WHY DO VOLUNTEERS DO IT?

Everyday, Red Cross Volunteers across the world go out of their way to help the sick and the suffering. It is not easy, sometimes it’s even dangerous. But they keep doing it. Day in, day out. Surely, there must be a reason that makes them do this.

Are you a Red Cross Volunteer? What is your driving force? What makes you smile?

Share your stories and comments. We will publish the best responses on our next issue of the KRCS Youth Chronicles.
World Red Cross Day Celebrations

The History of the Red Cross Movement goes back to one man, Henry Dunant born on 8th May 1828. Every year, Red Cross and Red Crescent volunteers honor Sir Henry by celebrating the WRCD!

By Mumtaz Mohamed,
JKUAT Chapter

World Red Cross Day is celebrated on 8th May every Year. It is celebrated to commemorate the birth of the founder of Red Cross, Sir Henry Dunant. Henry Dunant was born on 8th May 1828.

Red Cross was introduced as a major contributor to the peace after the world war I by the International commission at the 14th International Conference of Red Cross. The principles of the Red Cross Truce were presented and approved on 15th International Conference at Tokyo in 1934 to get applicable all across the world in different regions. The possibility of its annual celebration was asked to the League of Red Cross Societies (LoRCS) by the International Committee of Red Cross and Red Crescent General Assembly and two years later the proposal of celebrating Red Cross Day annually was adopted and was first celebrated on 8th May 1948. Later on, in 1984 it was officially named World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day.

This year, the theme for WRCD was **Every Where For Everyone**. The Red Cross Red Crescent (RC/RC) Volunteers used a simple call to action to spread love on this day - a **Smile**. In Central Region, Youth conducted several activities to mark the occasion, while also sharing what makes them smile.

**Laikipia**
Youth visited Likii Special School of the intellectually challenged. They had team building activities, songs and dance. The youth had fun with the kids who were very happy and thankful.

**Tharaka Nithi**
Youth and volunteers conducted a resource mobilization activity. They used vouchers and proformas and asked the residents to support the branch in building a disaster response center and also replenishing the disaster kitty.

**Embu and Nyeri**
Youth in Embu and Nyeri conducted dissemination activities in their respective towns.
Laikipia
Youth Dancing with the kids at Liki Special School.

Tharaka Nithi
Youth and Volunteers marching in Chuka town with proformas.

Nyeri
Youth disseminating a crowd.

Embou
Dissemination ongoing.

Laikipia
Smiling youth posing.
Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a UN development agenda adopted in 2015 and were derived from the 8 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). They are 17 goals that form part of the wider 2030 agendas for sustainable development.

They are universal calls to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity. Each goal tackles the root causes of poverty and bring people together to make a positive change for both people and the planet.

In this regard, Laikipia Branch Youths have had sessions to discuss majority of the goals and one session was a joint forum where the youths partnered with other private sectors like Action Aid to discuss goal number 5 which is Gender Equality, a major goal that also touches on the youths. It was a very informative and engaging session that saw youths from different youth groups attending the session. The session was majorly conducted through group discussions thus being more interactive.

Youth in other KRCS branches have also supported the SDGs through activities such as tree planting, anti-jigger and cholera campaigns, flood interventions among many others.

Tell us stories of how youth in your area are supporting the SDGs
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Following the call for applications for the Youth Delegates Exchange Program (YDEP) in January 2018, Teresiah Wainaina from Nairobi and Eugene Nam from Western Kenya were selected from a pool of 135 applicants. The two will go to live and work with the Norwegian Red Cross in Norway for 9 months. On 15th April 2018, Eugene and Teresiah embarked on a journey to Oslo, the Norwegian Red Cross Headquarters, to attend a Youth Basic Training Course (YBTC) ahead of the exchange program. The one week training was meant to prepare the youth delegates for the YDEP that starts in August 2018.

The Youth Delegates Exchange Programme (YDEP) contributes to the overall goal of the Red Cross Red Crescent (RCRC) Movement, which is to improve the lives of the most vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity amongst young people. YDEP works to develop the capacity of young Red Cross volunteers and youth structures in the participating RCRC National Societies. Young volunteers in the movement are already involved in many initiatives geared towards reducing vulnerabilities in these communities. However, in many of the local groups, the young volunteers often just do things, they rarely look back at what they have done to ask, why, and how? YDEP, inspired by the International Federation of the Red Cross/Red Crescent (IFRC) rallying call for youth engagement – “youth doing more, doing better and reaching further”, embarks on capacity strengthening of youth volunteers.
Art has been dated back to ancient times and comes in different varieties. Recycling wine and spirits empty bottles to customize home decoration has been an interesting form of art that volunteers in Kenya Red Cross Society Laikipia Branch have embraced.

Youth dependency to their parents and environmental conservation was the key motivation to this project. It all started when Felicita Nkatha, a DIY (Do-It-Yourself) enthusiast came up with the idea. “I called for classes and taught volunteers how to make beautiful decoration from waste empty glass bottles. It was an interactive class and I was impressed by everyone’s work and the effort to buy the materials” she tells us.

They use beads, special marble stones, strings, shells and spray paint to mention but a few. Their range of customers is wide since the art can be purchased for house interior work and it is open to anyone. Volunteers have helped to promote their friend’s work and it’s also an interesting art to those who work on event decorations.

Impressively, the youths do it at their own cost. “We have never been funded by anyone. Every volunteer contributes his or her initial capital to start the project. We collect the bottles from clubs and bars” Felicita explains.

The DIY project started in March 2018 and so far it has done pretty well. The youths who are also volunteers have embraced it and some have made sales worth Ksh. 7000. Some have made impressive decorations for their homes or even gifts for special occasions. With every business, there are challenges and Felicita points out. “Funds are a challenge especially to buy some material which are expensive like paint or special stones. At times the market is not easily available especially if we make the same designs.”

Art work is something volunteers plan to expand and venture in different types to support the youth activities and empower themselves financially.

Do you love art? What are some of the ways we can use art to reuse waste (whether plastic or glassware).

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Environmental degradation is an issue that needs to be addressed with utmost urgency. As explained in an article (goo.gl/HQXjij) by the standard, we should act now to reverse it or suffer the consequences.

Kenya Red Cross Youth have been on the forefront of environment conservation. They have taken up initiatives that ensure that they safeguard the environment. On 14th March 2018, Kenya Red Cross Society (KRCS) youth from Thika branch were joined by volunteers, interns, and staff in a tree planting activity at Queen of Holy Rosary primary school.

“Our country faces food insecurity and drought every year. We should all embark on such activities that will help us revert the situation.” Said Martin, the KRCs Thika branch coordinator.

The day was successful with a total of 100 trees planted that only marked the start of a new culture of planting trees. Thika branch has promised to continue with this activity throughout the year. This exercise has brought focus on the need to protect our environment. Youth from other branches in Central Region have emulated the same. Some of these branches include Nyeri, and Limuru Branches.

On 24th April, Isphan Njenga, the youth chairperson of Limuru branch led the youth in planting over 3000 trees at Kereita forest in Lari sub county, Kiambu county.

Everywhere For Everyone

By Polly Kendi, Miss RCRC

Still a clear day in mind
Knew exactly what I prehend
Power to bring more than radiance
Heart full of love in abundance
Dear volunteers, gold heart and devotedness
Sheen, glow, sparkle and smiles endless
I Am Red Cross, I’m everywhere for everyone

By the desire to bring help to humanity was founded
On bases of impartiality is grounded
Ran purely by the principle of neutrality
Enjoying confidence from independence and unity
Universal benevolence and voluntary avail
Sheen, glow, sparkle and smiles endless
I Am Red Cross, I’m everywhere for everyone
Youth STARS
Celebrating KRCS Youth

Central Region April Issue

Once the opportunity for the Norway delegates program was made known to the volunteers, many volunteers got busy to get the necessary documents to apply and crossed their fingers to be shortlisted and finally to be chosen as the Kenyan representatives to this program. The selection process involved the application stage, the shortlisting stage, interview stage and finally picking two representatives that would venture in the great opportunity. The chosen two were none other than Teresiah Wainaina from Nairobi and Eugene Nam from Western Kenya who is also a volunteer of Tharaka Nithi branch. We got a chance on a one on one with our very own Eugene Nam and also known by his friends as Ayujo. He’s been an active youth volunteer at Tharaka Nithi branch. Being one of the founders of the iVolunteer Crew, Eugene actively participates in the writing, designing and publishing of the youth chronicles. Today, we recognize Ayujo as one of the Central Region Youth Stars.

By Asunta Wambui
Thika Branch

Profile

Eugene John Nam

Nairobi
Tharaka Nithi Branch
eujonam@gmail.com
BSc. Computer Science

Hobbies
Reading fiction
Travelling
Writing

IFRC Courses
World of Red Cross/Crescent
Code of Conduct
Stay Safe-Personal Security

UP CLOSE WITH EUGENE NAM

I am Eugene John Nam, a computer science graduate from Chuka University (Class of 2017). I am a volunteer at KRCS Tharaka Nithi Branch and a founding member of the iVolunteer Crew.

What are your hobbies?
I enjoy reading fiction based books and traveling.

Name one thing that inspires you and why?
I derive my inspiration from the people I meet in the course of my volunteer work. Their smiles, gratitude and satisfaction during our interactions make me feel good about myself. This makes me want to touch more lives.

Did you face any challenges in the application, interview and pre-visit?
Main challenge had been gathering the requisite documents (passport, good conduct certificate) but luckily I got them in time before the application window closed.

Tell us about the departure process and your experience in the orientation program.
The departure process included applying for a visa which we were successfully granted. After that we waited for 24hours before our departure then we did an on-line flight check-in, this is where you even change seats you were previously allocated. All these things were new to me.

Effective participation of the youth in public affairs at both the national and county level will lead to their integration in national and county development. The devolved system of government provides a chance for the youth all over the country to push for their empowerment. The youth can serve in various elective or appointive positions at the county level. Indeed, the Constitution and enabling legislation makes it mandatory for the youth to be represented in the county assemblies and other decision-making structures at the county level. Devolution has thus made it possible for the youth to directly participate in county governance and development.

Equalisation Fund that is established under Article 204 of the Constitution will enable the national and county governments to expand services and development to previously marginalized areas and communities in accordance with the objectives set out under Article 174. The youth from these areas will thus benefit from the affirmative action measures taken.

As members of the public and voters, the youth have an opportunity to ensure that money and power allocated to county governments are used for the common good of the people at the county level. The county governor, “ministers” and the members of county assemblies are all required to perform their functions in accordance with democratically agreed priorities for the youth and also other sections of the population at the county level.

By Asunta Wambui
Thika Branch

Please Tell Us About Yourself.
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What is your role in the Norwegian delegate program?
Our main roles (me and co-delegate) are going to be: supporting on going youth activities in the Norwegian Red Cross, facilitating structured youth leadership capacity building sessions and trainings and lastly filling any gaps in the host district.

What are your plans after the program?
That is a bridge I will cross when I get there. Right now my focus is delivering in the program.

What new thing did you find interesting/strange/new in Norway?
Snow; the whole country just appeared white and that was really interesting.

Parting shot....
Volunteering is an investment. It could take long but eventually it brings with it a return. Let’s be involved, let’s be active, and let us grab these opportunities when they present themselves.

Did you like our story? Do you know an exemplary volunteer whom you would like to be featured in the youth chronicles magazine?
Write to us on: ivolunteercrew@gmail.com

THE 4 PART YOUTH PROGRAM

A lot of youth ask how they can participate in Red Cross activities upon becoming members. Young people make significant contributions to meeting the needs of the vulnerable people within their local communities and globally. The youth motto speaks of “serving one another”.

Kenya Red Cross believes in supporting and enhancing a unique, dynamic and capable Youth Volunteer force through empowerment for inclusive participation at all decision making levels of the National Society. The knowledge and skills enable youth to take an active role in the welfare of their communities by participating in the 4-part areas of the movement.

By Francis Kiama, iVolunteer Crew

PROTECTION OF LIFE AND HEALTH
It involves equipping young people with health and life saving knowledge and skills to improve their lifestyles and their communities. Includes First Aid Trainings, Disease prevention and control campaigns e.g. measles, polio etc, HIV/AIDS awareness campaigns, Blood donation drives to name but a few.

COMMUNITY SERVICE
It is the art of serving others while being cautious and taking care of our surroundings. Activities include cleanups, hospital visits, environmental awareness e.g. tree planting.

DISSEMINATION OF RCRC PRINCIPLES
This is aimed at increasing young people’s knowledge and understanding of the RC/RC Movement values and fundamental principles. Includes the International Humanitarian Law, the 7 fundamental principles, mandates and values of the Kenya Red Cross Society, emblem use and abuse and so forth.

PROMOTION OF FRIENDSHIP
It involves creating an enjoyable coexistence among all people while encouraging and facilitating friendship and networking amongst young people at the local, regional and international level. Team building, exchange programmes, camping and youth workshops are some of the activities that you can take part in.
Being a volunteer with Kenya Red Cross Society can be a great joy. From the various experiences of volunteers from all over the country that you get to share are just but a few. Sometimes we are often off duty but the spirit of HINI-VUU is never off duty. Driven by the will to alleviate human suffering, we often find ourselves acting when everybody else is scared to help or does not feel obliged to help.

On the 1st of April 2018, I Jacinta Nyambura, a Dedicated volunteer and youth member of Kenya Red Cross Society Mombasa branch, boarded a bus from Mombasa to Nairobi county for the Easter holiday. As a trained disaster responder, I checked my surrounding before I found my seat and having being satisfied with my “assessment”, I took my seat.

An hour after departure, I noticed a certain change of my surroundings. There was a lot of noise coming from the seat in front of me. On inquiring from a neighbor, I was informed that there was lady who had suddenly fallen ill. While everyone was trying to get away from the lady, I found myself moving closer. The true spirit of humanity.

On further assessment, I declared the area safe and therefore approached the casualty. There was a wheezing sound and the casualty was clearly having difficulty in breathing. As a well-trained first aider I automatically knew that this is an asthmatic case but I could not assume so I had to get more information.

I had a hard time convincing them that I was a first aider and that my intention was to help as I had no documentation to verify it. A first aid certificate is not something you will always have in your bag while traveling. I tried to explain to them that time would cost her life if she didn’t get immediately help but they wouldn’t listen. Luckily, I remembered about my membership receipt from KRCS Mombasa branch in my pulse. With the reputation the Kenya Red Cross Society has, they immediately allowed me to proceed.

I introduced myself, seeking the casualty’s consent then proceeded to reassure the casualty who was almost out of breath. The casualty tried to speak but I asked her to nod or blink instead so as to save on the little energy left in her. I inquired if the casualty had an inhaler or any other medication and she nodded to mean yes. With her permission, I proceeded to search for her medication. I found an inhaler, then checked the expiry date to ensure it was safe for use. Having been satisfied, I administered it to the casualty.

Minutes later, the casualty had improved and I advised her to rest. Later on Ashley, the casualty was jovial and so grateful. The other passengers came to thank me for being kind-hearted and brave. Ashley was overwhelmed with gratitude that tears of joy fell down her cheeks. She couldn’t believe that there were people out there who are always ready to help others at no cost at all.

Ashley’s smile is more than enough for me. I went back to my seat with a wide smile for the rest of the journey and a great sense of accomplishment. For I, being able to alleviate human suffering is more than enough.

Do you have any interesting stories about Red Cross? Share your volunteering experience with us and get a chance to win a free ticket to the Central Region Youth Camp in August 2018

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Youth forums are often held to empower youth by providing a platform where youth can discuss youth issues among themselves and try to find solutions to the challenges that they face. It is even better, when the forum is between the youth and their leaders.

On 14th March, Nominated MCA, Honorable Martin Mwangi, organized a youth forum in Embu County. The forum was held at the Embu County Assembly Chambers. It involved several youth groups around the County. Kenya Red Cross Embu Branch Youth was represented by Pius Kimeu and Naomi Njega. The forum was also attended by other dignitaries such as the National youth fund Chairman, MCAs and County Ministers.

The forum discussed the place of the youth in the county leadership. The youth got to discuss the challenges they face one-on-one with their leaders. MCA Collins Nyaga challenged the youth to take up every opportunity that comes up, and also be bold and take up leadership roles. The director of youth and sports urged the youth to make use of the Talent Academy. He commended the youth for using games such as basketball and skating to bring the youth together.

“We got to learn how to procure tenders from the County Government and also how to get the youth fund.” Said Pius, the youth vice chairperson of KRCS Embu Branch. “What we learnt will be particularly useful as we plan to start several IGAs in the near future. The knowledge we learnt from the forum will help us get funds for our project and also a market for our products, assuming we will get the tenders when we apply.” He added.

In its endeavor to promote health, the branch in partnership with MoH Kandara organized and conducted an anti-jigger campaign. The campaign was conducted in Muhuria village, Kandara Sub County. The main volunteers who took part in this campaign were the youth.

During the activity 9 households were reached from which 13 people benefitted from the treatment and disinfection of the wounds. It has been proven that jiggers thrive in unhygienic places, therefore, good hygiene education and psychosocial support also became part of the campaign.
The Space of Youth in DEVOLUTION

Mwagoh. M. Maissen
KRC, Thika School of Medical and Health Sciences Chapter

The Kenyan youth are put into consideration in devolution as stipulated by the Kenyan constitution. In the county governments, there is a docket designated for the youth that has the main role of empowering the youth by provision of funds to start up income generating activities and also facilitate in the growth of their talents in order to help them build a career. In Central Region, youth development is evident as a lot of youth are able to get loans from the county governments which enable them to start up small businesses such as agribusiness and mitumba that have subsequently improved their lives since many youth are able to generate income.

There is a need to ensure that all youth have information on the opportunities that the devolved system of government has created to empower them in accordance to the promulgated constitution of Kenya, so as to outline the structured avenues of youth empowerment. This will enable them to assert and occupy the social, economic, and political space that has been offered through the implementation of the new constitution.

As members of the public and voters, the youth have an opportunity to ensure that money and power allocated to county governments are used for the common good of the people at the county level. The county governor, “ministers” and the members of county assemblies are all required to perform their functions in accordance with democratically agreed priorities for the youth and also other sections of the population at the county level.

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The youth can serve in various elective or appointive positions at the county level. Indeed, the Constitution and enabling legislation makes it mandatory for the youth to be represented in the county assemblies and other decision-making structures at the county level. Devolution has thus made it possible for the youth to directly participate in county governance and development.

A draft prepared by Okute Samwel of UoN. In accordance to article 174 of the constitution stipulates the space of the youth in devolution and empowerment of the youth as it provides the roles of the youth.

1. Making agreements and inputs during budget discussions and convention processes. Active participation in planning, budgeting and implementation.
2. Seeking elective positions in the county governments so that they can be directly involved in policy execution and conceptualization.
3. Mobilizing pressure against corrupt and self-seeking individuals, thus contributing towards transparency and accountability.
4. Monitoring the transition to the devolved system of government. Transition is guided by Chapter Eighteen of the constitution as read together with the Fifth and Sixth Schedule.
5. Participating in the public vetting of public officials in order to ensure that only those of high integrity take public offices.
Coming Up> Nibambe Na Mbao (Phase II)

NIBAMBE NA MBAO

Youth Campaign

Dunants, Are You Ready For Phase (II)?
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Interested Members to SMS their names to 0715150220 and get their unique Dunant Code *

Money Goes to Support the Youth Programme

Kenya Red Cross

For More Info.
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Stories of the youth, by the youth, FOR THE WORLD