

# IN THE RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT WORLD

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## World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day 1987

The World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day 1987 has *CHILD ALIVE* as its theme and slogan.

This theme has been chosen to promote the aims of the *Child alive* Programme of the League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies: to help National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies prevent the avoidable childhood deaths and disabilities caused by diarrhoea and diseases which can be prevented by immunization.

Every year, more than four million children die as a result of diarrhoea. Another four million children die from diseases which can be prevented by immunization (measles, whooping cough, tetanus, diphtheria, poliomyelitis and tuberculosis), and an equal number become physically or mentally disabled. Although most of these deaths and disabilities occur in Africa, Asia and Latin America, some of these diseases continue to affect the health of children in highly industrialized countries.

Most of these deaths and disabilities could be prevented if only we could get a few simple health messages into every home and could encourage people to *act*. There is a lot that people can do to keep their own children alive and healthy, but they need information, support and motivation.

The *Child alive* Programme was set up in 1984 by the League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies to help strengthen this work and to encourage all National Societies to join in the fight against these avoidable deaths and disabilities. Many National Societies in Africa, Asia and Latin America are already carrying out or developing *Child alive* activities. A number of National Societies in other countries participate by funding, information campaigns and related actions.

The important contributions that National Societies have already made towards improving the health of children were recognized by UNICEF in 1986, when they were honoured with UNICEF's Maurice Pate Award for their "outstanding contribution to the survival and development of children through the *Child alive* Programme".

*Child alive* offers technical support to National Societies which want to start new *Child alive* projects or strengthen existing programmes. Teaching modules on diarrhoea and immunization for basic first-aid training and youth have been developed. *Child alive* has also produced a number of model training materials and can provide assistance with local adaptation and translation.

During 1987 the *Child alive* Programme will put special emphasis on introducing "Oral Rehydration", "Prevention of Diarrhoea" and "Promotion of Immunization" into first-aid and youth activities.

The 1987 World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day should help National Societies to mobilize their members to fight these unnecessary deaths and diseases among children in their communities as well as to spread important health messages about oral rehydration therapy, the prevention of diarrhoea and the importance of immunization—through volunteers, staff, first aiders, youth, information departments etc.

For this purpose the League Secretariat has prepared a publicity kit including posters, postcards, stickers, pocket calendars, mini-posters and documents on the *Child alive* programme (aims and policies of *Child alive*, a chart of possible *Child alive* activities and a presentation of available educational materials). This kit was sent to all National Societies in December 1986.

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