

UPPER VOLTA

At Ouagadougou on 25 March the Red Cross of Upper Volta organized a seminar on national and international Red Cross action, and on international humanitarian law principles. The meeting was sponsored by the Minister of Health and was attended by senior civil servants from a number of ministries.

The Minister of the Interior and Security was present at the opening ceremony. Several speakers delivered papers which prompted many questions. The ICRC was represented by Mr. M. Schroeder, regional delegate, whose description of ICRC activities in the world was followed by film projections.

The following day was devoted to the work of the National Youth Council and to first aid by the Upper Volta Red Cross. This was the first time that all the officials in charge of these activities had been together at a meeting.

UGANDA

Last month we printed an article on the seminar held recently in Kampala at the suggestion of the ICRC. At the closing ceremony, the Acting Chairman of the Red Cross of Uganda, Mr. S. K. Katama, made a speech, of which we give below some excerpts describing the valuable work done by this National Society and the way in which it is organized.

The Red Cross activities cover the following:

Blood transfusion service — This is one of the biggest programmes, run jointly with the Ministry of Health, which is responsible for the technical side and provides an annual grant.

First aid, child care and home nursing — These are carried out jointly with schools, mission hospitals, and government hospitals.

Assistance to disaster stricken areas — Recently the Uganda Red Cross Society, with the help of the ICRC and the League of Red Cross Societies, distributed blankets, clothes, food and soap to flood victims.

Tracing — The Uganda Red Cross Society assists in tracing individuals at the request of the ICRC, and the information is given to the ICRC Central Tracing Agency in Geneva.

Hospitals — The Society organizes hospital trolleys carrying small items like cigarettes, magazines or books.

Material help to other voluntary organizations — The National Society provides, for example, milk powder, soap and clothes.

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The Society is organized as follows:

A Division is recognized when some members agree among themselves to form an Executive Committee and resolve to carry out activities in their area with the framework of the aims and objectives of the Red Cross. They become sole representatives of the Red Cross in the area and are expected to spread and project the good image of the Society. There are divisions all over the country with a total annual membership, at present, of almost 1,500.

The first Red Cross Youth Link was created in Kampala in 1962. Each division has a Red Cross Youth Section, with Links in different schools, with a total membership of 6,000.

The Link leader is responsible for activities and training. He or she is either a teacher or a member of the senior Red Cross. The Youth Co-ordinator in each division reports to the National Youth Instructor.

The introduction of a Youth Link in any school, large or small, in the city or in a rural area, widens the horizons of teacher and student alike, making available to them the resources of a vast organization. Through local service projects, the young people are brought into closer contact with the community in which they live and are made aware of their responsibility toward that community. By taking part in international exchange with Red Cross youth in other countries they learn to know and better understand those who live beyond their shores.

All Red Cross Youth Links have three aims in common: to protect health and life; to serve others; to promote national and international friendship and understanding.