Uganda Red Cross Society Still Conscious on Ebola.

Stories Inside

Response to Ebola outbreak in Kasese

Support to families hit by Land Slides in Bududa

Response to flood affected victims in Bundibugyo

World Refuge Day Celebrations

I miss 12 days of school every term due to lack of pads

Keep a Girl in School
Dear Readers,

It is always a pleasure to keep you informed of our activities around the country throughout the year.

Thank you for continually supporting the Uganda Red Cross through your contributions towards the different initiatives we are undertaking.

We also appreciate the comments, likes, shares and all engaging traffic on our social media platforms. Your feedback is very much appreciated.

As the second issue of The Humanitarian - 2019; we continue to update you our efforts to curb the spread of Ebola on the Kasese/Congo border, as well as other points of entry preparedness activities.

Special thanks to partners that have supported our work through the Ministry of Health to ensure that Uganda remains Ebola free.

We also continue to interest you to support our Menstrual Hygiene Management Campaign "Keep A Girl In School"

Which focuses on girl child school retention, dignity and well-being.

The Campaign calls upon all Ugandans to support the Girl child in education. #KeepAGirlInSchool

Our other activities highlighted in this issue include; the World Refugee Day celebrations in Bidibidi refugee settlement, our interventions in Bududa during the recent landslide disaster, our response towards families effected by flooding in Bundibudyo as well as our efforts to streamline our activities as the Uganda Red Cross Society with the Government of Uganda.

We continue to appeal to you to join us in saving lives through cash or in-kind donation of pads for the "Keep A Girl In School" campaign as well as donate blood through any of the blood drives happening around the country. By doing this, you will be associating with the Red Cross cause of saving lives.

A colorful pictorial and more compelling stories await you in this publication.

Enjoy.

Keep a Girl in School
Dear Readers and Colleagues,

It is a pleasure to address you in our 2nd Issue of ‘The Humanitarian’.

This is our second publication in this year 2019. I appreciate your support and commitment to our cause of saving lives of the most vulnerable.

The Uganda Red Cross Society is always proud to associate and participate in life saving activities.

I am happy to report that the National Society was appreciated at the recent National Road Safety Summit which took place at Sheraton Hotel on 27th July 2019. This was organised by a consortium of partners that work closely with the Ministry of Transport.

What an encouragement to motivate us to continue delivering on this cause!

I also want to appreciate partners through the Ministry of Health who have worked with us to respond and contain the Ebola outbreak that claimed 3 lives in Kasese. The preparedness efforts we had in place enabled the country to arrest the epidemic in a very short period of time. Appreciation also goes to the Ministry of Health for the great coordination. It is over 42 days since the outbreak and now Uganda is Ebola free. We, however, continue to heighten surveillance at all levels.

In our previous issue we introduced you to our Keep A Girl In school Campaign, an initiative to support the vulnerable girls to access Menstrual hygiene kits. Through your support, we have availed girls with sanitary pads and the initiative has been introduced in schools with the highest rate of school drop outs as per the Ministry of Education report.

We thank our Good Will Ambassadors championing the cause, our partners and all the people of Uganda who have and continue to donate towards it.

We are excited about the impact this has on the Girl child in Education, their dignity in society and more so, how men have responded in solidarity

In August 2019, we will hit the road to Eastern Uganda to support about 6 schools in Mayuge district. Keep donating, all support will be accounted for.

Lastly, allow me share an update on the disasters that have happened.

This past quarter has been a busy one for our Disaster and Risk Management Program, especially with the recent heavy rains. Our teams immediately responded to up to five major emergencies that occurred in this last quarter.

The heavy rains precipitated a damaging hailstorm in Buyende and Kamuli, more landslides in Bududa, Bundibugyo, flooding in Mbale, Sironko, Butaleja and Makindye, in Kampala. We also had a coffee house collapse in at the Namirembe Guest House.

Our immediate response and help on these scenes helped mitigate some of the damage and ease residents’ fears. Our office and volunteers are on high alert as the heavy rains continue to threaten the residents of Bundibugyo with more flooding.

Thanks to our on-ground volunteers and response action teams (RCATs) who are always ready and willing to step up immediately.

The Uganda Red Cross emergency team has distributed relief non-food items, offered psychosocial support to affected families and continue to ensure that people access the information they need to keep safe.

As a society mandated to save lives, through our community resilience, we partner with the Uganda Meteorological Department and the office of the Prime Minister to develop strategies to deal with climate change in the most affected communities.

Relatedly, we embarked on the process of revising the Uganda Red Cross Act of Parliament (Cap 57, 1964) in order to align the Act to the evolving humanitarian mandates of Red Cross. URCS met with Members of Parliament to streamline the new bill that will be presented to The Parliament for enactment. The objective of the bill is to provide for the continued existence and relevance of the Uganda Red Cross Society as the sole National Red Cross Society in Uganda and for its management and operationalization.

We have had the new Central Governing Board settle in. They will champion and spearhead this strategic process with support from the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC).

Other developments are shared in the publication I encourage you to read on and appreciate the details herein.

Cheers!
On the 11th June 2019, the Uganda Virus Institute (UVRI) together with the Ministry of Health and the World Health Organization (WHO) confirmed a case of Ebola in Uganda. The confirmation came up after concerns of the disease’s presence in the neighboring Democratic Republic of the Congo arose.

On the 9th of June, the case of a 5-year-old child from the DRC who entered the nation through Bwera Border post in Kasese District with his family was affirmed. After the entry, they looked for restorative consideration at Kagando emergency clinic where wellbeing laborers recognized Ebola as a possible cause for disease. The child was rushed to the Bwera Ebola Treatment Unit but he and his three family members succumbed to the disease.

Such movements of people from DRC into Uganda, are caused by the violence and insecurity in some parts of the DRC, which leads to the rapid increase of population crossing our borders. This in turn increases the risk of the disease spreading into Uganda.

In such emergency situations, the Uganda Red Cross and its affiliates have trained residents on how to contain the epidemic by creating awareness and screening of migrants especially from DRC.

This awareness is also done in schools. The Uganda Red Cross Society (URCS) has been able to dispatch teams to work hand in hand with the authorities so has to fight the epidemic.

Furthermore, over 360 local Red Cross volunteers in the region have had specialized training on Ebola response and how to support the communities impacted by the disease. Uganda Red Cross Society (URCS) has also procured equipment for safe and dignified burials (SDB) and provided training and technical support on how to use these tools.

Volunteers go door-to-door ensuring that families know the facts about Ebola and that they understand how to prevent its spread. Their local knowledge and experience is very crucial in the fight against this outbreak.

Programs like the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Promotion (WASH) in Red Cross have also helped the public stay clean and safe from other potential epidemics like Cholera.

How to control Ebola

According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, symptoms of the Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) are treated as they appear. When used early, basic intervention such as; providing fluids and electrolytes (body salts) through infusion into the vein (intravenously), Offering oxygen therapy to maintain oxygen status, using medication to support blood pressure, reduce vomiting and diarrhea and to manage fever and pain, can significantly improve the chances of survival.
On Tuesday, June 4th, 2019, heavy rain showers hit several areas of Uganda. In Bududa (eastern Uganda), the rains lasted through the night until the next morning. This heavy downpour left over 400 people affected in the sub-counties of Buwaali, Bukalasi, Bundesi, Bumayoka, and Bubiita. Wamandu Paul, the Bunabumali Chairman says, “We heard an explosion and our neighbors making an alarm. Then we saw the water coming and we ran for our lives. My wife got hurt in the process and she is in the hospital.”

Other families were not so lucky. Nasoswe Fobia, a 45-year-old father of eight, lost his thirteen-year-old daughter, who was asleep when the landslide happened. Devastated he explains, “I took the young ones to safety and coming back for Mary to find the soil has already buried her alive along with everything we own.”

30-year-old Wamara John Richard who lost his 5-year-old daughter and 13-year-old sister says, “The water came out of nowhere. One minute they were dry, the next water and mud came rushing through the house. We were pushed down the hill along with the house that also moved. My wife and our eight-month-old daughter survived but the rest of the family perished.”

On June 12th, 2019, Uganda Red Cross in partnership with MTN Uganda, mobilized relief support for the most affected families. Each family received a specialized household kit comprising of 2 cooking pots, 2 Jerry cans, 6 cups, 6 plates, 1 Knife, 1 Ladle, 3 blankets, 3 bars of laundry soap, 1 tarpaulin, 3 Mosquito Nets (LLITN). This basic relief was to enable families to cope as the Government efforts of relocation take shape.

Mr. Kyomukama Gordian, representing the CEO of MTN Uganda says, “We stand with the communities and support them in these trying times. These communities are the ones that have been there to support our network for the last 20 years.”

Godfrey Watenga, the Member of Parliament of Lutseseh praised the Uganda Red Cross Society for their timely response. He says, “I am grateful for the support given to my people in the emergency situation with NFI that helped them start over. We hope other companies will come through to support my people because many are affected by this disaster.”

Justine Khainza, the Woman Member of Parliament of Bududa district, appreciated the Uganda Red Cross Society for sensitizing the people of Bududa about the signs of the heavy rains saying, “This initiative has helped save more lives compared to the past because now people in our communities can tell when these landslides are about to occur.”

Uganda Red Cross Society teams continue to offer psychosocial support services to those affected. Community engagement through climate change messages also continue, as the Uganda Metrological Centre has projected rains to continue through the month of July.
Uganda Red Cross Team preparing relief for distribution.

Akankwasa Robert Director Disaster Risk Management (URCS) briefs media about the distribution.

Kyomukama Gordian from MTN Uganda highlights why MTN supports the victims

Wamandu Paul, Area Chairman receives relief.

An elderly woman smiles after receiving relief.
Red Cross Distributes Relief To Flash Flood Affected Families In Bundibugyo.

Excitement filled residents of Kirumya parish and surrounding villages of Bundinagwara 1, Bugando 11, Habendu, Kirumya East and Central as they carried home relief Non-Food Item (NFI) kits.

According to the URCS assessment (July 2019), 285 households with a population of 2,834 people were affected in the recent flash floods that devastated Bundibugyo district. Uganda Red Cross positioned relief to support all affected families to help them cope.

Families lined up to carry home 3,731 NFI kits that included blankets, soap, aluminum cups, sauce pans, plates, basins and Tarpaulins.

Diana Tumuhimbise, the Branch Manager of Uganda Red Cross Society in Bundibugyo, noted that, “As soon as this disaster hit the district, we partnered with the District Officials and carried out an assessment on ground level.” She added that, "Uganda Red Cross Society (URCS) together with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) came up to support the affected victims. The affected people are being given support that is ensuring their health is maintained so as to avoid other epidemics like cholera that might come up as a result of the disaster".

In addition, the Woman MP, Hon. Bebona Babungi Josephine explained that the natural landscape of the district is steep and when the rain comes, rivers like river Kirumya fill up and burst their banks into residents’ homesteads. She thanked the Uganda Red Cross Society for always reacting quickly when a disaster has hit the area. Bebona also thanked the Office of the Prime Minister for distributing food to the affected people.

With more disasters taking place all over the country, the Uganda Red Cross Society has now embarked on efforts to sensitize the public on the dangers of disasters and how these can be predicted and mitigated.

As heavy rains continue in the country, people living around disaster-prone areas are called upon to take heed and seek safety in safer areas.
Pictures Showing Relief Distribution In Bundibugyo
In 1964, under an act of Parliament, the Uganda Red Cross Society (URCS) was enacted into existence. However, as the years have passed, the scope of work that the URCS does in Uganda has changed and Uganda Red Cross body saw it fit that the 1964 act should be revised and updated to reflect this.

**Why the bill?**

The objective of the bill is to provide for the continued existence of the Uganda Red Cross Society as the sole National Red Cross Society of Uganda and for its management and operation.

Another objective was to bring up to date the regulation of the use and protection of the name or emblem of the Red Cross or Red Crescent, the red crystal, the red lion and red sun as well as to repeal the Red Cross Act Cap. 57.

Last year, the Uganda Red Cross (URCS) body sat and pondered on how the law could be improved since it is now 55 years old. The law’s brevity lacks integrated and coordinated disaster risk management; it also lacks clarity on government financial support and Tax exemption to the Uganda Red Cross Society. Its generalizations also do not cover the full load that URCS carries today.

During the Uganda Red Cross bill presentation session and consultative meeting, Members of Parliament and the Uganda Red Cross body scrutinized the bill to see that it is ready to be discussed on the floor of Parliament.

Mr. Robert Kwesiga, the Secretary General of the Uganda Red Cross, says that, “There are several gaps to be addressed because decisions are being taken to international levels where the government of Uganda sits as member of Red Cross. He adds that, “at a global level the forum agreed that countries should revise the law that governs Red Cross to keep it updated with the modern trends of what Red Cross does”. He adds that, “Being a law that government put in place by an act of Parliament with the humanitarian work Red Cross partakes, the auxiliary body is exempted from taxes on a case to case basis. This is a fact but there is no legislation to back up this action and that why this bill needs to be revised”.

Mr. Alex Luganda, the national legal advisor to Uganda Red, also notes that there is a need for a detailed report because some of the rules that are already in place need to become legal and mandatory obligations.

Membership of the society is open to everyone with no discrimination on the grounds of race, sex, language, religion, political opinion or similar considerations.

The International Committee of Red Cross (ICRC) annual report of 2017 notes that, the Uganda Red Cross Society endeavors to respond to the humanitarian needs arising from armed conflicts and other violence in the most timely, humane and professional way possible.

Therefore the law should be able to fully recognize the hard work Uganda Red Cross does and foster its sustainability and ability to operate excellently.
During the summit that took place on 23rd July 2019, Uganda Red Cross Society was appreciated for the tremendous work it has done to maintain road safety.

The Ministry of Works and Transport in partnership with Vivo energy and Nation Media organised the Second Road Safety Summit under the theme “Road Safety - Time For Action.”

During the summit that took place on 23rd July 2019, Uganda Red Cross Society was appreciated for the tremendous work it has done to maintain road safety.
Road safety week in pictures

Hon. Aggrey Henry Bagiire, Minister of State for Transport emphasising on Road Safety.

Uganda Red Cross team sensitising the public on how to give first aid.
As a way of promoting corporate social responsibility, Uganda Red Cross Society (URCS) partnered with the Uganda Corporate League as another way to fulfill its mandate and obligation to deliver quality and sustainable humanitarian assistance to the people.

During the endorsement meeting, Mbabazi Norman, Head of Legal for the Corporate League, noted that The League’s main activity is to help those in the “Corporate world” who spend most of their time sitting in offices to keep healthy. He further explained that this kind of sedentary lifestyle increases the risks of non-communicable diseases.

As the vision of URCS is to be a leading humanitarian agency in Uganda through saving lives, supporting livelihoods and promoting human dignity, URCS is always available with first aid treatment to those who need it during the Corporate League games.

It should also be noted that according to the parliamentary forum for Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs), the World Health Organization (WHO) projects that deaths from NCDs will increase by 17% over the next ten years and will cause 46% of deaths in Africa by the year 2030. This partnership, therefore, reflects the core values of both partner organizations.
It was with excitement, dance and music that humanitarian actors serving refugees, congregated in Bidibidi Settlement in West Nile District of Yumbe, to commemorate the National Event for the World Refugees Day.

Adopted almost 19 years ago by the UN General Assembly, under resolution 55/76, the day serves to honor the courage and determination of those who have been forced to flee their homes, as well as highlight the plight of refugees across the globe.

This joyful celebration was a befitting choice for the settlement that currently has the biggest refugee population in Uganda. The national commemoration was graced by the Honorable First Deputy Premier of the Republic of Uganda, General Haji Moses Ali, who also serves as MP for Adjumani West County in Adjumani district.

Adjumani district itself hosts over 220,000 refugees from South Sudan. With him were Mr. Joël Boutroue, the Country Representative for UNHCR, the Commissioner Department of Refugees in the Office of the Prime Minister and the leaders of Yumbe District Local Government.

The commemoration kicked off with a colorful march led by a brass band, and went from Alaba Primary School football Pitch to Swinga Trading Centre and back.

During the event, URCS like other agencies involved in Refugees response, hosted an exhibition stall. The public was given the opportunity to view the society’s different program activities like the Household Energy Project, WASH, Psychosocial Support, Community Based First Aid and Family Tracing, among others. One program of great interest to the public and the guests, was the Household Energy Project display. It featured the JIKO Power; a device that uses energy from charcoal stoves or fire wood to provide light for a bulb and is also able to charge mobile devices.

It also boasted the nowlight, which is a device that generates power by manually pulling on a strap to produce instant light capable of lighting and charging devices. It also has the wonderbag; an innovative cooking bag that cooks almost all food types without using any other source of energy other than that in the saucepan or container in which food has been packed and placed into.

During the event, the Honorable RDC from Yumbe District handed over three pieces of the Wonderbag Cooking Bags to the Senior Livelihoods Associate UNHCR Mullo Innocent, Settlement Commandant Bidibidi and the Community Development Officer for Yumbe Town Council as ambassadors for environment protection.
Blood Mobilisation In Uganda

Interview

With Sarah Mutegombwa
Program Manager Blood Donor Recruitment At Uganda Red Cross Society.

Why is it important to donate blood?
Blood saves lives. Blood can only be donated and cannot be manufactured. Blood is mostly used in emergencies where there is inadequate time for any other alternatives.

How often can a person donate blood?
Male donors can donate blood every three months while female donors would be every four months.

Is it recommendable for everyone to donate blood?
Blood can be donated by healthy individuals that have adequate blood volumes and weigh 45kgs and above. They should be between the ages of 17 to 50 for female donors and 17 to 60 for male donors.

What do the donors get in return of blood donation?
Blood donation is a voluntary and non-remunerated/free action. Nothing is given in exchange of the donated blood. The most important benefit is to save a life, which would be lost in the absence of blood.

What are some reasons people give for not donating blood?
People give different reasons for not donating blood. Some reasons are related to myths and misconceptions which we frequently address in the sensitization campaigns. Some of these misconceptions include; the fear for the fainting, pain, needles, how much blood is given, the sterility of the equipment and the professionalism of the workers. Some people are afraid that they will not be able to carry on with their daily routine after giving blood. Some also say that they have never been asked to donate.

What strategies have you put in place so to improve on blood donation? and How have you implemented those strategies?
URCS Blood Donor Recruitment Strategy guides the donor recruitment campaigns.
The strategies take on the community-based approach of engaging Red Cross members and volunteers in their community as ambassadors, donors and recruiters for other blood donors.
URCS has over 364,000 Members and volunteers who are spearheading the campaign to increase blood donations by 20% annually. The strategy was started effective in July 2018, with positive results registered so far.

What challenges have you faced during blood donation campaigns?
Blood donation is voluntary and we are still getting inadequate donors to meet the country needs for blood. For this country to have adequate blood, 2% of the population should be blood donors. Currently blood is given by 0.5% of the population of Uganda. We need more people to respond to blood donation campaigns.

How many liters of blood are you hoping to collect this year?
Blood is measured in units and every donation is equivalent to one unit. The annual target is 300,000 units.

How many did you collect last year?
Last year we collected 240,000 units.

Continues to next page
What are you doing different this year to collect more blood?

Our biggest challenge amongst the donor panel is that it is largely constituted by students. With the challenges related to busy school schedules, we are refocusing on the adult out of school donors, at places of work, markets, shopping malls and places of worship, where we hope to inculcate a culture of donation.

What do you think causes shortage of blood in hospitals?

The shortages emanate from the supply. The supply is inadequate. We have reached 80% of the supply and the deficit of 20% is not addressed. All our current efforts are geared to closing that gap.

Note that the need is not static. It grows with population growth and improvement in health care service delivery and so we anticipate an increase in the demand.

Can a blood donor demand for blood at anytime?

Everyone is entitled to blood be it a donor or not. Its access is procedural driven by need without discrimination.

How many people die due to lack of blood annually?

Death is the last thing one would want to proudly speak about. The fact that the supplies are not adequate, there are definitely lives being lost.

Who are the recipients of the blood?

Blood in Uganda is majorly given to children under 5 years as a result of severe anemia caused by malaria and malnutrition. This covers about 50% of the blood donated. Women with pregnancy related complications take about 30%. Surgical and medical cases take 10% and accident victims use the remaining 10%.
I miss 12 days of school every term due to lack of pads

Keep a Girl in School
For only 15,000/=, (5$), support a girl to get pads for a full term.

Contribute through MTN Mobile Money or Airtel Money. Visit our Facebook page: Uganda Red Cross Society or website: www.redcrossug.org for details on how to make your contribution.

Keep a Girl in School (KAGIS)
For only 15,000/=, ($5), support a girl to get pads for a full term.

MOBILE DONATIONS PROCEDURE / COLLECTION ACCOUNTS FOR UGANDA REDCROSS

**MTN Mobile Money**
- Dial *165#
- Payments (No. 4)
- Next (No. 00)
- Goods and Services (No. 4)
- Enter code: redcross
- Enter Payment Reference
- Enter Amount
- Enter PIN to confirm

**Airtel Money**
- Dial *185#
- Select Pay Bill
- Select Others
- Enter Business Number (700103)
- Enter Amount
- Enter Reason for Payment
- Confirm Pay
- Enter PIN

**Account Name:** URCS-Keep A Girl In School  
**Account Number:** 0040086101547513  
**Bank:** EcoBank  
**Branch:** Bombo Rd  
**Swift Code:** ECOCUGKA  
**Sort code:** 290147

*Empowered Girls. Empowered Mothers. Empowered Communities.*

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I miss 12 days of school every term due to lack of pads

Keep a Girl in School
How to Support

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

AIRTEL PROCEDURE
Dial *185# 
Select others Enter business Number (700103)
Enter amount, Enter payment reason (your name)
Enter pin to confirm

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