

Red Cross seminar on public relations at Manila

Information officers of fourteen National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies of countries in Asia and the Pacific area met from 25 to 29 February at Manila, at the invitation of the Philippines Red Cross and the League of Red Cross Societies. The seminar gave participants the opportunity for fruitful exchanges of views on the various subjects on the agenda, such as the role of the information services and public relations in promoting Red Cross principles and actions, fund-raising techniques, recruitment of voluntary workers and the dissemination of international humanitarian law.

In connection with the extensive relief campaigns conducted by the Red Cross in several countries in South-East Asia, the participants stressed that the National Societies of the host countries accepting refugees needed additional means to develop the efforts directed by their information and public relations services towards their own inhabitants. It was found that, generally speaking, the latter were inadequately informed about the work which the local branches of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies performed, side by side with the two international bodies of the Red Cross, with the result that the local population's attitude towards the Red Cross was often one of misunderstanding, source of difficulties. This was a serious phenomenon, which demanded swift public relations action, in order to dispel it.