

The Gambia Unified Plan Annual Report 2025

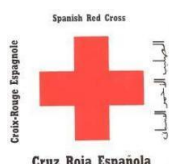
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As a signatory of the Grand Bargain Agreement, the IFRC has committed to its monitoring and reporting standards through the integration of the IASC [8+3 reporting template](#) approach into its results-based management approach. Annex 1 to this template demonstrates how this template supports 8+3 reporting.

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Q1. Overall performance

During 2025, implementation of the Unified Plan was influenced by evolving socio-economic conditions, climate risks, and humanitarian needs.

The national context remained stable, although increasing demand for humanitarian assistance was observed due to economic pressures, including rising food and fuel prices. Climate-related hazards such as floods and windstorms continued to affect vulnerable communities.

Migration dynamics remained significant, with increased numbers of returnees and maritime incidents, including the December 2025 Jinack incident, which required emergency humanitarian response.

GRCS expanded its operational footprint through key programmes including the CIDCA-funded malaria project, Locally Led Adaptation (LLA), and the EU Migration Project. Institutional strengthening efforts further improved coordination and service delivery.

Key Achievements (Highlights)

- **Strengthened Climate Resilience and Adaptation:** Successfully mobilized resources from IFRC for the continuous implementation of launched the *Scaling up Locally-led adaptation Project* after the withdrawal of funding by USAID, positioning GRCS as a key national humanitarian actor on community-based climate change adaptation, disaster preparedness, and locally-led humanitarian action.
- **Strengthened Health and Wellbeing Outcomes:** Rolled out the *Accelerating Malaria Elimination through Community-Led Initiatives* project through large-scale community-based Social and Behavior Change Communication (SBCC), logistics support, and volunteer mobilization for Seasonal Malaria Chemoprevention (SMC) and Insecticide-Treated Net (ITN) campaigns. These interventions directly contributed to improved awareness, uptake, and coverage of malaria prevention services, particularly among caregivers of children under five. Complementary first aid and health promotion activities further reinforced community-level health resilience with strong government and partner engagement, reinforcing GRCS's auxiliary role in public health and directly contributing to national malaria elimination targets.
- **Enhanced Disaster Preparedness, Climate Action, and Anticipatory Approaches:** Reactivated and trained/oriented Rapid Response/First Aid Teams (RRTs) across all regions to enhance readiness for disasters, crises, and other emergencies, while strengthening community engagement, accountability, protection, gender, and inclusion (PGI) mechanisms in line with programme intervention targets and other response operations. The National Society advanced its disaster risk management and climate agenda through the development and submission of the Simplified Early Action Protocol (SEAP) for flash floods, positioning GRCS to access anticipatory financing and act ahead of predictable climate shocks. Approval of funding under the IFRC Global Climate Resilience Platform for Locally Led Adaptation further strengthened GRCS's capacity to support community-driven

climate resilience initiatives. These efforts enhanced early warning, preparedness, and local ownership of risk reduction measures.

- **Scaled Migration Response and Protection Services**

GRCS continued to provide critical humanitarian assistance and protection services to migrants and returnees across the country. This included emergency response to maritime incidents, provision of RFL services, psychosocial support, and coordination with government and Movement partners. Engagement in national migration dialogue platforms and the initiation of Migration and Displacement policy and SOP development strengthened the strategic and operational foundations of migration programming under the Unified Plan.

Strengthened Institutional Capacity and Partnerships: Progress in governance, branch development, and coordination reinforced GRCS's institutional capacity to deliver on the Unified Plan. The expanded strategic partnerships with government ministries and departments, IFRC, ICRC, partner national societies (including the Spanish Red Cross, Italian Red Cross, Japanese Red Cross, Qatar Red Crescent Society, and Saudi Arabia Red Crescent Authority), the Chinese Embassy in The Gambia, the China International Development Cooperation Agency (China Aid), and international actors (UN System) ensure stronger alignment with national priorities and securing diversified resources to sustain Unified Plan implementation.

This overall performance demonstrates that the Unified Plan remained relevant, adaptive, and responsive to the evolving humanitarian context in The Gambia. Through a combination of programmes delivery, institutional strengthening, and strategic partnerships, GRCS continued to make measurable contributions toward reducing vulnerability, strengthening resilience, and improving the wellbeing of affected populations.

Q2. Changes and amendments

During the period under review, The Gambia Red Cross Society (GRCS) implemented the Unified Plan in a highly dynamic operational environment. Several contextual, financial, and operational developments necessitated adjustments to programme design, sequencing of activities, resource allocation, and internal systems, while maintaining alignment with the original Unified Plan 2025 outcomes.

These changes were primarily driven by evolving humanitarian needs, emerging public health threats, climate-related risks, funding timelines, and institutional transitions within the National Society.

Adjustments in Programme Design and Activities

1. Changes in programme design and implementation

a. Climate, Disaster Risk Reduction and Anticipatory Action

In 2024, the Gambia Red Cross Society (GRCS) launched the *Scaling up Locally-led Adaptation and Transforming Humanitarian Responses to Climate Change Project*, expanding climate resilience

activities under the Unified Plan 2025. This expansion required the realignment of certain planned outputs within Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and Community Resilience. Key adjustments included:

- Incorporation of additional training workshops.
- Increased emphasis on *Early Warning for All (EW4All) Pillar 4*.
- Development of the *Simplified Early Action Protocol (SEAP)* for flash floods.
- Integration of climate-smart livelihood initiatives.

The heightened frequency and severity of flash floods and windstorms during the 2025 rainy season created a strategic opportunity to position GRCS as a lead national actor in preparedness and anticipatory action, aligned with government and IFRC priorities.

However, the withdrawal of USAID support significantly impacted the implementation rate of the project. In response, GRCS redesigned activities to continue operations with limited resources available through IFRC support.

Adaptations Made:

- **Reallocation of staff time and technical expertise** to prioritize SEAP finalization and validation.
- **Adjustment of indicators** to reflect anticipatory action readiness milestones (e.g., protocol validation, preparedness capacity building) rather than solely response outputs.
- **Continuation of climate action programming** through funding from the IFRC Global Climate Resilience Platform (locally led adaptation), following the withdrawal of previous external support.

Health and WASH Interventions: The outbreak of Mpox declared as a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) by the WHO and Africa CDC, prompted GRCS to reactivate its volunteer core for possible rapid response where the needs arise. Consequently, some resources initially earmarked for measles campaigns were reallocated to polio campaign activities. The malaria programme ICCM and SMC components were rescheduled to later quarters in line with Ministry of Health programming and achieving the procurement requirements for the ICCM commodities.

Operational Constraints and Challenges

- **Financial and Resource Constraints:** Delays in fund disbursements from some partners caused postponement of planned activities, particularly in migration, youth engagement, and livelihood initiatives.
- **Human Resource Gaps:** The departure of two technical officers for advanced studies abroad (Health and WASH) created temporary capacity gaps. GRCS mitigated this by reallocating tasks across programme staff and intensifying volunteer engagement.

- **Logistical Challenges:** Reduction in availability of functional field vehicles (including prolonged repair delays of some fleet assets) is affecting the fleet needs of the NS. Resource sharing and coordination with some regional branches have partially addressed this constraint.
- **Closure of the GRCS Emergency Operation Centre (EOC):** The closure of the EOC in the first quarter of the year affected the general operations and programmes of the NS, especially in data collection, analysis, and coordination.

The changes and amendments made to the Unified Plan 2025 reflect GRCS's commitment to remain adaptive, responsive, and aligned with both evolving humanitarian needs and national priorities. While operational constraints posed challenges, proactive adjustments have enabled continuity of essential services that have contributed to achieving the overall programme goals in 2025.

Q3. Measuring results of the IFRC Network Action

Currently there is no ongoing Emergency Appeal.

Strategic Priorities

Climate and environment

During 2025, GRCS continued to strengthen its leadership role in climate resilience, community adaptation, and anticipatory action. Building on earlier investments, the National Society sustained momentum despite shifts in external funding and evolving operational realities.

Community-based environmental actions included mangrove restoration, drainage clearing, sanitation campaigns, and awareness raising on environmental stewardship. Over 12,000 mangrove seedlings were planted in Lower River Region, contributing to ecosystem restoration, flood mitigation, and long-term livelihood protection.

GRCS also strengthened local resilience capacities through training of youth and community members on climate-smart agriculture, horticulture, adaptive practices, and risk-informed livelihoods. These interventions promoted practical solutions for communities affected by climate variability.

During the second half of the year, important strategic progress was achieved through:

- Approval of funding under the IFRC Global Climate Resilience Platform for a Locally Led Adaptation initiative.
- Submission of the Simplified Early Action Protocol (SEAP) for flash floods for IFRC validation.
- Participation in the IFRC Climate Champions initiative and related global learning platforms.

- Continued engagement with national stakeholders on climate preparedness and environmental action.

These results positioned GRCS as an increasingly credible national actor in climate resilience and anticipatory action.

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Disasters and crises

The focus on disaster preparedness, response, and recovery phases of disaster management is basically to meet the needs of people affected by disasters and emergencies. One of the main and strong disaster and crisis management links with development is the promotion of sustainable livelihoods, their protection and recovery, and the improvement of their health and well-being after disasters and crises. With relatively potent collaboration and partnerships with the IFRC, the government, and corporate bodies, the National Society continues to improve its operational capabilities in effective and efficient humanitarian service delivery.

In response to internal disturbances, civil strife, political tensions, and other situations of violence in the country, the National Society remains committed to these events.

The Gambia's migration profile has recently noticed an increasing number of returns of Gambian migrants from across Africa and Europe, including those intercepted or rescued at sea or through land borders across and beyond the Sahel. With little or no support, most of these migrant returnees are left unattended or with limited options to access basic human necessities, including psychosocial support, healthcare, and reintegration assistance to ensure inclusive and meaningful reintegration into their communities.

In the past four consecutive years, the country has experienced chronic and unprecedented natural disasters dominated by flash floods and windstorms. These situations, unfortunately, affect the underprivileged people living in rural communities whose circumstances require alleviation. Their galactic hopes heavily rely on the National Society, whose services are geared towards mitigation and contribute towards their resilience.

Our interventions aimed to:

1. Strengthen community-based initiatives to prevent the recurrence of identified hazards and vulnerabilities and support resilience-building interventions to reduce future risk.
2. Enhance effective coordination between GRCS and local and international partners and stakeholders in the humanitarian sector.
3. Strengthen the capacity of DRR to tackle emergencies and recurring disasters and emergencies.

IFRC network joint support

Ensured disaster and emergency response facilities, such as the GRCS Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and radio communications equipment and necessary appliances and network applications, are installed and appropriately utilized.

Supported in the transformation of the GRCS response tool, i.e., the Emergency Response Teams (ERTs) to Branch Disaster Response Teams and a National Disaster Response team at the headquarters level. Through tools like the Disaster Response Emergency Fund (DREF) and emergency appeals, where appropriate, IFRC provides financial support to the National Society for rapid intervention in disaster and crisis in the country.

Finalized and validated the implementation roadmap for the Early Warning for All (EW4All) initiatives. This roadmap is expected to be validated by the Gambian government with the full participation and contribution from the National Society. Just a reminder, GRCS and IFRC are the Lead agencies for Pillar 4 Preparedness for Response Capabilities

Climate Champions (IFRC, Geneva initiative): Expression of interest submitted by the Gambia Red Cross Society in August 2025.

GRCS has submitted a Simplified Early Action Protocol (SEAP) Anticipatory Action Approach CHF 200,000 for two-year implementation for flash floods to the IFRC Validation Committee, Geneva, Nairobi, and Dakar. This process is supported by the IFRC Cluster Delegation, Dakar.

With the precipitation situation in the country this year, the NS is bracing itself for imminent flooding intervention.

The Community Trust Index Survey, developed by the IFRC Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) Unit, comprises various models grouped into two categories:

- 1) trust in humanitarian organizations, encompassing their capacities and values in delivering services,

- 2) trust in humanitarian programs and thematic across different organizations for effectiveness and community were accomplished by the NS in July 2025.

Maritime Emergency Response (December 2025)

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At the end of the year (31st December), GRCS responded to a major maritime migration incident affecting multiple coastal locations. The National Society rapidly activated internal coordination systems and deployed staff and volunteers to key response points.

Support provided included:

- Recovery support and dignified management of deceased persons in coordination with authorities.
- Restoring Family Links (RFL) services for families searching for missing relatives.
- Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) and psychological first aid.
- Provision of food, hygiene support, first aid, and referral services.
- Continuous coordination with NDMA, security services, health authorities, and humanitarian partners.

The response demonstrated GRCS operational agility and trusted auxiliary role during emergencies.

Health and wellbeing

Health remained one of the strongest performing pillars of the Unified Plan in 2025. Through strategic partnerships and volunteer-based delivery models, GRCS supported disease prevention, community health promotion, emergency health response, and WASH services.

Malaria Elimination Support

With support channelled through the IFRC from the China International Development Cooperation Agency (CIDCA), GRCS made substantial contributions to national malaria elimination priorities.

Achievements included:

- Support to implementation of four Seasonal Malaria Chemoprevention (SMC) cycles in Kombo North.
- Deployment of trained volunteers for house-to-house and public outreach campaigns.
- More than 90,000 people reached with malaria prevention and treatment adherence messages.
- Support to campaign logistics, visibility, mobilisation, and community acceptance.
- Procurement and handover of anti-malarial commodities supporting child health interventions.

First Aid and Emergency Health

GRCS continued to expand first aid services through community and commercial trainings, public event coverage, sea rescue operations, and emergency standby services. Preparatory work for establishment of the GRCS First Aid Training School also progressed during the year.

Mental Health and Psychosocial Support

GRCS invested in strengthening MHPSS capacity through training of trainers, step-down sessions, and deployment of trained personnel during migration incidents and humanitarian operations.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

Through partnerships, GRCS advanced WASH programming in Central River Region through:

- Ongoing construction of boreholes and water systems in targeted communities.
- Training of Water Management Committees.
- Hygiene promotion in schools and communities.
- Monitoring missions to ensure quality, sustainability, and community ownership.

Overall, health interventions significantly contributed to prevention outcomes, service access, and community resilience.

Migration and displacement

Migration and displacement remained a priority area throughout 2025. GRCS continued to provide humanitarian assistance and protection services to migrants, returnees, and vulnerable mobile populations.

Core achievements included:

- Continuous service delivery at reception centres and humanitarian service points.
- Provision of food, clothing, hygiene kits, first aid, information, RFL, and psychosocial support.
- Participation in national migration dialogue platforms and policy discussions.
- Progress in development of a Migration and Displacement Policy, Strategy, and operational SOPs.
- Capacity building of community actors to support social cohesion and reintegration in affected communities.

The launch and operationalisation of the EU Migration Project further strengthened GRCS readiness to scale migration programming nationwide.

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- Mini Grant from Global Migration Lab

A USD 7,000 mini grant was obtained from the Global Migration Lab to conduct a nationwide study on missing migrants in Africa, with a particular focus on The Gambia. The study was conducted by the NS trained data collectors (GRCS staff and volunteers) by conducting interviews or group discussions with migrant women and young adults, migrant children (aged 8+), the relatives of missing migrants, and/or key informants within the country. Upon completion of the training, the data collectors conducted a minimum total of 60 interviews focusing on group discussions with migrant women or young adults, migrant children and/or relatives of missing migrants, 5 key informant interviews with relevant women- and youth-led organizations or organizations representing migrants and families within the country.

IFRC network joint support

- GRCS with the support of the Spanish Red Cross (SPRC), secured a funding from Cabildo De Gran Canaria.
- Support Through the Global Route-Based Migration Programme; The GRCS continues to provide humanitarian assistance and protection services to 9,935 migrants with various vulnerabilities under the Global Route-Based Migration Programme. These services aim to address immediate needs and ensure safe and dignified migration experiences.
- Supported the Bantaba with an amount of GMD 125,000 and built the capacity of 35 participants on Migration (14 freshmen introduced to the RCRC Approach, while 21 benefited ToT on RCRC approach and are about to begin follow-up activities).
- Introduced 30 participants from KM, WCR, and URR Branches, in Cohort 2 of training on Humanitarian Service Points following previous training from the rest of the regions.

Restoring Family Links

Restoring Family Links (RFL) is a core activity of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. The RFL strategy is a global framework that guides the work of the ICRC, national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies:

All RFL activities are in line with this global strategy, which is based on the Geneva Conventions, the Movement's statutes, and resolutions from international conferences. The strategy ensures a coordinated and unified approach to addressing the humanitarian needs of people separated by armed conflict, violence, disasters, and migration.

The GRCS RFL conducts community outreach activities across all the regions of The Gambia. Volunteers engage directly with community members to raise awareness and share key messages.

Key Achievements:

- A total of 12 volunteers conducted outreach sessions.
- Approximately 3,730 people were reached.
- 5 posters were displayed in strategic community locations.
- 40 leaflets were distributed.

These activities contributed to strengthening community awareness and visibility of the program while promoting greater access to information.

In terms of direct assistance to migrants, a total of 1,052 migrants were returned through the IOM voluntary repatriation program. A remarkable 800 successful calls were facilitated, allowing migrants to reconnect with their families and provide assurance of their safety.

Core RFL services were also successfully carried out. A fact sheet detailing all available services was prepared to improve access to information for those in need.

A total of 11 Tracing Requests (TCs) were collected, initiating the search for missing loved ones, and two 'Salamats' (a message from a family member) and a Red Cross message were successfully delivered to a beneficiary.

The GRCS RFL Unit provided timely support to migrants in distress. One migrant from Guinea-Bissau was assisted after experiencing difficulties, while two other migrants, who had been forcefully pushed out of Mauritania and found themselves in The Gambia for the first time, also received the necessary support and guidance. These cases highlight the continued relevance of RFL services in responding to the needs of vulnerable migrants and ensuring their protection and dignity.

In May, the RFL officer attended the African Family Links Network (AFLN) workshop held in Nairobi, Kenya. The workshop provided an in-depth understanding of Restoring Family Links (RFL) activities across the African continent and created a valuable space to exchange experiences, strengthen networks, and learn about best practices being implemented by other national societies. This further enhanced my knowledge and capacity to strengthen RFL work in The Gambia.

Additionally, a five-day technical support mission was conducted in collaboration with the FO PFL of ICRC Dakar. This mission provided practical office-based working sessions that focused on strengthening operational coordination, improving technical capacities, and aligning approaches to ensure quality service delivery to affected families.

Values, power and inclusion

GRCS maintained a strong commitment to inclusive, accountable, and community-centred programming throughout 2025, with increased emphasis in the second half of the year (July–December) on strengthening Protection, Gender and Inclusion (PGI) and Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) systems across operations.

1. Integration of PGI Across Programmes

Across all thematic areas, GRCS ensured that vulnerable and at-risk groups were prioritised in targeting and service delivery. This included women, children, older persons, persons with disabilities, migrants, and displaced populations.

From July to December, PGI integration was further strengthened through:

- Reinforcement of inclusive targeting criteria in migration and cash-based interventions
- Integration of safeguarding considerations in emergency responses, particularly during the December maritime incident
- Increased attention to gender-sensitive communication in SMC campaigns and community outreach

These measures contributed to more equitable access to services and reduced barriers for vulnerable groups.

2. Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA)

GRCS scaled up community engagement efforts throughout the year, with notable progress in Q3–Q4:

- Implementation of the **Community Trust Index Survey (July 2025)** to assess community perceptions of humanitarian actors and programmes
- Strengthening of two-way communication channels between communities and GRCS through field engagements, sensitisation activities, and volunteer interactions
- Increased use of community feedback during programme implementation, particularly in health and migration interventions

During the SMC campaign cycles (Q3–Q4), community feedback mechanisms were actively used to address challenges such as caregiver hesitancy, leading to adapted messaging strategies and improved uptake.

3. Participation and Inclusion in Programme Design and Delivery

GRCS ensured community participation in planning and implementation through:

- Engagement of **traditional communicators, opinion leaders, and community volunteers**
- Inclusion of **community representatives in WASH committees and local structures**
- Participatory approaches during field missions, consultations, and monitoring activities

From July to December, these approaches were further institutionalised, particularly in WASH programming where Water Management Committees were trained and empowered to manage infrastructure.

4. Safeguarding and Protection Measures

Safeguarding remained a priority, especially in emergency and migration contexts. In Q4:

- GRCS ensured that staff and volunteers adhered to protection principles during response operations
- MHPSS services were delivered in a manner that respected dignity, confidentiality, and cultural sensitivity

- Vulnerable individuals affected by the maritime incident received targeted psychosocial and referral support

5. Capacity Strengthening (PGI & CEA)

GRCS continued to build internal capacity to deliver inclusive and accountable programming:

- Step-down trainings and briefings were conducted for volunteers and staff on community engagement, protection principles, and accountability approaches
- Lessons from regional and global PGI/CEA initiatives were adapted into local programming

While progress was made, further structured training and systematisation of PGI and CEA tools remain a priority for 2026.

6. Key Results

- Community Trust Index Survey successfully conducted and analysed
- Improved community acceptance of SMC interventions through responsive engagement
- Strengthened inclusion of vulnerable groups in migration and emergency response activities
- Increased community ownership of WASH systems through trained committees

7. Challenges and Areas for Improvement

- Limited availability of fully disaggregated data (sex, age, disability)
- Need for standardised CEA feedback tracking systems
- Inconsistent documentation of community feedback across programmes

8. Forward Outlook

GRCS will continue to strengthen Values, Power and Inclusion by:

- Developing a formal **CEA Policy and Strategy**
- Enhancing PGI integration across all sectors
- Strengthening data disaggregation and feedback systems
- Expanding community participation in programme design and evaluation

Overall, GRCS made important progress in ensuring that humanitarian action in 2025 was inclusive, accountable, and responsive to the needs and voices of affected communities, with notable strengthening observed in the second half of the year.

Enabling functions

Strategic and operational coordination

GRCS strengthened internal and external coordination throughout 2025. Close engagement with government institutions, Movement partners, donors, and communities supported timely implementation and coherent humanitarian action.

Operational coordination was particularly visible during health campaigns, migration incidents, climate initiatives, and governance processes.

National Society Development

Important progress was made in strengthening institutional systems and long-term capacity. Key milestones included:

- Ongoing review of the GRCS Constitution.
- Strengthening governance processes linked to branch assemblies and General Assembly preparations.
- Recruitment and onboarding for strategic project positions.
- Continued development of staff and volunteer capacities.
- Improved planning, monitoring, reporting, and compliance systems.

Humanitarian Diplomacy and Communications

GRCS continued to enhance visibility and strategic influence through participation in national, regional, and global platforms. Engagements related to climate action, migration, health, and humanitarian partnerships increased recognition of GRCS as a credible actor.

Accountability and Agility

The National Society continued to strengthen accountability through improved reporting practices, internal controls, adaptive management, and evidence-based planning. Despite operational constraints, GRCS remained agile and responsive to changing needs.

Synergies and Impact: The combined coordination efforts resulted in stronger government recognition of GRCS's auxiliary role, better alignment with national development and emergency priorities, and increased credibility with international partners. Improved cooperation among Movement partners and branches also ensured more timely, inclusive, and community-driven responses.

Recommendations for future coordination:

- Strengthen structured engagement with government ministries and NDMA to institutionalize and strengthen GRCS participation in national contingency planning.
- Expand partnerships with the private sector and academia to diversify expertise and resources.
- Enhance branch-level capacity for decentralized coordination with local authorities and NGOs.
- Consolidate Movement coordination by establishing a joint resource mobilization strategy.

- Continue active participation in inter-agency platforms to ensure Red Cross perspectives are integrated in national and international coordination frameworks.

National Society development

During 2025, GRCS made significant progress in strengthening its institutional capacity, governance systems, and operational effectiveness. While efforts were ongoing throughout the year, notable advancements were achieved during the second half of the year (July–December), driven by strategic leadership, partner engagement, and internal reforms.

1. Governance Strengthening and Constitution Review (Q3–Q4 Focus)

A major milestone in 2025 was the continued progress on governance strengthening, including the successful convening of the General Assembly and advancement of the Constitution Review process.

General Assembly (Governance Milestone)

The 2025 General Assembly represented a key statutory and governance milestone for GRCS, providing a platform for strategic decision-making, accountability, and institutional reflection.

The Assembly brought together delegates from all regions, governance bodies, and partners, ensuring inclusive participation and representation. Key outcomes included:

- Review and endorsement of institutional reports (Secretary General, President, Finance, and Audit)
- Strengthened accountability through structured question-and-answer sessions
- Confirmation of leadership positions and governance structures
- Strategic discussions on volunteer development, financial sustainability, and programme priorities
- Integration of major initiatives, including the launch and positioning of key programmes and partnerships

The Assembly also strengthened engagement with Movement partners and stakeholders, reinforcing GRCS's credibility and accountability as a National Society.

Constitution Review Process

In parallel, the Constitution Review Committee advanced the drafting and consultation process, including review of comparative National Society statutes to ensure alignment with Movement standards.

- Engagement with the Joint Statutes Commission (JSC) was initiated to seek technical guidance and validation support
- Preparations were undertaken for branch-level consultations to ensure inclusive participation in governance reforms

These efforts contribute to strengthening accountability, transparency, and compliance with international Red Cross standards.

2. Strengthening Organizational Structure and Human Resources

During the second half of the year, GRCS undertook key human resource and structural improvements to enhance delivery capacity:

- Recruitment and onboarding processes were initiated for critical positions under major programmes, including the **EU Migration Project** (Project Manager, Finance Officer, Procurement Officer).
- Strategic redeployments and acting appointments were made to address operational gaps, including leadership within programme departments.
- Collaboration with government institutions facilitated the planned deployment of technical personnel (e.g., Public Health and WASH officers) to strengthen programme delivery.

Despite staff transitions and capacity gaps earlier in the year, these measures improved operational continuity and technical capacity.

3. Strategic Planning and Programme Development

GRCS strengthened its long-term planning and programmatic direction during Q3–Q4:

- Development of the **Food Security, Livelihoods and Resilience (FSLR) Strategy (2025–2030)** through internal consultations and partner engagement.
- Advancement of new project pipelines, including climate, migration, and research initiatives.
- Strengthening alignment between strategic priorities and emerging funding opportunities.

These processes support sustainability and long-term impact of GRCS interventions.

4. Systems Strengthening (PMER, Reporting and Compliance)

GRCS continued to enhance internal systems for planning, monitoring, evaluation, and reporting:

- Improved use of **standardised reporting templates and compliance tracking tools**
- Strengthened internal coordination for timely submission of programme reports
- Increased emphasis on results-based management and indicator tracking

However, further improvements are needed in data consolidation, disaggregation, and system-wide integration of PMER tools.

5. Infrastructure and Operational Support

Efforts were made to improve operational efficiency through infrastructure and logistical planning:

- Planning for **office space reorganisation** to improve staff working conditions and coordination
- Continued efforts to address fleet and logistical constraints through resource sharing and coordination
- Strengthening of operational readiness systems, including response coordination mechanisms

6. Partnerships and Institutional Positioning

GRCS strengthened its institutional positioning through expanded partnerships and engagement:

- Active collaboration with IFRC, ICRC, Partner National Societies, government ministries, and development partners
- Participation in national, regional, and global platforms (e.g., climate, migration, disaster management)
- Increased visibility as a credible and reliable humanitarian actor in The Gambia

7. Key Achievements

- Progress in Constitution Review and governance reform processes

- Recruitment and onboarding for major programme roles
- Development of FSLR Strategy and expansion of project pipelines
- Strengthened PMER and reporting systems
- Enhanced partnerships and institutional visibility

8. Challenges and Areas for Improvement

- Temporary human resource gaps due to staff transitions
- Need for further strengthening of PMER systems and data management
- Logistical constraints affecting field supervision and operations

9. Forward Outlook

In 2026, GRCS will continue to prioritise National Society Development through:

- Finalisation and adoption of the revised Constitution
- Strengthening governance structures at all levels
- Enhancing staff capacity and retention strategies
- Further institutionalisation of PMER and accountability systems
- Expansion of strategic partnerships and resource mobilisation efforts

Overall, progress made in 2025, particularly in the second half of the year, has laid a strong foundation for a more resilient, accountable, and effective National Society.

Over the reporting period, The Gambia Red Cross Society made significant progress in strengthening its organizational development and alignment with its strategic priorities. Guided by its strategy direction, the National Society has worked to consolidate statutory and legal frameworks, ensuring greater compliance with national regulations and international Red Cross Red Crescent standards. Branch development has also remained a key focus, with capacity-building initiatives rolled out to improve infrastructure, governance, volunteer management, and community outreach across several regions of the country.

Financial sustainability efforts have been advanced through the diversification of resource mobilization, including strengthened partnerships with government, private sector actors, and international partners. These efforts have been complemented by improvements in internal systems, with greater emphasis placed on accountability, transparency, and digitalization of processes to enhance efficiency and service delivery.

In terms of leadership, the National Society invested in strengthening governance and management capacities, while also fostering the active participation of youth and volunteers. The establishment of platforms for youth engagement and community-led initiatives has further enhanced the Society's role as an inclusive humanitarian actor. Volunteer development programmes, including training in disaster response, health, and climate adaptation, have expanded the skills base of the National Society and ensured a strong presence at the community level.

At the international level, GRCS has continued to align its priorities with global NSD agendas. It has actively engaged in peer-to-peer exchanges and benefited from technical and financial support from the IFRC and Partner National Societies, as mentioned above. This collaboration has enhanced institutional resilience and provided access to NSD funding streams that support both organizational growth and programmatic expansion. The IFRC network's joint support has been

instrumental in advancing branch capacity development, strengthening governance, and the rollout of innovative approaches in community engagement and accountability (community trust index survey conducted).

Integrity and accountability remain central to the GRCS's operations. While reflected under the broader enabling function of *accountability and agility*, GRCS has made deliberate efforts to embed these principles in its programming and management.

Volunteer and Youth Development programmes

Youth Empowerment through Innovative climate actions aims to equip 100 youth with skills in climate-smart horticulture, poultry farming, climate adaptation and resilient building programs. These activities aim to mitigate the impacts of climate change, such as erratic rainfall and rising temperatures, desertification, drought, etc. The programme would expose and strengthening youth adaptive capacities on locally led climate fight and create sustainable living conditions for youth and volunteers. This will amplify and strengthen the voices of young people, and foster youth entrepreneurship and green jobs at GRCS Local Branches. Beyond this, it would create a vital avenue for training and motivation thereby leveraging on the youth as an agent of Behavioral change for climate adaptative programs.

Youth Climate Change Adaptation programme promotes the adoption of climate-smart agricultural practices that can enhance productivity while protecting natural resources. By introducing young people to sustainable farming techniques, this project aims to contribute to local food security and reduce vulnerability to climate-related shocks and strengthen youth participation at the national and Branch level with the view to support Branch Development initiatives in line with youth and volunteering policy of The Gambia Red Cross Society and IFRC.

The North Bank Region Branch of The Gambia Red Cross Society successfully implemented an Easter work camp and training. The event brought together over 500 volunteers across links and districts within the North Bank Region, with support from The Gambia Red Cross Society management, youth commission, and individual partners, including the community of Kerewan. The work camp members molded blocks and laid the foundation of the proposed Branch Office in Kerewan. Similar activities were done during the NBR Branch World Red Cross days to strengthen and amplify their efforts in having a new Branch Office.

In Upper River Region, Jimara District Red Cross Committee, with the Support of the Upper Red Cross Branch, had embarked on the 3rd Edition of its Annual Capacity Building Camp for volunteers of the district and beyond. This year's five (5) day camp brought together 80+ volunteers at Numuyel Village in Jimara District. The training aimed to build the capacities of volunteers in various thematic areas of the Red Cross.

Humanitarian diplomacy and communications

During 2025, GRCS strengthened its humanitarian diplomacy and communications functions to enhance visibility, influence policy dialogue, mobilise resources, and reinforce its auxiliary role to public authorities. While progress was made throughout the year, significant gains were observed during the second half of the year, including deepened bilateral partnerships and international knowledge exchange.

1. Strategic Positioning and External Engagement

GRCS expanded its presence in key platforms and policy spaces, contributing to national and international dialogue on priority humanitarian issues:

- Active participation in **national migration dialogues**, contributing to discussions on protection, reintegration, and service delivery for people on the move.
- Engagement in **climate-related platforms and IFRC global initiatives**, strengthening GRCS positioning on climate resilience and anticipatory action.
- Participation of senior leadership in regional and global forums, enhancing visibility and partnership opportunities.

These engagements strengthened GRCS credibility as a national humanitarian actor and increased its influence in shaping humanitarian priorities.

2. Strengthened Bilateral Cooperation – Partnership with the Chinese Embassy

A notable development in the second half of 2025 was the strengthening of bilateral cooperation between GRCS and the **Embassy of the People's Republic of China in The Gambia**.

- GRCS engaged with the Chinese Embassy on areas of mutual interest, particularly in **health, disaster preparedness, and capacity development**.
- This partnership complemented ongoing collaboration under the **CIDCA-supported malaria programme**, reinforcing alignment between humanitarian priorities and bilateral development cooperation.
- The engagement contributed to **enhanced diplomatic visibility**, strengthened trust, and opened pathways for future technical and financial collaboration.

This partnership reflects GRCS's proactive approach to humanitarian diplomacy, leveraging strategic relationships to support national priorities.

3. International Capacity Building and Knowledge Exchange (China Seminars)

<https://www.facebook.com/share/p/1BDpY7vcyG/>

During July–December, GRCS staff participated in a series of **international seminars and training programmes in China**, covering key areas of intervention including:

- Public health and disease prevention systems
- Disaster risk management and emergency response coordination
- Climate adaptation and environmental management
- Humanitarian logistics and operational systems

These engagements provided:

- Exposure to **global best practices and innovative approaches**
- Opportunities for **technical learning and institutional exchange**
- Strengthened professional capacity of GRCS staff across departments

Upon return, participating staff contributed to **internal knowledge sharing**, supporting the adaptation of relevant practices into GRCS programming and systems.

4. Partnerships and Resource Mobilisation

Humanitarian diplomacy efforts translated into strengthened partnerships and resource mobilisation, particularly in Q3–Q4:

- Launch and operationalisation of the **EU-funded Migration Project**, expanding nationwide programming in migration and protection.
- Continued implementation and extension of the **ECOWAS Humanitarian Assistance Project**, ensuring sustained support to vulnerable populations.
- Progress in securing climate financing through the **IFRC Global Climate Resilience Platform**.
- Strengthened collaboration with Partner National Societies, UN agencies, and government institutions.

These partnerships enabled GRCS to scale interventions, diversify funding, and align with national development priorities.

5. Communications and Visibility

GRCS enhanced its communication efforts to improve visibility, transparency, and public engagement:

- Increased documentation and dissemination of programme results across health, WASH, climate, and emergency response sectors.
- Media engagement and coverage of key activities, including malaria campaigns, community outreach, and emergency responses.
- Use of branded materials and community communication tools to support awareness and behaviour change campaigns.

During Q3–Q4, communications played a critical role in:

- Supporting **SMC campaign awareness and uptake**
- Highlighting **migration response operations**, including the maritime incident

- Promoting **climate and environmental initiatives**

6. Advocacy and Auxiliary Role Reinforcement

GRCS continued to reinforce its auxiliary role through sustained engagement with public authorities:

- Collaboration with ministries and agencies (Health, NDMA, Migration authorities) in programme implementation and coordination.
- Contribution to national coordination mechanisms across disaster management, health, and migration sectors.
- Promotion of humanitarian principles, community resilience, and inclusive programming approaches.

These efforts strengthened alignment with government priorities and reinforced trust in GRCS as a key humanitarian partner.

7. Internal Communication and Organizational Alignment

GRCS strengthened internal communication systems to support coordinated delivery:

- Improved information sharing between headquarters and branches
- Regular briefings and updates to support programme implementation
- Enhanced coordination during emergency responses and large-scale campaigns

8. Key Achievements (July–December Highlights)

- Strengthened bilateral partnership with the Chinese Embassy
- Participation of GRCS staff in international seminars in China
- Expanded partnerships leading to new and sustained programme funding
- Increased national and international visibility of GRCS
- Improved communication and documentation of programme results

9. Challenges and Areas for Improvement

- Limited dedicated communication resources and staffing
- Need for a more structured and fully resourced communication strategy
- Inconsistent documentation of field-level impact and success stories

10. Forward Outlook

In 2026, GRCS will further strengthen humanitarian diplomacy and communications by:

- Developing and implementing a **comprehensive communication and visibility strategy**
- Expanding bilateral partnerships, including continued engagement with the Chinese Embassy
- Enhancing staff participation in international learning and exchange platforms
- Strengthening digital presence and media engagement
- Improving documentation of impact and results for advocacy and resource mobilisation

Overall, humanitarian diplomacy and communications in 2025 significantly enhanced GRCS's visibility, partnerships, and institutional positioning, with **notable progress achieved during the second half of the year**.

Accountability and agility (cross-cutting)

During the reporting period, The Gambia Red Cross Society (GRCS) strengthened its institutional systems to enhance transparency, risk management, compliance, digital capability, and innovation. These efforts were critical to ensure that program scale-up across health, climate, migration, and disaster response was supported by robust internal controls and agile management systems.

1. Accountability

Human Resources (HR)

Safeguarding and Staff Safety

GRCS continued to mainstreaming safeguarding across programmes, with emphasis on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA), child safeguarding, and safe programming. Orientation sessions were conducted for newly recruited project staff and volunteers under malaria, migration, and ECOWAS-supported projects. Safeguarding reporting pathways were reinforced at branch level to improve accessibility and confidentiality.

Staff safety measures were strengthened through refresher briefings on operational security, particularly for teams engaged in maritime migration response and flood-prone areas. Safety protocols for field travel and emergency deployment were re-emphasized.

Staff Development and Capacity Building

During the reporting period:

- Staff participated in technical training on PMER, migration programming, epidemic preparedness, and financial compliance.
- Branch-level leadership was strengthened through governance orientation sessions linked to Branch Assemblies and the Constitution Review process.

- Acting appointments and internal task redistribution were used to maintain operational continuity amid temporary staffing gaps.

Gender, diversity and Inclusion

Gender and inclusion considerations were integrated across recruitment and programming. Efforts were made to:

- Maintain gender balance in volunteer mobilization, particularly in health campaigns.
- Ensure representation of women and youth in branch governance processes.
- Integrate PGI principles into migration and climate programming.

Finance

Transparent Management of Financial Resources

Financial management systems were reinforced to ensure:

- Segregation of duties and compliance with IFRC and donor requirements.
- Regular reconciliation of accounts and improved budget monitoring.
- Alignment of expenditure with approved work plans.

Financial planning was revised in response to cash-flow constraints and project-based funding structures. Non-essential expenditures were curtailed, and resource allocation was prioritized toward lifesaving and donor-funded activities.

Financial Reporting and Donor Accountability

- Timely financial reporting was submitted to IFRC and project donors, including CIDCA and migration partners.
- Budget revisions were undertaken where necessary to align with activity rescheduling.
- Increased collaboration between Finance and PMER units improved reporting accuracy and compliance.

Integrity

GRCS maintained zero tolerance for fraud, corruption, and misconduct. During the reporting period:

- Integrity policies were reinforced through staff orientation.
- Reporting channels for misconduct were communicated internally.
- No major integrity breaches were reported at national level; minor compliance issues were addressed through corrective supervision.

The organization continued to align with IFRC integrity standards and Movement Code of Conduct obligations.

Risk Management

Risk management systems were strengthened across programs and at institutional levels:

- Operational risks (funding gaps, climate shocks, migration surges) were reviewed during management meetings.
- Governance-related risks were mitigated through structured Branch Assemblies and oversight mechanisms.
- Financial risk monitoring improved through tighter budget tracking.
- Programme implementation risks were monitored through quarterly reviews and GB updates.

Adaptive management allowed GRCS to re-sequence activities where funding, staffing, or contextual risks emerged.

Security Management

Security protocols were reviewed in light of:

- Maritime migration incidents.
- Field operations in flood-prone communities.
- Staff travel and volunteer deployment.

Coordination with local authorities ensures safer access during emergency responses. No major security incidents affecting staff were recorded during the reporting period.

Supply Chain Strengthening

Supply chain systems were reinforced to support:

- Procurement and distribution of malaria medicines and campaign materials.
- WASH infrastructure materials for borehole construction.
- Emergency supplies for migration response.

Improvements included:

- Better procurement planning aligned with campaign schedules.
- Enhanced documentation and compliance with donor procurement requirements.
- Strengthened coordination between programmes and logistics units to avoid delays.

Results-Based Management (RBM) / PMER

GRCS made progress in institutionalizing Results-Based Management principles:

- Improved alignment between planning tools, workplans, and Unified Plan outcomes.
- Strengthened indicator tracking for health, migration, and climate programmes.
- Regular programme reviews informed adaptive decision-making.
- Enhanced collaboration between PMER and Finance improved narrative–financial coherence.

Digital data collection tools were increasingly used in malaria and migration programming to improve real-time reporting.

Digital Transformation

- Digital transformation progressed gradually, reflecting growth in digital maturity:
 - Digital Maturity Growth: Increased use of digital data collection tools for SBCC, malaria, and migration activities; strengthened electronic documentation and cloud-based data storage systems; and Improved communication through social media and digital engagement platforms.

- Data and Digital Literacy: Staff and volunteers received orientation on digital data collection tools; and PMER and programme staff enhanced capacity in digital reporting systems.
- Data-Driven Humanitarian Services: Health campaign data informed targeting and follow-up strategies; migration response data supported coordination with authorities and movement partners.

Access to Infrastructure and Digital Services

- Limited infrastructure and connectivity at the branch level remain a constraint.
- Plans are underway to expand digital access and equipment under new project funding.

Innovation

Innovation during the reporting period focused on practical, locally-led improvements:

Transformation Leadership

Senior management promoted adaptive management approaches, particularly in climate and migration programming.

Experimentation and Innovation Mainstreaming

- Integration of anticipatory action mechanisms (SEAP development) represents a strategic innovation in disaster financing.
- Mobile caravan SBCC approaches enhanced outreach effectiveness in malaria programming.

Enabling Local Innovation

- Youth and volunteers played active roles in climate awareness and community-based resilience initiatives reaching 558 people.

Partnerships

- Collaboration with IFRC, ICRC, Spanish Red Cross, CIDCA, ECOWAS, and government institutions supported technical innovation and operational efficiency.

Ongoing Emergency Operations – Secretariat Services Update

While no large-scale IFRC emergency appeal was active during the reporting period, GRCS maintained readiness for: Flood response; Maritime migration incidents; and Epidemic preparedness (Mpox).

Progress Against Operational Strategy Objectives

- Maintained rapid response capacity through trained volunteers.
- Strengthened coordination with national authorities.
- Preserved readiness for DREF activation if required.
- Continued SEAP validation process to enable anticipatory financing.

Summary

Progress by the National Society Against Objectives

GRCS has made measurable progress in strengthening institutional systems that underpin Unified Plan delivery. Improvements in safeguarding, financial compliance, governance, supply chain management, and digital reporting have enhanced operational reliability. While funding constraints and HR gaps remain challenging, adaptive management has ensured continuity of priority programs. The National Society is progressively advancing toward greater institutional maturity, transparency, and agility, positioning it for sustainable growth.

IFRC Network Joint Support

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and Movement partners supported GRCS through:

- Technical assistance in SEAP development and climate financing.
- Financial management oversight and donor compliance guidance.
- PMER capacity strengthening.
- Safeguarding and integrity framework alignment.
- Support for migration programming and RFL systems.

This joint support has been instrumental in reinforcing accountability, digital adaptation, and operational agility across all strategic priorities.

Q4. Affected persons (people reached)

See cover pages for data on indicators.

Thematic Area	Gender		Total
	M	F	
Disaster	988	1028	2,016
Response and recovery	0	0	0
PGI	1,300	3,000	4,300
WASH	683	991	1,674
Health programming	199,685	208,079	407,782
Immunization	0	0	0
Mental Health	6,338	3,597	9,935
Migration, RFL	13,592	9,434	23,026
First Aid Sea Rescue	35,496	36,946	72,442
Blood Donations	784	123	907
Shelter	0	0	0
Livelihoods	0	0	0
Climate Risk	233	325	558
Cash Transfer	40	64	105
RCRC Educational Programming	588	612	1,200

Value, power and Inclusion	4,942	14,847	19,889
Environmental awareness and education activities in schools	588	612	1,200
Total	259,671	268,949	529,332

Q5. Participation and accountability for affected people – Community Engagement and Accountability

See under Q3 – Values, Power and Inclusion for Community Engagement and Accountability results.

Under the reporting period, GRCS ensured that affected people were meaningfully engaged in programme design, implementation, monitoring, and feedback processes through the following mechanisms:

- Integration of CEA principles across Health, WASH, Migration, Disaster Risk Reduction, and Climate programming, ensuring community consultations precede interventions.
- Deployment of trained volunteers to conduct house-to-house sensitization, public forums, and Mobile Caravan outreach, particularly during the Seasonal Malaria Chemoprevention (SMC) campaign.
- Establishment and strengthening of Water Management Committees in Sami and Nianija districts to enhance community ownership and sustainability of borehole systems.
- Regular community dialogue sessions with migrants, returnees, and host communities to improve protection services and reintegration support.
- Implementation of the Community Trust Index Survey (June 2025) supported by IFRC, assessing trust in humanitarian actors and programme effectiveness.
- Development processes initiated for a CEA Policy and Strategy, aimed at institutionalizing accountability standards within the National Society.
- Use of digital platforms (Facebook, X, LinkedIn) to enhance transparency, publish activity updates, and provide real-time emergency response information.
- Integration of Protection, Gender and Inclusion (PGI) safeguards including PSEA and Child Safeguarding training to ensure safe participation environments.

Q6. Risk management

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Actions Taken
	Low/medium /High	Low/medium/ high	
Crop failure and adverse effect on climate change	high	high	Encouraged farmers to adopt Smart Agricultural systems and engage in horticulture activities
Inflation and bad governance	High	High	Ensure Government put measures to regulate foreign investment and be accountable on their actions
Ambulance services - faces financial risk in the management of the ambulance services investment	Medium	Very high	- Developed a robust financial management plan to address budgeting, revenue generation, and cost containment. - Monitoring financial performance regularly to identify and address potential issues. - Regulatory compliance: ensure the ambulance services comply with relevant regulations and standards. - Safety protocols: implement strict safety protocols for ambulances including driver training and patient safety procedures.
Funding Gaps and Delays – Limited or delayed funding may hinder the timely execution of planned activities.	High	High	Proactive donor engagement, diversified funding sources, and

			phased implementation of activities.
Climate-Related Disasters (Flooding, Droughts/Dry Spells, Epidemics) – High exposure to climate shocks poses threats to community resilience and programme continuity.	Medium	High	Strengthened disaster preparedness, early warning systems, prepositioning of relief items, and integration of climate-smart approaches in interventions.
Public Health Emergencies (e.g., Mpox, Malaria, Measles, Polio, Cholera) – Outbreaks can disrupt ongoing activities and increase humanitarian needs.	Medium	High	Maintaining trained Rapid Response Teams (RRTs), pre-positioning hygiene and health supplies, and scaling up community awareness and surveillance.
Operational and Security Risks – Challenges such as limited access to certain areas, volunteer safety, and logistics constraints may affect implementation.	Medium	High	Strengthened security protocols, regular risk assessments, and coordination with authorities for safe access.
Institutional and Capacity Risks – Internal challenges including human resource gaps, governance, or systems inefficiencies may slow delivery.	Medium	High	Ongoing capacity-building, leadership training, staff retention strategies and motivations, and systems strengthening.
Reputational Risks – Mismanagement, communication gaps, or failure to deliver on commitments could affect trust with communities, partners, and donors.	Low	High	Transparent communication, accountability to affected populations (AAP), and regular monitoring and reporting.

Q7. Exit strategy and sustainability

GRCS integrated sustainability and exit considerations across all programme areas throughout 2025, with a focus on strengthening community ownership, institutional capacity, and alignment with national systems. Exit approaches were designed not as abrupt cessation points, but as structured transitions that ensure continuity of benefits beyond the life of specific project funding.

1. Community Ownership and Local Structures

Across sectors, GRCS prioritised the establishment and strengthening of community-based structures to sustain outcomes:

- **WASH:** Water Management Committees (WMCs) were trained in operation, maintenance, governance, and basic financial management for borehole systems. Regular coaching and follow-up visits were conducted to ensure functionality, accountability, and local ownership. Clear handover protocols are being applied as infrastructure becomes operational.
- **Health & Malaria (SMC/SBCC):** Community volunteers, traditional communicators, and opinion leaders were capacitated to continue behaviour change messaging on malaria prevention, treatment adherence, and health-seeking behaviours beyond campaign periods.
- **Climate & Environment:** Community groups engaged in mangrove restoration and environmental sanitation were supported to institutionalise practices (e.g., routine clean-up schedules, local by-laws where applicable) and link with local authorities for continuity.

2. Capacity Strengthening of Volunteers and Staff

Sustainability was reinforced through continuous capacity building:

- Expansion of **first aid training** and progress toward establishing the GRCS First Aid Training School to ensure long-term service delivery and revenue generation.
- **MHPSS Training-of-Trainers (ToT)** model to create a cadre of national and regional trainers capable of cascading skills.
- Ongoing strengthening of **PMER systems**, enabling improved planning, monitoring, and evidence-based decision-making for future programming.

3. Integration with Government Systems and Policies

GRCS ensured alignment and integration with national frameworks to support sustainability:

- Close collaboration with the **Ministry of Health** and National Malaria Control Programme ensured that SMC and SBCC interventions are embedded within national health strategies.
- Engagement with **NDMA and sectoral ministries** strengthened alignment of disaster risk management, EW4All, and anticipatory action (SEAP) with national priorities.
- Active participation in **national migration coordination mechanisms** supports continuity of protection services and referral pathways.

4. Institutionalisation of Systems and Tools

To sustain programme quality and accountability, GRCS advanced institutional systems:

- Standardised **reporting templates and compliance tracking** to improve data quality and timeliness.
- Strengthened **CEA and PGI approaches**, including use of tools such as the Community Trust Index to inform programming.
- Development of **policies and SOPs** (e.g., Migration & Displacement Policy and SOPs) to guide consistent future implementation.

5. Financial Sustainability and Resource Mobilisation

Recognising funding volatility, GRCS adopted a diversified resource mobilisation approach:

- Secured new and continued funding streams, including **EU Migration Project, ECOWAS Humanitarian Project (No-Cost Extension into 2026)**, and **IFRC Global Climate Resilience Platform** funding.
- Strengthened partnerships with Movement partners and external donors to ensure continuity of priority programmes.
- Expansion of **income-generating initiatives** (e.g., commercial first aid trainings, facility utilisation) to support core costs.

6. Transition and Exit Planning by Sector

- **WASH:** Gradual handover to Water Management Committees (WMCs) with technical backstopping from regional teams; linkage to local authorities for oversight.
- **Health (SMC/Community Health):** Integration of volunteer networks into routine health promotion structures; continued collaboration with MoH.
- **Climate & DRM:** Transition from project-based activities to system-based approaches (SEAP, EW4All), enabling sustained anticipatory action.
- **Migration:** Scaling through longer-term programmes (EU Migration) and institutionalisation via policies and SOPs.

7. Risks to Sustainability and Mitigation Measures

Key risks identified include funding discontinuity, turnover of trained volunteers, and variable functionality of community structures. Mitigation measures include:

- Continuous refresher trainings and mentorship for volunteers and committees.
- Embedding activities within government and community systems.
- Strengthening monitoring and follow-up mechanisms.
- Ongoing resource mobilisation and partnership diversification.

8. Forward Outlook (2026 and Beyond)

GRCS will build on 2025 achievements by:

- Operationalising approved climate and anticipatory action financing (LLA, SEAP).
- Scaling migration and protection services under multi-year programmes.

- Consolidating PMER systems for stronger results-based reporting.
- Expanding community-based approaches that promote resilience and self-reliance.

Overall, the sustainability approach adopted by GRCS ensures that programme benefits extend beyond the reporting period while strengthening national and community systems for long-term impact.

Q8. Lessons learned

Over the course of implementing the Unified Plan, several lessons have emerged that provide important insights for strengthening the design and delivery of future projects and programmes.

1. Importance of Locally-Led Approaches: We learned that interventions are most effective when communities are meaningfully engaged in decision-making, planning, and implementation. While community participation was integrated into many activities, some areas showed that early involvement and continuous dialogue with local stakeholders significantly increased ownership and sustainability.

Application in the future: Upcoming projects will dedicate more time and resources to structured community engagement at all stages, ensuring that solutions reflect local priorities and capacities.

2. Flexibility and Adaptive Management: The Unified Plan highlighted that rigid project designs can become challenging in dynamic contexts, particularly in responding to overlapping crises (climate shocks, health emergencies (planned for measles and polio became the need for intervention), or socio-political changes). We learned that adaptive planning and flexible funding mechanisms improve responsiveness and effectiveness.

Application in the future: Future programmes will embed on adaptive management strategies, including scenario-based contingency plans and flexible resource allocation, to allow quick adjustments when contexts shift.

3. Integration of Multi-Sectoral Interventions: Experience shows that addressing humanitarian needs in silos is less effective than integrated approaches. For instance, linking disaster responses with livelihoods of recovery and psychosocial support strengthened resilience outcomes.

Application in the future: Future projects will emphasize integrated, cross-sectoral design, aligning with GRCS and IFRC Strategy 2030 priorities to connect health, disaster risk reduction, climate adaptation, and livelihoods.

4. Strengthening Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL): While data collection and reporting were carried out, gaps were observed in systematically capturing and analyzing learning from interventions. We learned that stronger MEAL frameworks enable better evidence-based decision-making and accountability.

Application in the future: Investments will be made in digital data systems, staff training, and regular reflection sessions to strengthen the culture of learning and adaptive programming.

5. Partnership and Coordination: Collaboration with government institutions, Movement partners, and other stakeholders enhanced the auxiliary role of the National Society. However, coordination mechanisms were at times fragmented or ad hoc, limiting collective impact.

Application in the future: More structured coordination platforms will be established, with clear roles, communication channels, and joint planning exercises to maximize synergies and reduce duplication.

6. Volunteer and Staff Capacity: The Unified Plan confirmed that well-trained and motivated volunteers are central to effective programme delivery. However, uneven capacity across branches created disparities in service delivery.

Application in the future: Future interventions will prioritize continuous training, mentorship, and incentive mechanisms to build a more consistent, skilled, and resilient volunteer network nationwide.

Evaluation Plan - Updates

Evaluation Title (Tentative title if final title not available)	Location(s) covered by the Evaluation	Strategic Priority / Enabling Function	Organization (National Society/PNS/ IFRC/ Joint)	Completion/intended completion date
Quarterly Reviews to take stock of programmatic performance of the inform planning for the subsequent ones.	All programmes and projects of the national society	Maximal utilization of resources to achieve programme outcomes	GRCS Spanish Red Cross	This activity is ongoing and mainly on quarterly basis
Retreats to conduct moments of reflection on progress in the implementation of 2024 Unified Plan including determining success stories, best practices, challenges, and way forward	All Central and Region level staff	Determining best practices, opportunities, gaps, and potential threats to inform 2027 2028 implementation planning	GRCS Spanish Red Cross	Completed for the Management and Governing Board (January and February 2025)
Assessment of the roles of the EOC one year after its commissioning	Disaster Management		GRCS Spanish Red Cross	Completed

Evaluation of the existing logistics and supply chain management including Warehousing (central and Branch offices) at the National Society to inform	Logistics and supply chain Management	Improve logistics and supply chain system in place for timely and effective of relief services	GRCS Spanish Red Cross	Completed
Review of current SOP s on the Identity of the National Society to inform Development of Standard manual on Brand Identity	Office of SG	Standard manual on Brand Identity	GRCS Spanish Red Cross	Completed
Knowledge, Attitude and Practice (KAP) Survey on WASH	Project Intervention Communities in CRR North	Health and Wellbeing (WASH)	GRCS Spanish Red Cross	Conducted in April 2025 in CRR covering SpRC WASH Project Intervention Communities

Success stories

1. Success Story —Establishment of a Child Safe Friendly Space in Foni-Kanjabina

The Gambia Red Cross Society (GRCS), with support from the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs through the Children Affected by Armed Conflict (CAAC) project, established the first **Child-Friendly Safe Space (CFSS)** at Kanjabiana Arabic School in the Foni districts of The Gambia.



For years, children in this border community attended school without access to a structured,

protective, and child-centered environment. Many faced psychosocial distress linked to cross-border insecurity, poverty, and limited access to formal education services. Teachers reported low concentration levels, irregular attendance, and limited parental engagement—particularly among girls and children from vulnerable households. The establishment of the Child-Friendly Safe Space marked a transformative moment for the school and the wider community.

A Child's Voice: A 15-year-old girl attending the school shared:

"Before this space, we just came to class and left. Now we can talk about our problems. We learn how to protect ourselves and support each other. I feel more confident and happier coming to school."

Teachers also reported improved participation and concentration among students attending the sessions. Caregivers expressed relief knowing their children now had access to a safe environment within the school compound.

Child-friendly videos on protection and safeguarding issues were developed and made available to children, social media platforms and state TV.

<https://x.com/GambiaRedCross/status/2021254551290970245?s=20>

2. Restoring Hope to Families Through Restoring Family Links (RFL)

"We thought our son was dead..."

One of the most emotional moments during the reporting period came through the work of the **The Gambia Red Cross Society** Restoring Family Links (RFL) Unit.

A father in rural The Gambia had lost contact with his son for more than two years after the young man migrated through North Africa. The family had searched tirelessly for information but received none. Eventually, believing he had died during the migration journey, the family performed Islamic funeral rites in his memory.

When the GRCS RFL Officer first contacted the father to arrange delivery of a Red Cross Message (RCM), the father reacted angrily and refused to cooperate. The family had lost hope.

After careful explanation and reassurance, the officer was allowed to visit the household. During the visit, the father received a handwritten message from his son, who was alive but detained in Algeria.

As he read the message, the father broke into tears.

The family gathered around him in disbelief and relief. What had begun as despair turned into renewed hope and healing. For the first time in years, the family knew their son was alive.

<https://www.facebook.com/share/p/1ECp3g6tY5/>

3.. A Mother Reunited with Her Son After Nine Years

“The hug brought everyone to tears.”

At the migrant reception centre in Tanji, one returnee approached the GRCS RFL team with a special request. He wanted to call his mother—but feared the shock of hearing his voice after nearly nine years of silence.

The young man had spent years detained abroad and had completely lost contact with his family. Before making the call, he asked the RFL Officer to first speak with his mother and prepare her emotionally.

When the call was connected, the young man could barely speak. He wept uncontrollably as his mother realised her son was alive.

Within an hour, the mother arrived at the reception centre. The moment they embraced after nine years apart moved staff, volunteers, and migrants alike. Many present were unable to hold back tears.

4. Women Taking Leadership in Water Management

“For the first time, women are managing the community water system.”



https://youtu.be/OSIZa-HTSCc?si=FvE06NKn_3MQ9fPb

Under the Spanish Red Cross-supported WASH Project in Central River Region (CRR), Water Management Committees were established in Jalakoto, Tandi, and Bati Jaha communities.

For many women in these communities, this was the first time they had been included in leadership and decision-making around community infrastructure.

Women representatives participated in:

- Borehole oversight
- Water management training
- Hygiene promotion

- Maintenance planning

One woman committee member explained:

“Water is life. Before this project, women were never involved in decisions about the water system. Now we are part of the management and protection of this important resource.”

The inclusion of women strengthened community ownership and improved sustainability of the water systems.

5. Saving Lives Through Community Malaria Action

“People started accepting the medicines because the volunteers spoke our language.”



During implementation of the Seasonal Malaria Chemoprevention (SMC) campaign in Kombo North, resistance and hesitation from caregivers threatened programme uptake during the early cycle of implementation.

In response, GRCS mobilised volunteers to conduct intensive house-to-house Social and Behaviour Change Communication (SBCC) activities and community caravan outreach.

Volunteers used local languages, drama, and direct engagement to explain:

- The benefits of SMC

- Proper use of medicines
- Side effects and management
- Importance of completing treatment cycles

One caregiver shared:

“At first, many mothers were afraid to give the medicine to their children. But after the volunteers came and explained everything, we understood and accepted it.”

The campaign eventually reached tens of thousands of community members and significantly improved acceptance of malaria prevention interventions.

<https://www.facebook.com/share/v/1LA2rPowYB/>

6. Youth Building Climate Resilience and Livelihoods

“The garden gave us hope and skills.”

Through the Climate and Capacity Building Fund (CBF) initiative in Marakissa, youth volunteers and community members were trained in:

- Climate-smart horticulture
- Poultry management
- Adaptation practices
- Sustainable livelihoods

For many young people, the initiative represented more than training—it provided hope, skills, and pathways for future income generation.

A youth and volunteer participant stated:

“Before this project, many of us only heard about climate change. Now we are learning how to adapt and create livelihoods for ourselves.”

7. General Assembly Strengthening Governance and Unity

“Branches came together to shape the future of the National Society.”

The 2025 General Assembly marked a major milestone for GRCS institutional development and governance.



Figure: Group photo of the GRCS General Assembly

Held in Janjanbureh, the Assembly brought together:

- Governing Board members
- Branch representatives
- Youth leaders
- Volunteers
- Movement partners
- Government representatives

The Assembly:

- Reviewed progress and accountability
- Conducted elections.
- Strengthened constitutional reform discussions.
- Launched strategic partnerships and projects.
- Reinforced the auxiliary role of GRCS

The event also served as a platform for strengthening unity between headquarters and branches while recognising the contribution of volunteers and local leadership.

<https://www.facebook.com/share/p/1Dx1DjLtG5/>

8. YOUTH ASSEMBLY

“The youths, the heartbeat of the movement”

<https://www.facebook.com/share/p/18VuSiGHjp/>

The Gambia Red Cross Society held its Youth Assembly in Fajara, bringing together passionate young volunteers from across the country.

From energizing discussions to innovative ideas and renewed commitments to humanitarian service, the youth proved once again that they are the heartbeat of the movement.



Figure : Opening Ceremony of the GRCS Youth Assembly 2025.

9. Voluntary Aid Detachment (VAD) conducts a HEALTH FAIR.

<https://www.facebook.com/share/p/1ChgA8wxuR/>

Health Fair in Njawara Village was a powerful reminder that healthcare is a right, not a privilege. Through the dedication of our Voluntary Aid Detachment Link and support from the **China Medical Team**, we brought essential health services directly to the community.

From eye screenings to diabetes and hypertension checks, families received care, reassurance, and hope right at their doorstep.



Figure 3: Health Fair in Njawara in the North Bank Region of The Gambia

Annex 1. IFRC application of the 8+3 reporting template

The IFRC network structures its result-based management along five Strategic priorities and four Enabling functions, developed based on the IFRC network's [Strategy 2030](#):

IFRC network Strategic Priorities	IFRC network Enabling Functions
SP 1 - Climate and environment	EF 1- Strategic and operational coordination
SP 2 - Disasters and crises	EF 2 - National Society development
SP 3 - Health and wellbeing	EF 3 - Humanitarian diplomacy
SP 4 - Migration and displacement	EF 4 - Accountability and agility
SP 5 - Values, power and inclusion	

The Federation-wide results matrix provides a standard way for the IFRC network to measure its progress towards Strategy 2030 implementation and supports consistent quality of the IFRC network planning, monitoring and reporting. To further advance coherence in monitoring across the IFRC network, a [Federation-wide Indicator Bank](#) has been developed and integrated into the Federation-wide monitoring systems for emergencies and longer-term work, structured along the Federation-wide results matrix as well. Signatory of the Grand Bargain Agreement, the IFRC has committed to its monitoring and reporting standards through integration of the [8+3 reporting template](#) contents into its results-based management approach. The following mapping demonstrate the way in which this report aligns with 8+3 reporting:

8+3 template	IFRC network Annual Report (with variance in structure in red)
Core Questions	
1. Overall Performance	Overall Performance
2. Changes and Amendments	Changes and amendments
3. Measuring Results	Measuring Results
4. Affected Persons	Cover pages with indicators values
5. Participation & AAP	Under Q3 Strategic Priority 5: Values, power and inclusion – Community Engagement and Accountability
6. Risk management	Risk management
7. Exit Strategy and Sustainability	Under Q3 sub-sections by Strategic Priority/Enabling Function where relevant
8. Lessons Learned	Lessons learned
Additional Questions	
1. Value for Money/ Cost Effectiveness	Not included in mid-year reports
2. Visibility	Not included in mid-year reports
3. Coordination	Under Q3 Enabling Function 1: Strategic and operational coordination
4. Implementing Partners	Cross-cutting, with a focus on support to localization through the Q3 Enabling Functions 1 to 4
5. Activities or Steps Towards implementation	Crosscutting in Q3 Strategic Priorities and Enabling Functions
6. Environment	Under Q3 Strategic Priority 1: Climate and environment