy Kyeyune, the Director Uganda Blood Transfusion Services.

This year’s celebrations were held at the Nakasero Blood Bank in Kampala, Uganda.
While recognizing regular blood donors, the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Health Ms. Diana Atwine appreciated all the partners who support the Ministry in mobilizing blood.

“We appreciate all the voluntary blood donors and encourage you to continue supporting the ministry in this noble cause. Please keep donating and saving lives of the people that require blood transfusion.”
World refugee day commemorations in Kampala.

Uganda Red Cross together with other humanitarian agencies and the office of the Prime Minister on 27th June 2018 celebrated the world refugee day for urban refugees in Kampala at Nakivubo blue primary school. The event brought together all the urban refugees in Kampala and the surrounding suburbs. Over 800 urban refugees attended the function which was presided over by the commissioner for refugees in the Office of the Prime Minister Mr. Gerald Menhya.

In his address, the commissioner called upon urban refugees to continue working together and ensure to elect their own leaders to tackle issues of insecurity and other problems affecting them.

“You should all be united and work together to appoint your own leaders. This will help you know all your rights, excise them and live secure lives. You need these leaders to help you interpret the laws of this country to which you are subjected” he added.

During the celebrations refugees, who are majorly from Somalia, Eritrea and South Sudan exhibited various items and products they craft to earn a living. Thanks to Uganda’s open door policy, refugees are allowed to engage in business like any other citizens.

“It really feels good to know that we have been allowed to do business here in Uganda like all the other people. Through this we earn a decent living and even manage to take our children to moderate schools.” Said Selam Daniel a refugee from Eritrea selling craft African fabrics.

Refugees also showcased their different cultures through dance and drama and among the dances was Kinyarwanda and Lingala from Rwanda and DRC respectively. There were also modeling and matching sessions at the function.

Uganda Red Cross Society provided first aid at the event and over 50 people were attended to, including Ali Kasule 15, one of the acrobat dancers of the Hyper Dance Group who fell from about 14feet during a performance. The Uganda Red Cross standby team of first aidsers quickly responded and saved his life.

“I don’t remember what happened really. I just slipped and fell off and the next thing I knew I was in a Red Cross ambulance. I really thank God for Red Cross, they have saved my life” said Ali Kasule

The leadership and management of the Hyper Dance group lauded Uganda Red Cross's courage and expertise and also emphasized that they have always trusted the services offered by Red Cross.

“When we got here, the first thing we noticed was a Red Cross Ambulance in place and all our fears were gone. It doesn’t surprise us therefore that the Red Cross team have saved our boy’s life today. We would love to work more with them.” Said Moses Butindo, the leader of the Acrobatic dance group.

DRC Refugees performing at the World refugee day celebrations in Kampala

The URCS RFL table lined up materials for exhibition during the event.
First Lady applauds Uganda Red Cross Society for promoting menstrual hygiene.

On May 28th, Uganda joined the rest of the world to commemorate the International Menstrual Hygiene day under the theme ‘Empowering girls through good menstrual hygiene’.

In her speech, delivered by Ms. Angella Nakafero, the Technical advisor at the Ministry of Education, Mrs. Janet Kataha Museveni, the first lady and Minister for Education in Uganda appreciated the unique and commendable work done by Uganda Red Cross in promoting menstrual hygiene management among women and adolescent girls in Uganda.

“The support of the Uganda Red Cross Society to menstrual hygiene ‘bring a smile to her’ will enable the education sector to scale up the distribution of sanitary towels among adolescent girls in schools. Indeed this will not only bring smiles but will contribute to improving adolescent girls’ school attendance and retention. As a sector we commit our total support to this initiative.” She added.

The first lady also further expressed her gratitude towards the Red Cross for the support given to the government of Uganda through offering emergency health and disaster response programs that save lives of people whenever there’s a disaster in the country. She called upon everyone to join hands and empower girls and women through menstrual hygiene management.

Uganda Red Cross Society has been key in the fight to raise menstrual hygiene awareness across the country. Since the South Sudan conflict broke out in July 2016, the National Society in partnership with the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent have since taken the campaign to include the refugee women and adolescent girls to redeem their dignity in public.

Uganda Red Cross sensitizes and gives out menstrual hygiene / dignity kits to all women and adolescents in child bearing age. They receive items like soap, sanitary towels, buckets, pegs, knickers, a linen material locally known as “lesu” among other sanitary materials to redeem their self-worth in public. In August 2017 alone, dignity kits worth 40 million Ugx were given out to refugees in Imvepi and Bidi-bidi camps in Northern Uganda and about 300 kits were distributed last month (May 2018) with more distributions expected subsequently.

The same campaign will soon be rolled out in Eastern Uganda as a move to retain more girl children in school with a theme, “Bring a Smile to her.”
Uganda Christian University (UCU) and the Uganda Red Cross Society (URCS) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding aimed at harnessing their collective strength to save lives, serve communities, and improve documentation and knowledge sharing.

The signing took place at UCU main campus in Mukono with UCU Vice Chancellor Rev. Canon Dr. John Senyonyi and URCS Secretary General Mr. Robert Kwesiga as principal signatories to the MoU. The MoU establishes a collaborative relationship in the area of operational research for evidence based programming, knowledge transfer through capacity building trainings, staff and student placements, field work support and other development programs of mutual interest to the two institutions.

Under the agreement, UCU is to create avenues for her students and staff to support the URCS emergency health interventions such as blood donation exercises aimed at saving lives of those at risk. It is also to place students/fellows for experiential learning with URCS, carry out research for URCS and avail any academic related research information that it deems necessary for programme and project planning in the field of Humanities and Social Sciences to URCS.

On the other hand, URCS is to second staff to undertake trainings in SWASA at Masters and Post graduate levels and other relevant disciplines at UCU, participate and facilitate Public Lectures at the UCU Faculty of Social Sciences, recommend guest lecturers to support the development of the Faculty’s Knowledge resources in the field of Peace, Conflict, Human rights, Disaster Management among other fields of Humanities and Social Work. It is also to offer avenues for field work for students and lecturers as part of building capacity for the Faculty of Social Sciences–at UCU and offer First Aid and Ambulance / Emergency Health Services at UCU functions, among other services.

Citing the participation of UCU students and staff in community-centered activities such as the quarterly UCU health awareness week, vac-
cination campaigns, offering pro-bono services and volunteering as interns in various community organisations, UCU’s Rev. Canon Dr. Senyonyi said that, “It will thus not be difficult for us to mobilise the UCU community to embrace and support the Uganda Red Cross Society emergency health interventions such as the regular blood donations exercises aimed at saving lives of those at risk.”

He also assured the URCS of quality staff and students once it opens up its doors to receive and work with them for internship, volunteer and work opportunities, “UCU graduates have been ranked as the second best in graduate employability in the country. This is because of a long-term built track record of professionalism, character, discipline and integrity that are synonymous with the UCU brand.”

On his part, Mr. Robert Kyesiga, the Secretary General, said that the MoU cements an existing relationship given that URCS has already been offering internship and jobs to UCU students and UCU has also been receiving URCS staff as guest lecturers.

Mr. Kwesiga added that URCS has had limited engagement with the academia which gap, the MoU fills. “Documenting our work, best practices, lessons learnt and how they feed into the academia and knowledge sharing has been rather weak.” The MoU is valid for an initial period of three years effective the date of signing and subject to renewal upon consent of the two parties.
Over 2000 bags of food items were given away to Muslims across Uganda during Ramadan by the Turkish Red Crescent working in partnership with Uganda Red Cross Society. This came at the peak of Ramadan as the holy month entered its last weeks, when most of the families were stretched as a result of putting up with extra meals.

The distribution was done in over 30 districts in Uganda and about 15,000 fasting Muslims benefited. The campaign went to Mukono, Buikwe, Luwero, Masaka among other districts across the country.

“The food distribution campaign targets 45 countries. In Uganda we have distributed 2,000 food packages and with assistance from Uganda Red Cross we have reached over 15,000 people. We have been to most parts of the country throughout the whole month of Ramadhan.” Said Selck Ozturk from the Turkish Red Crescent.

The package given out contained sugar, beans, posho, salt and rice which sum up to about 22kgs of food per bag given out. According to the Turkish Red Crescent, food items worth USD 20,000 were given out to 5000 families.

On June 4th, the campaign was brought to Kampala city and over 300 bags of food were given out to the Muslims at Wandegeya mosque. About 500 people received the food.

Story continues to next page
packages. According to Hadijja Musa, a resident of Makerere who also prays at the mosque, this gesture of kindness was the first she has seen since the beginning of Ramadhan and it couldn’t have come at a better time.

“I have got what to eat when breaking the fast, I didn’t have what to eat with my children because I have been just discharged from the hospital, I am really happy that Red Cross brought us this food and am sure it will take me for some time since I don’t have a big family.”

Uganda Red Cross Kampala North Branch which hosted the activity, has previously partnered with other organizations like Haba na Haba to give out food to the needy and this was therefore another opportunity for the branch to further extend its humanitarian hand to the needy in the community.

“We liaised with the administration of Wandegeya mosque about this activity to help our Muslim brothers and sisters especially those that can’t afford to sustain all Ramadhan meals. This is such an important season in the Moslem faith and we as Red Cross are glad to help and identify with this community for this cause” said Abbas Bogere, the manager URCS Kampala North branch.

Uganda Red Cross partners with Haba Na Haba to take food to the vulnerable

Uganda Red Cross has entered a partnership with Haba Na Haba Uganda, a local food bank organisation to take food to the vulnerable groups in community. The partnership is between Uganda Red Cross Kampala North branch and the food bank.

The initiative was launched on Wednesday 9th May, started with gathering and serving food around Kampala but there are plans for expansion to other parts of the country.

“We chose to partner with Uganda Red Cross because of their vast experience in dealing with the vulnerable people. They help us identify the vulnerable in society.” Said Jessica Bagenda, the director and cofounder Haba Na Haba.

“This is a remarkable gesture, a real sign of humanity. Thank you so much Red Cross and Haba Na Haba, we so far have over 20 sick children and feeding them has been a bit of a challenge. A single child consumes about Ushs 20,000 every day in food considering all meals. It has been quite expensive but with your hand today, this budget will be significantly reduced” said Mr. Peter Atugonza, an administrator at Bless A Child Foundation.
In the scorching sun, time check is 1:33pm, Beatrice Anyei 26 years old walks through the small bushy foot path with a jerrican, approaching the Parolinya Water Plant to fetch water. She opens a running tap near a big water plant, fills her jerrican and walks back home. I was keen to have a chat with her; I went to her home.

With a shy smile, Beatrice welcome me with a small wooden chair to sit outside her one roomed grass thatched hut. In her introductions, Beatrice mentioned that she is a refugee from South Sudan. She is a mother of one (2-year-old Viko Anyur) and lives with her brother William Nyadu (28 years old). They have been in Uganda since November 2016. Beatrice's husband died during the war in South Sudan. She managed to escape with her daughter and brother. Today, the trio lives in Parolinya refugee settlement and life has since not remained the same.

Like any necessity, water is an essential of life. Beatrice is a very hard working lady. She tells us how useful this water is to her and family. “We use it to cook food, wash clothes, bath and wash fresh fish.”

Beatrice sells fish in the evening at the street market to raise income. On a normal day, she wakes up at 7:00am to start running her errands. She goes to Angaliachini (3 kms away from her home) to buy fish which she sun dries, fries and takes it to the market to sell for income. On a daily basis, she earns Ushs 3000 (less than a dollar) which she saves to buy oth-
Beatrice also mentions how the water from the Parolinya plant is very safe for her and family. “I am happy. The water at the Red Cross plant helps us a lot. It is clean and safe. Before we could just draw from the river Nile and use. My baby was always sick because of that water. Now we are safe, we no longer fall sick. I thank Red Cross for bringing clean and safe near us. This water is unique because the Red Cross people make it clear and very pure white. Not dirty brown like the one we used to fetch before. This is what brings all of us to fetch here.” Beatrice adds.

On December 17th 2017, Uganda Red Cross society took over the Parolinya Surface Water Treatment Unit (SWTU) from MSF-Holland with approvals from Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) and UNHCR. This followed end of MSF Holland’s emergency operational period in December 2017 and proposed to hand over the Unit to OPM & UNHCR being the lead coordinating Partners /agencies in the South Sudan Refugee Response /Operation.

Uganda Red Cross was considered due to its strong sound experience and technical expertise of operating Emergency Water Treatment Units since August 2016 in for Rhino Camp (Kamu Kamu water plant) Imvepi Settlement (Enyau water plant) Obongi & Kochi Water Treatment Units in Bidibidi refugee settlements, all supporting South Sudan refugees in Northern Uganda.

The water plants have contributed to the alleviation of the risks of public health emergencies in South Sudan refugee hosting communities which has been the SSRO movement’s strong contribution to the health security of refugees. “Our Engineers have built technical capacity gained over time through managing previous big water units set up by our IFRC technical emergency response units. We took over this plant from MSF Holland with endorsement from OPM and UNHCR. We are doing well, have added value to it and now we are producing more water than what was being produced before we took over this plant.” Said Gracious Kyagaba, URCS Technical WASH Engineer.

The Parolinya water plant produces 2.4 million litres of water per day. It is anchored at the River Nile which is a major water source serving both Uganda and South Sudan. Uganda Red Cross society deployed two highly trained engineers at the site and has a dedicated team of 58 volunteers as support force. Among these are quality control experts, laboratory technicians, hygiene promoters, chemists among other specialties.

“The team has been working hard since day one and we are glad to say we do a great job here. We are able to truck water every day and serve over 120,000 people.” Said Martin Mbadhi, the site overseer.

Parolinya settlement is the 2nd largest settlement in Uganda with over 183,000 South Sudanese refugees and over 10,000 surrounding nationals in the host communities.

Today, Uganda Red Cross uses access to safe and clean water supply to avert disease outbreaks and promote good health of the South Sudan refugees and members of the hosting communities in west Nile, Northern Uganda.

The URCS is currently operating the unit with support from Swedish Red Cross, IFRC with technical support from Austrian Red Cross.
URCS joined the rest of the world to celebrate Red Cross day on May 8th and throughout the Red Cross Week, we carried out different activities to further emphasize our mandate and role in society.

We conducted blood donation drives across Kampala, URCS also engaged in various zebra cross paintings across major highways. Other activities included community service across hospitals and schools.
Restoration of family Links

2,087 Red Cross messages exchanged

273 Children Reunifications

700 Identified Unaccompanied minors

13,883 Restored family Links by telephone services

1,006 Referals to Red Cross by partner agencies

2,051 People received Psychosocial support.
1. URCS first aid team responds to an emergency during the celebrations of World Refugee Day in Kampala recently.

2. A URCS vehicle maneuvering through a flooded road in Karamoja. The region has long suffered effects of climate change.

3. URCS first aid volunteers attending to a sick young girl with a cold during the celebrations of World Refugee Day in Kampala.
URCS ICCA Project team guiding road users about the floods that hindered vehicle movement in Karamoja recently.

The coordinator PR interacting with Sabina Menhya & her husband, beneficiaries of the ICCA goats project

Our volunteers maneuvering through an overly flooded neighbourhood during the cholera response in Kampala

The URCS RFL team exhibiting some of their materials at Nakivubo P/S during celebrations of World refugee day.
Top: URCS RFL team match during celebrations of world refugee day.

Left: Through our various livelihood projects, individuals especially women have been fully empowered to startup their own income generating ventures.
Throughout the quarter, URCS formalised relations with various institutions and entities.

These among others included The University of South Wales (top left), Uganda Christian University UCU (top right), Miss Uganda UK (Centre), and Mount of Olives Ministries UK with Bishop Dr. Margaret French (Left).
How to Support

MTN PROCEDURE
Dial *165#, Select Payments (No. 4)
Select Next (00), Goods and Services (No. 8)
Enter Merchant code: redcross
Enter Payment Reference: Your name
Enter Amount, Enter PIN to confirm

AIRTEL PROCEDURE
Dial *185#, Select Pay Bills
Select Others
Enter Business Number (700103)
Enter Amount/ Reason for Payment
Confirm Pay, Enter PIN

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