



"Always Needed, Always There"

# IN THIS MONTH'S NEWS

May 2017

## WORLD RED CROSS DAY

World Red Cross Day has become an important day in the history of humanitarian work and is commemorated annually on the 08th of May to celebrate a big role that is played by National Societies, Red Cross Federation (IFRC) and International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in the life saving events as well as assisting the vulnerable social people all around the world. It is on the birthday of Henri Dunant who was the founder of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement in the year 1863 in the Geneva, Switzerland.

On World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day and throughout 2017, especially in the month of May, we celebrated the strength and reach of our global network.

The Movement aims to provide relief to the human beings in distress and desolation due to war, food shortage, epidemic diseases or natural calamities. The celebrations are highlighted through a special theme each year to fulfil the aim of bringing awareness of the work accomplished each year. It also aims to attract more private or governmental organizations to be active members and participate regionally to assist people in need.

The aim was to highlight how National Societies are addressing humanitarian challenges through original and innovative approaches. We want the public to learn more and get exposed to our work in a way that engaging and arouses their curiosity.

Different regions within South Africa celebrated the day through hosting various events from:

### EASTERN CAPE:

undertook a fun day for orphans and other vulnerable children by celebrating Red Cross day with indigenous games for all. From the traditional egg and spoon race as well as sack races to pick up sticks and rope skipping, the children had a wonderful day of entertainment that culminated with a ceremony celebrating Red Cross for everyone. 225 children participated in these events.

Eskom assisted in funding disaster relief to 841 people affected by a devastating disaster in OR Tambo District earlier this year. Distribution of food parcels, hygiene packs, mattresses and blankets was completed and 350 disaster victims were catered for but however, majority of them still struggle to cope with the loss of their homes and their livelihoods.

*Eastern Cape Photo: South African Red Cross Society*



## **WESTERN CAPE:**

This year the Knysna branch ended off this year's celebrations with a bang re-enacting an accident scene simulating the trail of events in partnership with the Knysna Municipality, fire and rescue, SAPS, traffic services, Metro police and the volunteers as the first aiders, victims and the triage station staff.

The wreckage delivery and setup of the accident scene called for a closure of the main road by the traffic officials of the local Traffic department. Once set up the volunteers were placed into the wreckage bringing the scene to life.

Volunteers placed the call to the operations centre who had no idea that this was a mock illustration, however fire and rescue, Metro and SAPS arrived on the scene just two mins apart from each other to an instruction by their superiors who were informed and already onsite.

The area was cleared making it safe for the rescue team to

gain access to the casualties who had sustained near fatal injuries, being carted to the triage station for treatment and then unfolding the Jaws of Life to rescue the two casualties trapped in the front of the vehicle, safely removing the casualties and having the entire town holding their breath as this all unfolded.

Mixed emotions ripped through the crowds as bystanders were not all aware that this was only a demonstration, these emotions were managed with the SARCS Volunteers having one-on-one chats with bystanders who had broken out into tears.

The day was a huge success and this illustration got the crowds applauding SARCS for a brilliant concept and an eye opener to a possible life event.

## **NORTHERN CAPE:**

The South African Red Cross Society (SARCS) was approached by the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC) to play a remedial and reintegration role in a highly political and community astute environment. Before the involvement of SARCS, there was crisis in the community, this crisis was classified as a human right crisis. Sequel to this human right crisis, SAHRC responded to assist in the reintegration of the displaced Bangladeshis, termed as "xenophobic violence", which emanated from a community called "Bankhara Bodulong". This community is 10km away from Kuruman town with an estimated population of less than 10,000 people. Bankhara community is a young community in terms of year of existence. It is estimated that Bankhara Bodulong is less than 25-year-old. Being a young community the age ratio show that the youth are greater in population. Unemployment, high rate of anti-social activities, substance abuse, and chronic illness characterises the community. However, it is found that the community is highly organized and extremely political astute.

On World Red Cross Day, SARCS sent in two special professionals and two volunteers, one a social-worker with depth knowledge and experience in home base care, primary health and trauma counselling. The second professional, an expert in community health, health and safety, youth, group formation, counselling and community engagements. The intention was in line with the promise made by SARCS to Bankhara community to provide trauma counselling to the family of the bereaved and the community at large.

SARCS went in and engaged the Bankhara Bodulong community for one week, providing them with basic home base care, peer education, counselling and other SARCS programmes such as formation of youth structure in the community to respond to disaster, first aid and incidences. Having identified primary health as a challenge in the community, SARCS applied the humanitarian and health programmes to provide to the needs of the community

## **GAUTENG:**

**Benoni;** Our nursery school celebrated Red Cross Day on the 10th May, as the children to a local Mall. The kids sang songs and entertained the pensioners and public that came to shop. There was a display table with First aid kits for sale and disseminated about the Red Cross. Red Cross cup-cakes were also on sale and the celebrations were on the 10th as the day fell on Pensioner's Day. The elderly got entertained by songs and performances by the little ones on the day. Pick 'n Pay came on board and spoiled the kids with sweets and cooldrinks.

**Johannesburg;** The staff visited Gerard Home for the Elderly in Alexandra to make and serve breakfast, cleaning of the Home and bathing of the elderly who needed assistance. Over and above that, the Home was supported with a donation of clothes and bed linen.

**Brakpan;** The day was spent by staff and volunteers at The Tsakane therapy centre for children which provides care for children with physical and mental disabilities. SARCS had fun playing with the kids and donated clothes, toys, books, tables, chairs and other essential items.

## **LIMPOPO:**

The province of Limpopo visited Polokwane Children's Hospital where they celebrated with the little patients who could join in the festivities and delivered them with fruits (for the Mothers), snacks and cake especially baked for the day. There was song and dance and a cheerful atmosphere all around.

## **NORTH WEST:**

The branch assisted Thuto Neo OVC's with 12 winter sweaters and 12 school bags, 24 school bags to Rekopane Primary School learners and 56 blankets to 33 members of the Sonder Water community. The number of Home Based Care (HBC) clients receiving Red Cross services was 268 and 147 Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC's). We managed to serve over 68 clients who are HIV positive and 24 clients living with TB at their homes and community settings. Clothes and shoes were also distributed to 26 needy members of the Lonely Park community and 28 carers received child walking rings. Five families of Madibogo Village shacks were totally burned down and we assisted with 40 blankets and clothes to 25 beneficiaries.

## **FREE STATE:**

The team went out to Onsteiste Old Age Home and spent the day with the elderly where they massaged the elderly, cut their nails and served breakfast assisting the staff on the day.



## ADDRESSING GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

The need to create a prevention dialogue was identified and it encourages our communities to stand against Gender Based Violence. Combination of interventions significantly reduces the number of people who lack prevention information especially those in deep rural areas. However, with all prevention campaigns in place from different societal groups and foundations, sadly in the past weeks there has been an upsurge of crimes against women and our girl children.

**Limpopo, 23 May.** An outreach on drugs and substance abuse integrating GBV was held at Mokopane Primary school where teachers, parents and pupils were given a talk and education behind these issues that are constantly affecting our children and youth. This activity was set out to impart knowledge to the community of Mokopane.

SARCS as an entity, stands behind initiatives to end violence against our mothers, sisters, daughters and other loved ones.

Various branches took to the streets and community to say ***Enough is Enough.***



Limpopo Photo: South African Red Cross Society



Free State Photo: South African Red Cross Society

**Free State, 24 May.** Together with the Methodist Church, SARCS Bloemfontein team headed out to Dinaweng in-

formal settlement to give awareness regarding the recent outbreaks of GBV and disappearance of women around South Africa. The outreach including a door-to-door campaign was integrated with Young Women in Development (YWD) programme whose mandate is to empower young women, filling gaps in the services provided by mainstream (often governmental) services and is carried by SARCS team on a regular basis. Throughout the month of May radio interviews were conducted to promote SARCS programmes within the province and raise awareness on the disappearance of women.

**Eastern Cape, 24 May.** With an active youth department Jansenville community including EPWP volunteers and reaching out to vulnerable youth across all spectrums of society, the campaign commenced on this day with a community dialogue in Jansenville. On Thursday 25 May an outreach activity was conducted in Nieu Bethesda. On Friday, a candlelight memorial was held at the Red Cross Kiosk at the Provincial Hospital from 10h00 to 10h30. Nurses and hospital staff as well as patients who were able to, were invited to join this ceremony. Activities will continued on Monday (29 May) with a community dialogue in Steytleville and another dialogue to be conducted in Willowmore. 62 direct beneficiaries were reached in the dialogues that promoted defence of women's rights. A call was

made to men to be more active in standing up for women and saying Enough is Enough. Each activity concluded with the participants signing a pledge to end violence against women.



Eastern Cape Photo: South African Red Cross Society

**Soweto, 26 May.** Teams from SARCS Head Office together with SARCS branches within Gauteng (Soweto and Daveyton) were deployed and were be out in their numbers not only joining in on the #notinmyname march which took place from UJ Soweto Campus to Regina Mundi Church, but also showed support through provision of First Aid and Ambulance services.



Soweto Photo: South African Red Cross Society

**Kwazulu Natal, May.** Branches in KZN conducted awareness campaigns which included different stakeholders. Newcastle peer educators conducted an educational talk for children including adults who attended a 4 day Newcastle Winter Festival which was attended by thousands. Other campaigns were conducted in different schools. A joint campaign by Pietermaritzburg and Howick branches with different stakeholders was arranged to address the social ills taking place in our society.

Methodist church. We further engaged with informal settlement area in Bloemfontein to educate and highlight safety measures for women and girl children.



Photo: wotwwomen

Kynsna Photo: South African Red Cross Society  
Accident simulation on World Red Cross Month

