A century and a half journey for The Red Cross: still executing the widely unique mandate

Today marks 155 years of the existence of The Red Cross movement in the world. One and a half century of committed, dedicated and sacrificial humanitarian work. With over 14 million active Volunteers globally, Red Cross is able to respond to emergencies and offer lifesaving interventions in service to Humanity.

Every year, on 8th May, Red Cross National Societies commemorate the birth of Henry Dunant, the Founder of the Red Cross Societies in the world. It is commemorated with a theme that uniquely relates with the Red Cross work globally. This year, the theme is “Everywhere for Everyone, Smile.” This directly translates that the Red Cross is everywhere for Everyone who needs their services. Red cross work brings smiles on faces of their beneficiaries.

As part of the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent societies, the Uganda Red Cross this year joins the rest of the movement partners to relate to the theme. With over 360,000 volunteers and staff, the Uganda Red Cross is committed to offer support to the vulnerable through the different response activities ranging from mobilizing Voluntary blood donors, responding to emergencies and disasters, managing epidemics and pandemic outbreaks like Marburg and Cholera, and above all, being at the fore front of the big refugee crises in the Country (South Sudan & DRC).

Through the services we provide, Uganda Red Cross brings a smile on the faces of the beneficiaries. The psychosocial support given to the depressed refugees and protection of the separated and unaccompanied children, provision of safe and clean water, offering emergency first aid and treatment to the sick and wounded, supporting registration of new arrivals, dissemination of important lifesaving information, providing livelihood programs for food security, among other activities done by Uganda Red Cross are part of the reason for the celebration of the Red Cross Day (8th May 2018).

Since 2016, Uganda Red Cross fully bounced back in operation after the 2015/16 recovery and change management processes that saw the National Society back on its feet and fully in motion. The fully functional National Society today has scaled up operations and serves over 5 million people. Uganda Red Cross by far remains the largest humanitarian organization in Uganda with a unique mandate, committed and dedicated staff, members and Volunteers who have given their all to protect human life, promote health and disseminate the key fundamental Red Cross / Crescent principles of International Humanitarian Law. We serve humanity by observing the 7 Red Cross movement principles of Humanity, Impartiality, Neutrality, Independence, Voluntary service, Unity and Universality.
Uganda Red Cross since 2017 has continued to bring a smile on the children and expectant mothers, adolescent girls and other youths, accident victims that receive blood, survivors of floods and landslides around Mt. Elgon region, Kisoro, Kabale, Isingiro, Ssesse Islands, Mukono among others. Whenever there’s an emergency, the Red Cross is always the first on ground and the last to leave. When there was a Cholera in Kasese, Hoima, Nebbi, and Kampala in 2017, Uganda Red Cross responded very fast and gave a smile to the survivors. When the deadly Marburg outbreak hit areas of Kween and Kapchorwa, Uganda Red Cross was on ground and because of the fast response, the epidemic was managed sooner than expected, saving lives of many people.

These among other ways depict the avenues through which Uganda Red Cross brings a smile to the faces of the people we serve. I therefore invite you to join our 51 branch network across the country to participate in a number of activities that will be done throughout this month of May as a way of commemorating the International Red Cross Month as we continue to bring a smile to the people we serve. You can subscribe as a member, volunteer, a donor and choose to identify with Uganda Red Cross in every way possible and you too can bring a smile on the face of a vulnerable person.

*Everywhere for Everyone, Smile!*