



ZAMBIA RED CROSS SOCIETY



STRATEGIC PLAN 2026 – 2030

Saving Lives Changing Minds





Zambia Red Cross Society (ZRCS)

STRATEGIC PLAN 2026 – 2030

Date:

13th December 2025

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Presented to:

ZRCS National Council, Board Members, Strategic Planning Steering Committee, Provincial and District Structures, Volunteers, Partners and Stakeholders

Empowering a Resilient and Inclusive Zambia Red Cross Society for 2026 - 2030



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NATIONAL PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



ZRCS Board and Management wishes to acknowledge with gratitude the valuable contribution of individuals who took part in developing this Five-Year National Society (NS) Strategic Plan. The plan was developed using a participatory and consultative approach involving ZRCS Board Members, Management, the ten (10) Provincial Presidents drawn from all ten (10) provinces of the Republic of Zambia, Branch Presidents, Volunteers, Youth representatives, Strategic Government Heads of Departments mostly involved in providing humanitarian services such as Disaster Management and Mitigation Unit (DMMU), Ministry of Green Economy including internal and external partners, women, youths and different abled persons.

On behalf of the NS, we wish to thank the Netherlands Red Cross (NLRC) for its support in providing financial and material support and the Consultant who provided simplified strategic planning technical guidance. We further wish to thank our stakeholders and various government departments for their participation. Stakeholder inputs and contributions to the quality and comprehensiveness of our National Society Strategic Plan for the next quinquennium.

The NS is alive to the changing humanitarian funding landscape and remains agile, adaptive and forward looking to ensure successful implementation of this Strategic Plan at all levels, which will be ensured through the commitment and passion of the entire ZRCS structure, complemented by local and international stakeholders/partners, as well as the continued and scaled up support from public authorities. The National Governing Board remains committed to ensuring that the NS becomes resilient and fit for purpose through implementation of this ambitious and attainable strategic Plan in the face of evolving humanitarian challenges.

We the leaders of the NS stand tall because we are standing on the shoulders of stakeholders and partners.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M. Ng'onga', with a stylized circular flourish at the end.

Martin Ng'onga
National President (Board Chairperson)

FOREWORD



Developing the 2030 Strategic Plan has been an invaluable opportunity for the Zambia Red Cross Society (ZRCS) to reflect on our progress, assess our achievements and challenges, and identify areas for improvement and growth. Despite the turbulence of the 2021–2025 period, ZRCS remained resilient and delivered on its mandate, recording significant gains across priority areas. During this period, our humanitarian and development programming expanded more than threefold, greatly increasing our reach and impact. We remain committed to being a symbol of hope for vulnerable communities and to upholding transparency, accountability, and trust with communities, authorities, and partners.

Though we exhibited resilience in the face of evolving disasters and humanitarian landscape, becoming a fully resilient and fit-for-purpose humanitarian organization requires continued transformation, strengthened systems, and renewed commitment at all levels.

As we operationalize the 2030 Strategic Plan, our key priorities include strengthening our legal framework; positioning ZRCS as a trusted humanitarian partner; enhancing resource mobilization and investment; and improving financial management through professional, transparent, and credible leadership. Strengthening and retaining a dedicated membership base will further enhance our effectiveness and national presence.

Management is committed to attracting and retaining competent staff capable of driving the change and growth of the NS. The 2030 strategic plan is ambitious but not insurmountable with the right mindset, teamwork, commitment and dedication, propelled by supportive/enabling environment, innovation and digital transformation, mastering the balance between governance and management

The four pillars anchoring this Strategic Plan; **(1) Disaster Risk Management, Climate Change and Resilience (2) Health, Protection and Community Resilience (3) National Society Development and Volunteer Engagement and (4) Financial Sustainability and Adaptation** are catalytic to our direction of becoming a resilient, trusted and principled humanitarian actor in the country.

This plan aligns with the broader national and regional agenda, including Pan-African initiatives and commitments, IFRC Vision 2030, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Zambia's 8th National Development Plan.

A stylized, handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a large, looped 'C' followed by a series of fluid, connected strokes.

Cosmas Sakala
Secretary General/ Chief Executive Officer

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Zambia Red Cross Society — the nation’s oldest and largest volunteer-based humanitarian organization — has been saving lives and empowering communities since 1966. Guided by the Seven Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross, ZRCS serves as an auxiliary to the Government of Zambia and a trusted leader in disaster response, health, protection, and community resilience.

Zambia faces escalating humanitarian challenges — climate shocks, health inequities, persistent poverty, and rising road traffic accidents. The ZRCS Strategic Plan 2026–2030 offers a bold, evidence-driven roadmap to safeguard lives, strengthen communities, and build a resilient, financially sustainable, and adaptive National Society that delivers lasting humanitarian impact.

Methodology and Stakeholder Engagement

The Plan was developed through an inclusive, evidence-based process combining situational analysis, SWOT and Problem Tree assessments, and broad consultations with volunteers, staff, branches, government, private sector, and partners. It aligns with Zambia Vision 2030, the 8th National Development Plan, the SDGs, and IFRC Strategy 2030.

Strategic Model

ZRCS applied the Issue-Based Strategic Planning (IBSP) model to identify challenges, address root causes, and define results-oriented, resource-efficient objectives that ensure measurable impact, accountability, and transparency.

Strategic Pillars and Goals

The Plan is anchored on four interconnected pillars that advance ZRCS’s mission to save lives, reduce suffering, and build resilient communities:

1. **Disaster Risk Management, Climate Change and Resilience** – Increase anticipatory action, preparedness, and rapid response by 2030, reducing vulnerability and strengthening community resilience.
2. **Health, Protection and Community Resilience** – Expand equitable access to health, WASH, and protection services, empowering women, youth, and vulnerable groups.
3. **National Society Development and Volunteer Engagement** – Boost volunteer engagement, digital capacity, and retention for quality, people-centred humanitarian action nationwide.
4. **Financial Sustainability and Adaptation** – Strengthen resilience through diversified funding, innovation, and digital transformation, reducing donor dependency and increasing domestic financing.

Implementation and Operationalization

A phased approach will guide implementation: 2026–2027 (quick wins and foundational systems), 2028–2030 (systems strengthening and scale-up), and beyond 2030 (long-term transformation). Annual operational plans will translate goals into measurable actions, budgets, and KPIs. Resource

mobilization will leverage partnerships with government, private sector, civil society, academia, and the Red Cross Movement, with emphasis on local fundraising and social enterprise growth.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL)

A robust MEL framework will support real-time digital reporting, gender- and youth-sensitive indicators, annual reviews, and a 2028 mid-term evaluation to refine and scale successful interventions. This ensures evidence-based decision-making, accountability, and adaptive learning.

Conclusion

By 2030, ZRCS will be a resilient, agile, digitally enabled, and financially sustainable National Society delivering high-impact, equitable humanitarian services that empower communities to thrive amid crises. The Issue-Based Strategic Planning model ensures that every action directly addresses Zambia's most urgent humanitarian and institutional priorities — positioning ZRCS as a trusted, transformative, and forward-looking humanitarian leader within the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

8NDP	Eighth National Development Plan (Zambia)
ADRA	Adventist Development and Relief Agency
AU	African Union
BCC	Behaviour Change Communication
CBOs	Community-Based Organizations
CBU	Copperbelt University
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (<i>U.S.</i>)
CDF	Constituency Development Fund
CRM	Customer Relationship Management
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
DMMU	Disaster Management and Mitigation Unit
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GRZ	Government of the Republic of Zambia
GTA	Gender Transformative Approaches
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HQ	Headquarters
IBSP	Issue-Based Strategic Planning
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
MEAL	Monitoring, Evaluation Accountability and Learning
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
MIYCN	Mother – Infant and Young Children Nutrition
MU	Mulungushi University
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations

NLRC	Netherlands Red Cross
NS	National Society
NSHS	National School Health and Nutrition Strategy
OVCs	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
PESTELI	Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Environmental, Legal and Institutional analysis
PPPs	Public-Private Partnerships
PTA	Problem Tree Analysis
RMNCH	Reproductive Mother New – born Child Health
SA	Situation Analysis
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SREF	Society Revenue and Expenditure
SRH	Sexual and Reproductive Health
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (analysis)
TB	Tuberculosis
TV	Television
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund
UNZA	University of Zambia
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WASHE	Water, Sanitation and Health
WHO	World Health Organization
ZAMGOLD	Zambia Gold Company Limited
ZANACO	Zambia National Commercial Bank
ZAOU	Zambia Open University
ZNBC	Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation
ZNPHI	Zambia National Public Health Institute
ZRCS	Zambia Red Cross Society

INTRODUCTION

The Zambia Red Cross Society, established in 1966 under an Act of Parliament (The Zambia Red Cross Act Cap 307), is Zambia's oldest and largest humanitarian organization. Born out of the handover from the British Red Cross just two years after independence, ZRCS has since been at the forefront of saving lives, protecting dignity and building resilience among the most vulnerable communities.

As an auxiliary to Government, ZRCS plays a critical role in disaster risk management and response, community health and sustainable development, ensuring no one is left behind in times of crisis developmental context

ZRCS is firmly guided by the 7 Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, which define its mandate and inspire its action:

- **Humanity:** Preventing and alleviating suffering, protecting life and health and fostering peace.
- **Impartiality:** Serving all without discrimination, prioritizing the most urgent needs.
- **Neutrality:** Remaining non-partisan to maintain trust and access.
- **Independence:** Supporting Government efforts while retaining autonomy to act on humanitarian principles.
- **Voluntary Service:** Driven by compassion, powered by volunteers, not profit.
- **Unity:** One National Society for all Zambians, open to everyone.
- **Universality:** Part of a global family of equal National Societies, working together to support humanity.

With a presence in all 10 provinces of Zambia, ZRCS has become a trusted partner in both emergency and development settings.

In 2020, with support from the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), ZRCS launched its 2021 - 2025 Strategic Plan, prioritizing disaster preparedness, response and recovery, community health and mobilizing people for lasting change.

Building on those achievements, ZRCS has now embarked on its 2026 - 2030 Strategic Plan, a bold new direction shaped by lessons learned and an ambition to remain agile, innovative and impactful. This process is being supported by the Netherlands Red Cross (NLRC) through the Localization Project, with technical expertise from partners and a locally hired consultant.

Through this new strategy, ZRCS reaffirms its commitment to being a leading humanitarian actor in Zambia - resilient, people-centered and dedicated to saving lives while empowering communities for a better future.

Strategic Context and Rationale

In today's resource-limited environment, humanitarian organizations in Zambia face the daunting challenge of meeting competing development and livelihood needs. For ZRCS, this reality

underscores the urgency of adopting a clear, forward-looking strategy. Strategic planning is therefore not a luxury but a necessity - it enables ZRCS to prioritize effectively, strengthen resilience and safeguard the lives and livelihoods of the most vulnerable.

The Humanitarian Challenge

Zambia continues to grapple with multiple, overlapping crises:

- Climate change impacts such as prolonged droughts, flash floods and extreme heat.
- Humanitarian emergencies including hunger, disease outbreaks, accidents and pandemics.
- Deep-rooted poverty, with 61% of the population living in poverty and 42% in extreme poverty (below \$1.25/day). In rural areas, this figure rises to 78% (Mwape Chiefdom, 2014 – 2018).
- Limited access to clean and safe water, and adequate sanitation

These conditions result in food insecurity, malnutrition, crop failures and rising health threats such as outbreaks of communicable diseases, neglected tropical diseases, non-communicable diseases and zoonoses. Communities in ZRCS operational areas are particularly vulnerable without stable minimal livelihoods thereby perpetuating the cycle of poverty.

ZRCS's Response and Vision

ZRCS recognizes that it must be the architect of its own resilience. Together with government (GRZ), partners, volunteers and communities, ZRCS envisions a future where:

- Lives are saved in times of disaster.
- Communities are empowered with lasting solutions for improved livelihoods.
- National resilience is strengthened, ensuring that Zambia is better prepared to withstand shocks and emergencies.

Through this strategy, ZRCS commits to:

- Building a resilient National Society (NS) capable of delivering timely, effective and inclusive humanitarian services.
- Mitigating the impacts of disasters and climate change through proactive measures and community-based solutions.

1.0 PREAMBLE

The ZRCS implemented a Strategic Plan for 2021 - 2025, supported by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC). This plan guided sound decision-making, resource mobilization and delivery of life-saving services to vulnerable communities.

As the 2021-2025 Strategic plan came to its conclusion, the ZRCS Board, Management Team, volunteers, youth representatives and branches across all ten provinces, launched the development of the 2026 - 2030 Strategic Plan. This process was facilitated by a locally engaged consultant.

The ZRCS leadership desired a localized strategy rooted in Zambia's context. While aligning with global and national frameworks - IFRC priorities, the 8th National Development Plan, Vision 2030 and the SDGs - the new plan had to directly address Zambia's most pressing humanitarian needs. Key priorities identified included:

- Climate change and disaster risk reduction
- Resource mobilization and financial sustainability
- Empowerment of vulnerable groups
- General health, including Water, Sanitation and Health Education (WASHE)
- Sexual and reproductive health
- Digital transformation
- Leadership and governance
- Livelihoods and Nutrition
- Monitoring, evaluation and learning

Equally important, the plan was designed to reflect the voices and priorities of stakeholders, ensuring inclusiveness, broad ownership and alignment across all levels.

ZRCS Strategic Plan Framework

This Strategic Plan is built around five guiding questions that shape the Zambia Red Cross Society's **direction, priorities, and measurable results over the next five years.**

Table 1: Key Questions Guiding the Strategic Plan

No.	Key Question	What ZRCS Must Do
1	Who are we as ZRCS?	Define the Society's identity – its vision, mission, mandate, and core values.
2	Where are we now in achieving our vision of resilience?	Examine current performance through internal and external analysis to identify key challenges and opportunities.
3	Where do we want to go?	Set clear results, strategic goals, and priorities for the next five years.

4	How can we get there?	Outline the strategies, actions, and partnerships required to achieve the defined goals.
5	How will we know we have succeeded?	Establish a robust monitoring and evaluation framework with measurable indicators, supported by annual work plans and investment plans.

1.1 Strategic Planning Approach and Methodology

Under the leadership of the Board and Management Team, ZRCS engaged an external consultant to facilitate a highly participatory, inclusive, and evidence-based strategic planning process.

The approach combined qualitative and quantitative methods to ensure the Strategic Plan reflects both data-driven insights and the lived experiences of those ZRCS serves.

The process brought together voices from the Board, senior management, technical teams, ten provincial offices, district branches, volunteers, youth representatives, and key partners. This inclusive engagement allowed for a comprehensive situational analysis using a bottom-up approach, identifying strengths, capacities, and gaps across the organization.

Through collective reflection and forward-looking dialogue, participants defined ZRCS's humanitarian vision, developed a clear roadmap for achieving it, and designed a monitoring framework to measure progress.

1.2 The Role of Government and Partners in the ZRCS Strategic Plan

A core assumption of the ZRCS Strategic Plan (2026–2030) is that the Government of the Republic of Zambia (GRZ) and development partners will play a central, catalytic role in achieving the Society's goals. Accordingly, this plan aligns with key international, regional, national, and local development frameworks, including:

- **Global frameworks:** IFRC Strategy 2030, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and the African Union Agenda 2063.
- **National frameworks:** Zambia Vision 2030 and the Eighth National Development Plan (8NDP, 2022–2026).
- **District frameworks:** Integrated Development Plans (IDPs).

ZRCS strategies focus on priority areas including healthcare (WASH), sexual and reproductive health, nutrition, climate change adaptation, digital transformation, One Health, disaster risk reduction, natural resource conservation, and empowerment of vulnerable groups—closely aligned with national and district priorities.

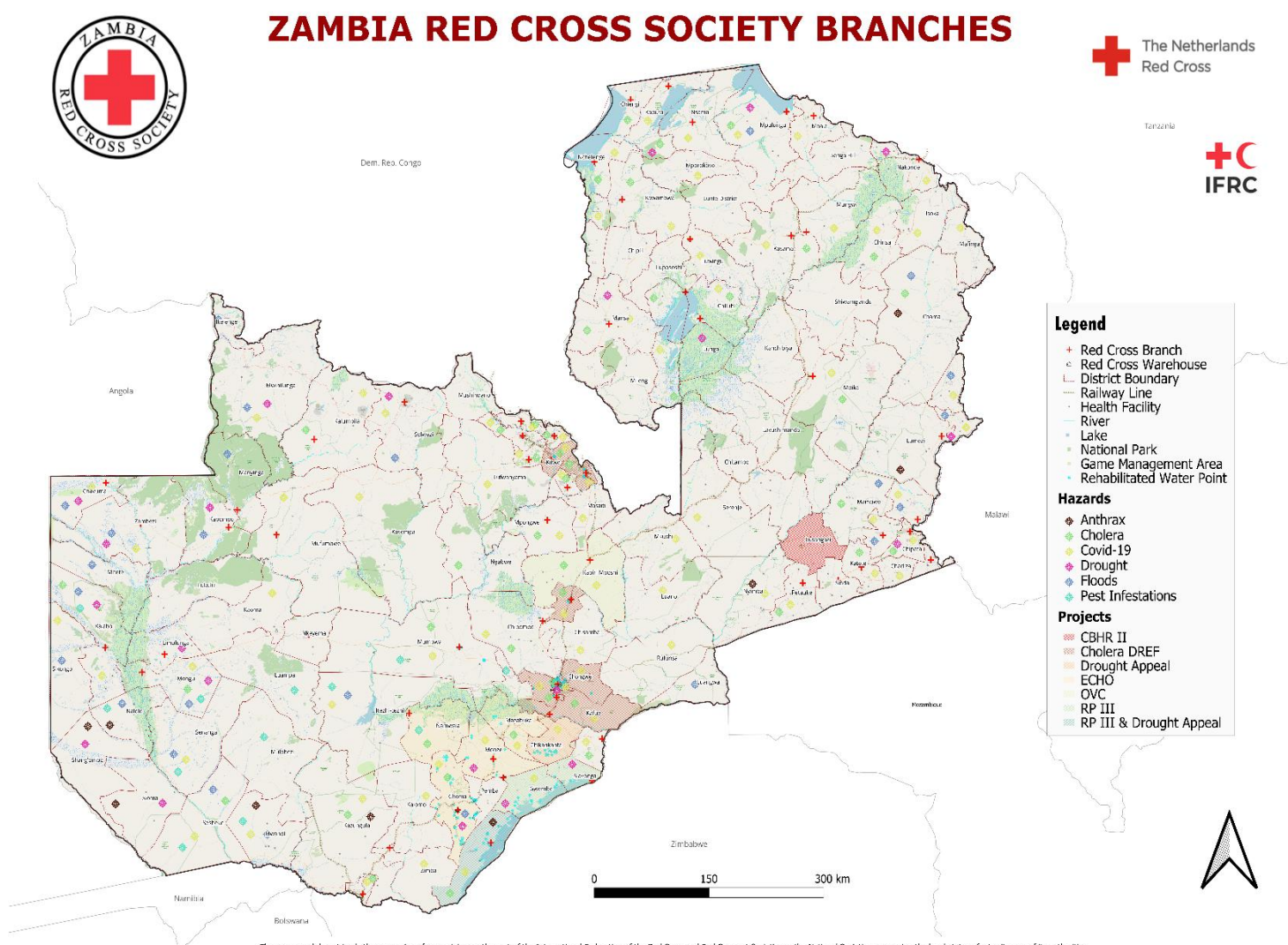
The Society recognizes that its impact depends on GRZ's delivery of critical public services and infrastructure, particularly in disaster-prone and underserved rural areas. Without these enabling conditions, humanitarian responses risk being constrained, and inequalities may persist.

ZRCS positions the GRZ and development partners not just as collaborators, but as essential drivers of sustainable humanitarian and development outcomes—working hand-in-hand with the Society to strengthen resilience, reduce vulnerability, and improve livelihoods across Zambia.

2.0 BRIEF HISTORY OF THE ZAMBIA RED CROSS SOCIETY

ZRCS was established by an Act of Parliament under the Zambia Red Cross Society Act Cap 307, with a mission to tackle Zambia’s most pressing humanitarian and development challenges—saving lives, restoring dignity, and transforming mindsets.

Founded in 1966, following the handover from the British Red Cross shortly after Zambia’s independence, ZRCS has consistently complemented Government efforts by delivering humanitarian services to the most vulnerable and responding swiftly to both natural and man-made disasters.



2.1 Governance and Leadership of ZRCS

Understanding ZRCS Governance and Leadership

Strong governance and decisive leadership are the backbone of the ZRCS. They ensure accountability, transparency, and full adherence to the Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. Through effective governance, ZRCS makes sound decisions, mobilizes resources responsibly, and delivers life-saving services to the people who need them most.

ZRCS Governance Structure

ZRCS operates through a clear and robust governance system that promotes integrity, participation, and strong oversight at every level:

- **National Council** – The highest policy-making body that sets the strategic direction, approves major decisions, and protects the overall mandate of the National Society.
- **National Governing Board** – Provides strategic leadership and oversight, ensures strong governance, manages institutional risks, and upholds fiduciary accountability.
- **The Secretariat (Management)** – Implements the National Society's Strategy, policies, and drives the day-to-day operations of the organization.
- **Provincial Executive Committees** – Supervise provincial operations, enforce national policies, and strengthen coordination between branches and headquarters.
- **Branch Executive Committees** – The frontline leadership teams that manage community programmes, engage volunteers, build local partnerships, and drive grassroots resource mobilization.

This governance structure strengthens coordination, decentralization, and accountability from the national office right down to community levels.

3.0 ASPIRATIONS AND COMMITMENTS OF ZRCS

A strong Strategic Plan reflects an organization's purpose, aspirations, and guiding principles. For ZRCS, these are captured in its Vision, Mission, Core enablers, and Core Values, defining who we are, what we stand for, and how we serve.

4.0 VISION AND MISSION OF ZRCS

4.1 Vision Statement

A resilient humanitarian organization that saves lives and empowers vulnerable communities for lasting well-being.

4.2 Mission Statement

To build resilience and save lives through principled humanitarian action that empowers vulnerable communities for lasting well-being.

4.3 Core Enablers

ZRCS delivers on its mandate through essential functions that define its scope and enable operational success:

- **Service Delivery:** Provide timely, inclusive, life-saving services where needed most.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Track progress, measure impact, and ensure accountability.
- **Planning:** Anticipate needs and design effective, priority-aligned responses.
- **Capacity Building:** Strengthen volunteers, staff, and communities for sustainable action.
- **Resource Mobilization:** Secure financial, material, and human resources to sustain operations.
- **Research:** Generate evidence-based knowledge to improve programming and advocacy.
- **Support:** Provide technical, material, and moral support to all stakeholders.
- **Facilitating:** Enable partnerships, dialogue, and coordination for maximum impact.
- **Coordinating and Management:** Ensure effective systems and oversight for quality delivery.
- **Governance and Leadership:** Uphold good governance practices and inspire visionary leadership.
- **Networking and Collaboration:** Build alliances locally, nationally, and internationally to enhance reach and impact.

4.4 Core Values

ZRCS's values define its spirit and character, guiding behaviour, shaping relationships, and building trust:

- **Transparency:** Operate openly, sharing information honestly.
- **Accountability:** Take responsibility for decisions, actions, and their impact.
- **Integrity:** Act with honesty, fairness, and consistency.
- **Trust and Respect:** Honour the dignity of everyone we serve and work with.
- **Collaboration:** Work together with communities, partners, and stakeholders for greater impact.

5.0 STAKEHOLDER MAPPING AND ANALYSIS

No organization operates in isolation. ZRCS recognizes that achieving sustainable humanitarian impact requires strategic engagement with diverse stakeholders. Stakeholder mapping and analysis is therefore essential, not optional—transforming engagement from ad hoc interactions into a deliberate, evidence-driven process.

By mapping and analyzing stakeholders, ZRCS ensures its Strategic Plan is rooted in reality, reflecting the influence, interests, and power dynamics of actors across Zambia's humanitarian and development ecosystem. This enables the Society to:

- **Reduce blind spots and clarify relationships:** Identify actors whose influence or resources can accelerate or impede ZRCS objectives.
- **Prioritize resources/engagements:** Focus time, funding, and effort on high-impact partners and stakeholders critical to success.
- **Strengthen partnerships and accountability:** Build trust, alignment, and inclusivity with government, donors. Include beneficiaries, communities, and vulnerable populations alongside government, donors, and private sector actors.
- **Enhance sustainability:** Anticipate risks, opportunities, power dynamics, and foster shared ownership and long-term collaboration, reducing reliance on single actors.
- **Anticipate risks and seize opportunities:** Understand stakeholder expectations, potential conflicts, and alignment with national and global humanitarian priorities.

This approach ensures that partnerships are strategic, inclusive, and long-lasting, positioning ZRCS to deliver its mandate with credibility, foresight, and measurable impact.

Using participatory techniques, ZRCS has developed a stakeholder mapping and analysis matrix as part of its Situational Analysis / Environmental Scan (SA) (*See Table 2 in Appendix*).

6.0 ZRCS SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

The 2026–2030 strategic planning process took a balanced combination of quantitative and qualitative data collection, capturing measurable trends alongside the lived realities of communities. This approach ensures that the strategy is anchored in hard evidence and authentic voices from beneficiaries, communities, partners, and stakeholders.

6.1 Environmental Analysis

For ZRCS, a strong strategy must be grounded in reality and not assumptions. The PESTELI (Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Environmental, Legal, and Institutional) analysis provided a clear, evidence-based picture of the external forces shaping ZRCS’s path toward its vision of becoming *“a leading humanitarian organization that is resilient, saves lives, and empowers communities for better livelihoods.”*

PESTELI Strategic Insights

Politically, ZRCS operates within a supportive environment anchored by Zambia’s 8th National Development Plan, Vision 2030, and disaster risk frameworks. These priorities, together with growing global and regional humanitarian cooperation, strengthen ZRCS’s auxiliary role and open new avenues for advocacy, funding, and partnerships.

Economically, shifting donor trends, inflation, and global financial uncertainty pose challenges—but they also drive innovation. ZRCS can tap into emerging private sector partnerships, joint donor programs, and its vibrant youth volunteer base to diversify and sustain its resources.

Socially, Zambia’s free education policy, community engagement, and inclusive governance align with ZRCS’s humanitarian mission. Yet, persistent gender inequalities, climate-related health risks, and restricted civic space continue to test the Society’s reach and impact.

Technologically, advances in AI, telemedicine, mobile money, and early warning systems are transforming humanitarian response. For ZRCS, embracing digital innovation means faster coordination, stronger accountability, and greater transparency. However, risks like misinformation and cyber threats must be carefully managed to protect community trust.

Environmentally, climate change remains one of ZRCS’s most pressing challenges. Floods, droughts, and disease outbreaks demand that resilience and adaptation become central to all programs. Global and local climate frameworks now offer ZRCS opportunities to expand disaster preparedness, climate-smart initiatives, and sustainable livelihoods.

Legally, international humanitarian law, human rights conventions, and Zambia’s evolving NGO regulations provide an enabling framework for ZRCS to operate effectively. Still, enforcement gaps and bureaucratic delays can hinder rapid response and protection for the most vulnerable.

Institutionally, ZRCS’s strength lies in its credibility, partnerships, and alignment with the IFRC, ICRC, AU, and SADC frameworks. Deepening collaborations with government, academia, and the private sector—while addressing challenges like coordination gaps, donor dependency, and short-term funding—will enhance sustainability and impact.

6.2 SWOT Analysis

The SWOT analysis provided the Zambia Red Cross Society with a clear picture of where it stands and how it must position itself for the future. It moved beyond a diagnostic exercise to serve as a strategic compass—highlighting strengths to build on, weaknesses to address, opportunities to seize, and threats to anticipate. This process ensured that every decision in the 2026–2030 Strategic Plan is rooted in fact, not assumption, and that ZRCS remains realistic, resilient, and responsive to both local and global humanitarian demands.

Strengths

The Zambia Red Cross Society is built on a solid foundation of people, systems, and partnerships that position it as a trusted national humanitarian leader. Its greatest strength lies in its diverse and skilled human capital, complemented by an extensive volunteer base and strong youth engagement that ensures community connection and a sustainable leadership pipeline. Through continuous capacity building, ZRCS enhances staff and volunteer competencies, reinforcing institutional resilience and adaptability across all levels.

Operationally, ZRCS has a proven record of nationwide disaster response backed by well-established community structures and strong local acceptance. Its recognized First Aid expertise and certification leadership further position the Society as a technical authority and first responder of choice during emergencies.

The Society operates under sound corporate governance and enjoys legal recognition through an Act of Parliament, providing both legitimacy and accountability in all its operations.

ZRCS's strategic asset base—including warehouses across the country—strengthens its logistical efficiency and emergency preparedness. Its diversified income streams and broad network of partnerships with corporates, churches, community-based organizations, and local authorities enhance sustainability and reach. The organization's high community visibility and strong national brand, coupled with the patronage of the Republican President, amplify public trust, political goodwill, and stakeholder engagement.

Together, these strengths form the backbone of ZRCS's operations. They are core capabilities that sustain the organization's relevance today, offer significant potential for future impact, and can be strategically leveraged to scale humanitarian action.

ZRCS's Internal Weaknesses as Strategic Issues

ZRCS continues to deliver vital humanitarian services, yet several internal weaknesses have emerged that limit its long-term sustainability and impact. Volunteer motivation and retention, especially among youth, remain low, while staff turnover weakens institutional memory. Limited training opportunities and a small pool of technically skilled board members further constrain effective decision-making. Financial dependence on donors poses threats to both credibility and independence.

The limited presence of Red Cross clubs in schools and unequal membership distribution restrict ZRCS's national reach and inclusiveness. Geographic barriers and limited emergency equipment compromise rapid response capacity, while low uptake to digital transformation limits adaptability and innovation. Declining external support and limited local fundraising efforts further threaten sustainability. To remain a trusted humanitarian leader, ZRCS must urgently address these weaknesses through stronger leadership, enhanced accountability, and strategic investment in human capital, technology, and financial resilience.

These cross-cutting weaknesses limit ZRCS's ability to lead, respond, and sustain impact. Urgent investment in strong governance, motivated human capital, digital innovation, and diversified financing will be vital for maintaining ZRCS's relevance and authority as Zambia's premier humanitarian institution.

Opportunities

The Zambia Red Cross Society operates in a fast-changing humanitarian, socio-economic, and technological landscape that offers immense opportunities to expand its impact and strengthen sustainability. The organization stands at a strategic advantage to harness innovation, partnerships, and emerging trends that can transform its operations and deepen community engagement.

- ***Capacity Building and Human Capital Development;*** There is a growing national demand for First Aid and disaster management training, positioning ZRCS as the country's leading authority in lifesaving skills. The rise of educated and motivated youth eager to volunteer

presents an opportunity to build a vibrant, skilled, and innovative volunteer force that ensures leadership continuity and institutional renewal.

- ***Technological Advancements and Digital Transformation***; The rapid digital revolution—through mobile apps, online fundraising, and early warning systems—offers ZRCS the chance to modernize operations, expand reach, and improve real-time coordination. Leveraging technology will not only enhance efficiency but also attract new donors and strengthen transparency.
- ***Strategic Partnerships and Collaborations***; Expanding partnerships with hospitals, private sector actors, faith leaders, and traditional authorities can deepen trust, resource mobilization, and service delivery. Continued support from the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement and potential alignment under the Office of the President through DMMU create new avenues for influence, funding, and national integration.
- ***Resource Mobilization and Infrastructure Expansion***; Access to unused land, government grants, and CDF resources provides a strong foundation for income-generating ventures and infrastructure growth. The country's favourable investment climate encourages public-private partnerships, while ZRCS's growing branch network ensures broader reach and visibility at the grassroots.

These opportunities offer ZRCS powerful levers to scale impact, diversify funding, and reinforce its humanitarian leadership. By strategically investing in people, technology, partnerships, and infrastructure, ZRCS can secure a more sustainable and resilient future while transforming lives across Zambia.

Threats/Challenges

ZRCS operates in an increasingly complex and volatile environment marked by multiple intersecting threats that strain its humanitarian capacity. Fragile community surveillance and weak early-warning systems continue to expose populations to preventable epidemics and disasters, while rising road traffic accidents and gaps in emergency and pre-hospital care intensify the demand for stronger First Aid and emergency response systems amidst growing competition in service delivery.

Widespread poverty, food insecurity, and unemployment have deepened humanitarian need, driving social vulnerability and dependence on aid. At the same time, climate change and environmental degradation—manifested through frequent droughts, floods, and extreme weather—are disrupting livelihoods and threatening national resilience.

Persistent health inequalities, limited access to clean water and sanitation, and recurrent disease outbreaks such as cholera continue to endanger communities. The escalating mental health crisis and youth neglect, marked by substance abuse and limited psychosocial support, further compound vulnerability among young people.

Equally concerning are gender inequalities and protection risks, including gender-based violence, child marriage, and restrictive cultural norms that erode human dignity and safety. Limited data sharing and dissemination, and accountability gaps undermine operational efficiency.

ZRCS also faces financial constraints and overreliance on external donors, exposing it to funding uncertainty amidst economic fluctuations and competing national priorities. Finally, digital and

infrastructure deficiencies, including poor connectivity, cybersecurity threats, and inadequate transport networks, hinder effective humanitarian delivery, particularly in remote and hard-to-reach areas.

Collectively, these challenges represent strategic threats that demand innovation, resilience, and adaptive leadership to safeguard ZRCS's relevance, credibility, and humanitarian impact in the years ahead.

Table 2: ZRCS SWOT Analysis Summary

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
• Skilled human resources and large volunteer base • Operational Excellence and Disaster Response expertise • Sound corporate governance ensuring transparency • Legal mandate under Act of Parliament and Patronage of the Republican President • Established structures, high visibility with strong community acceptance • Strong asset base (warehouses, infrastructure) and diversified income streams • Steady growth in Digital Transformation (digital tools -apps, fundraising, volunteer platforms)	• Risk of financial instability due to donor dependence • Limited branch-level visibility and capacity • Few NS clubs in schools reducing volunteer enrolment pipelines • Low uptake of digital transformation and mindset change • Limited coordination, focus and communication • Limited volunteer and Human Resource Capacity at the Branch level	• Partnerships with hospitals, private sector, religious/traditional leaders • Peaceful operating environment • High donor confidence and IFRC support • Strong government support and cooperation • Rising pool of educated youth with innovative ideas eager for volunteerism	• Competition with NGOs and First Aid providers • Declining donor support amidst an increasingly competitive donor environment • Loss of skilled staff to competitors • Poor transport links delaying access to disaster-prone areas • Financial constraints due to economic volatility

7.0 PROBLEM TREE ANALYSIS (PTA)

Conducting a PTA after qualifying each Strategic Issue ensured ZRCS did not just “treat the wound” but healed the underlying condition, creating smarter strategies that drive lasting resilience, save lives and empower communities. In addition, Problem Tree Analysis tool was used to help ZRCS Leaders to further identify the roots causes to weaknesses and threats/challenges which were identified in both the SWOT and PESTELI.

Table 3: Analyzed Strategic Issues using PTA to identify Immediate, Underlying and Root Causes

Strategic Cluster	Strategic Issue	Immediate, Underlying, Root Causes
Humanitarian Emergencies and Disaster Preparedness	Climate change and environmental degradation	Droughts, floods, crop/livestock losses, weak early-warning systems, poor infrastructure, rising greenhouse gas emissions, deforestation, weak climate policies..

	Road traffic accidents and emergency care gaps	Frequent crashes, overloaded transport, inadequate ambulances/kits, weak law enforcement, limited training, poor coordination, rapid motorization, low investment in road safety
	Humanitarian strain from poverty, food insecurity, unemployment	Low income, unemployment, crop failures, weak social protection, limited education/skills, structural inequality, climate impacts, weak governance, population growth.
Health, Protection and Community Resilience	Fragile community surveillance and preparedness	Weak early-warning systems, limited outbreak reporting, low digital adoption, fragmented coordination, chronic underinvestment in health/disaster systems, over-reliance on external actors.
	Health inequalities and recurrent outbreaks	Limited WASH access, unequal health services, weak primary healthcare, shortage of skilled workers, structural poverty, policy gaps.
	Persistent gender inequalities and protection risks	GBV, child marriage, exclusion from decision-making, weak protection systems, patriarchal norms, deep-rooted economic/educational disparities.
	Rising youth mental health and neglect	Substance abuse, teenage pregnancies, lack of role models, limited SRH education, unemployment, social stigma, weak intergenerational support.
Volunteer Engagement and Human Resource Capacity	Low volunteer motivation and retention	Limited incentives, recognition, career growth, weak volunteer management systems, absence of mentorship and long-term development strategy.
	Loss of skilled staff	Competitive salaries elsewhere, limited internal progression, inadequate staff welfare, weak HR retention framework, employment insecurity.
	Limited skills and training	Insufficient training, outdated learning resources, lack of structured learning pathways, inconsistent prioritization of human capital.
	Restricted board expertise	Narrow selection criteria, reliance on traditional nominations, limited outreach, weak succession planning, governance structures misaligned with modern best practices.
Governance, Leadership and Institutional Integrity	Insufficient financial resources and over-dependence on donors	Limited internal resource mobilization, entrenched donor dependency, lack of financial autonomy vision, structural underinvestment in income-generating assets, weak coordination, centralized decision-making, and poor succession planning.
	Ineffective coordination and communication	Overlaps in program implementation, gaps in information flow, unclear roles, lack of

	across HQ, provinces and branches	standardized coordination framework, weak MEL-driven communication, limited digital adoption, resistance to institutional change.
	Low staff and volunteer morale	Absence of unified values, inadequate leadership support, historic HQ-dominant culture.
Visibility, Outreach and Stakeholder Engagement	Limited visibility and branch capacity	Few active communication platforms, weak branding, inadequate branch investment, minimal digital/media presence, centralized HQ focus, poor storytelling culture.
	Weak youth engagement	Few active school clubs, limited youth initiatives, lack of systematic school-club framework, inconsistent youth programming, weak partnerships with schools.
	Geographic and logistical barriers	Poor roads, limited transport, weak warehousing, underfunded rural outreach, structural underinvestment, donor preference for accessible areas.
Organizational Adaptation and Operational Resources	Limited local resources and declining external support	Weak local fundraising, over-dependence on donors, minimal private sector engagement, low investment in income generation, lack of alternative resource strategies.
	Inefficient allocation and operational processes	Low morale, high turnover, budget overruns, missed opportunities, weak inter-departmental coordination, centralized resource mobilization, limited strategic planning.
Digital and Infrastructure Capacity	Digital and infrastructure gaps	Poor connectivity, weak IT systems, cybersecurity threats, inadequate transport/logistics, limited ICT investment, weak digital skills, high deployment costs, reliance on donor-driven upgrades, low long-term digital vision.
Institutional Strengthening and Accountability	Limited institutional systems, tools, and policies	limited feedback channels, , limited investment in MEL, fragmented coordination, .
	Overreliance on donors and financial instability	Funding shortfalls, unsustainable branch activities, limited domestic resource mobilization, narrow income base, weak financial reserves, volatile economic/policy environment.

8.0 STRATEGIC PILLARS, GOALS, RESULT OUTCOMES, OBJECTIVES, CORE STRATEGIES

8.1 Strategic Pillar 1: Disaster Risk Management, Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Capacity

Strategic Goal: Strengthen ZRCS's anticipatory, preparedness and rapid disaster response capacity by 2030



Result Outcome: Enhanced ZRCS emergency preparedness and response systems, ensuring timely, equitable and effective life-saving interventions across disaster-prone and high-risk communities, while reducing vulnerability and strengthening community resilience against climate shocks and humanitarian crises.

Strategic Objective: By 2030, disaster-prone communities experience reduced disaster risks and enhanced resilience.

Core Strategies:

- Strengthen Institutional and Legal Frameworks through establishment and enforcement of effective policies, and institutional arrangements for coordinated DRR planning and implementation at all levels.

- Enhance Risk Identification and Assessment through improved hazard monitoring, vulnerability analysis, and risk mapping to inform evidence-based decision-making and prioritization of DRR interventions.
- Promote Community-Based Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience. Empower communities through knowledge, skills, resources, and participation to reduce disaster risks and enhance preparedness at the local level.
- Integrate DRR into Development Planning and Climate Change Adaptation. Mainstream risk reduction in sectoral policies, programs, and projects to ensure sustainable development and resilience against multiple hazards.
- Strengthen Early Warning Systems and Preparedness through development and maintenance of effective early warning mechanisms and preparedness plans to enable timely anticipatory actions, response and minimize disaster impacts.
- Enhance Public Awareness, Education, and Capacity Building through increased knowledge on disaster risks and risk reduction measures among all stakeholders, including schools, media, and vulnerable groups.

Strategic Objective: Ensure national and sub-national disaster response and recovery systems operate timely, are coordinated, and effective to save lives and livelihoods.

Core strategies:

- Rapid and Coordinated Emergency Response through mobilization of resources, personnel, and equipment to quickly protect lives and livelihoods and meet urgent needs immediately after a disaster.
- Multi-Sectoral Collaboration and Partnership by engaging government agencies, UN Agencies, NGOs, private sector, and communities to work together efficiently
- Restoration of Essential Services and Infrastructure through prioritization restoring water, sanitation, food security and livelihoods and shelter to stabilize affected areas
- Community Engagement and Accountability, Risk Communication and Community Engagement and Psychosocial Support and Protection gender and accountability
- Transition Planning from Response to Recovery by designing recovery actions early to smoothly shift from emergency relief to rebuilding livelihoods, housing, and economic stability
- Ensure emergency services reach affected populations, essential services are restored, lives are saved, suffering is minimized, and communities rebuild with enhanced resilience.

Strategic Objective: By 2030, Communities demonstrate enhanced climate resilience and reduced climate-related losses to food security and livelihoods.

- Establish and strengthen community-based early-warning, early actions and monitoring systems for climate and non-climatic hazards.

- Promote diversified climate-resilient livelihood programs, including drought-tolerant crops, livestock, water harvesting, aquaculture, insurance schemes and other alternative income-generating activities to reduce vulnerability.
- Integrate climate change mitigation and adaptation into development plans at all levels through coordination, collaboration and partnerships with key stakeholders including government, NGOs, UN Agencies and communities.
- Develop disaster preparedness and response tools, structures and systems including Disaster
- Management policy, strategy, multi-hazard contingency planning and rapid response
- Mechanisms tailored to pro-actively reduce humanitarian suffering and loss of life at all levels.
- Promote and support Nature based Solutions including soil conservation, agroforestry,
- Reforestation and watershed management programs to strengthen natural buffers against floods and droughts.
- Implement community-based water management, water harvesting and irrigation systems to sustain agricultural production.
- Develop and promote climate-smart agricultural initiatives for farmers and local farmer groups as well as capacity building through trainings, farming inputs support and extension services.
- Construct and reinforce critical preparedness for effective response infrastructure (storage facilities, relocation centres, flood barriers and shelters) to withstand extreme weather events.

Strategic Objective: By 2030, ZRCS programs demonstrate improved organizational capacity for climate change adaptation, mitigation and environmental preparedness and response plans.

Core Strategies:

- Institutionalise climate and environmental response within ZRCS to coordinate programs and resource allocation.
- Forge multi-stakeholder partnerships with government, private sector and NGOs for technical support, funding and policy advocacy.
- Integrate climate change risk management into all operational planning and training programs for staff and volunteers.
- Develop monitoring, evaluation and learning frameworks to track climate impact, community resilience and program effectiveness.

Strategic Objective: By 2030, internal and external disaster-displaced populations experience well-managed movement through coordinated response, timely data, efficient evacuation and shelter systems, and integrated displacement considerations.

Core Strategies:

- Improve Evacuation Planning and Shelter Management by designing and implementation of community-centered evacuation plans and shelter management protocols that ensure safe, dignified, and efficient relocation of affected populations.
- Integrate Displacement and Migration into DRR and Recovery Plans through Mainstreaming considerations of displacement and migration into disaster risk reduction frameworks, recovery strategies, and development planning to address long-term vulnerabilities
- Support with provision of immediate and long-term needs including protection, inclusion, restoration and maintenance of family links for internal and external displaced families

8.2 Pillar 2: Health, Protection and Community Resilience.

Strategic Goal: Enhanced delivery of high quality, equitable and community accessible health Services

Result Outcome: Increased equitable access to quality public health, safe water and sanitation services by 2030, with reduced epidemic risks.



Strategic Objective: By 2030, communities and institutions demonstrate improved capacity to prepare for, detect, respond to, and recover from epidemics

Core Strategies:

- Expand community-driven surveillance systems linked to national and regional platforms.
- Strengthen adoption of digital and mobile tools for outbreak detection and reporting.
- Institutionalize partnerships between ZRCS, government and community structures for timely alerts.
- Advocate for sustained domestic investment in decentralized surveillance infrastructure.
- Strengthen the capacities of ZRCS branches for effective preparedness and response.
- Enhance the ZRCS prepositioning capacity of WASH and Healthcare supplies for effective response.
- Boost community disease surveillance through trained volunteers in contact tracing and digital reporting systems.

Strategic Objective: By 2030, communities demonstrate equitable and inclusive access to safe and sustainable WASH services.

Core Strategies:

- Develop and implement a comprehensive community WASH programme to improve access to clean water, sanitation and hygiene in high-risk areas, integrating behaviour change, infrastructure and disease prevention initiatives.
- Upgrade primary healthcare facilities and mobile outreach in rural and hard-to-reach locations.
- Establish community-managed safe water systems and sanitation facilities with local ownership.
- Advocate for stronger government and partner investment in rural WASH and primary health infrastructure.
- Strengthen capacities for staff and volunteers to deliver quality WASH services to vulnerable communities.

Strategic Objective: By 2030, communities experience improved access to primary and community health services, reducing preventable health risks

Core Strategies:

- Strengthen community awareness on Reproductive Mother, New-born Child Health (RMNCH) Mother-Infant and Young Children Nutrition (MIYCN) health promotion and health education activities in the communities using different platforms (based on baseline survey and formative research findings, Behaviour Change Communication (BCC) plan, health problem message development, etc)
- Capacity building of targeted Red Cross staff and volunteers on essential trainings for effective delivery of public health services.
- Strengthen primary health care services through multi-sectoral coordination mechanisms.

- Advocate for Adolescent sexual reproductive health and rights services.
- Integration of mental health and psychosocial support in all health and care interventions
- Strengthen maintenance and provision of infrastructure towards prevention of disease outbreaks such as renovation and construction of appropriate toilets, waiting mothers' shelters, good storage facilities for drugs and sundries, and boreholes.
- Strengthen local vector control initiatives (e.g., mosquito net distribution, sanitation drives).
- Advocate for improved policy alignment and resource allocation for epidemic preparedness at national and district levels.
- Challenging harmful norms and power relations: Strategies target entrenched patriarchal norms and shift social and cultural attitudes.
- Transforming structures and institutions: Establishing community-led protection networks changes institutional behaviours rather than only focusing on individual skills.
- Addressing root causes: Tackles deep-seated cultural, religious, and social drivers of GBV, child marriage, and other negative community practices.
- Track primary and community health services via service availability, utilization, outreach coverage, and community engagement.

Strategic Objective: By 2030, women, youth, and other vulnerable groups meaningfully participate in decision-making

Core Strategies:

- Strengthen inclusive governance and youth engagement systems – establish multi-level programmes that empower women and youth to meaningfully participate in decision-making processes at community, institutional and national levels.
- Establish a comprehensive framework for leadership development and mentorship of women and youth – create a multi-tiered programme that builds capacities, nurtures future leaders and embeds gender- and youth-inclusive practices across communities and institutions.
- Establish gender-inclusive governance frameworks at local and community levels.
- Promote intergenerational dialogues to reinforce equitable decision-making.

GTA Alignment:

- *Promoting equitable participation:* Empowers marginalized groups to have real influence, central to GTA principles.
- *Transforming structures and institutions:* Gender-inclusive governance frameworks ensure systemic change, not just individual capacity-building.
- *Sustainability through intergenerational change:* Mentorship and intergenerational dialogues normalize equitable practices over time.

Strategic Objective: By 2030, communities and institutions demonstrate increased gender equity awareness and adoption of protective practices

Core Strategies:

- Implement integrated gender-transformative curricula in schools and community programs.
- Strengthen community-led gender equity and social norm transformation systems – establish multi-level initiatives that engage communities, traditional leaders, youth and institutions to progressively shift harmful gender norms and promote protective practices.
- Build institutional and community capacity for gender-responsive leadership and protection – develop comprehensive programmes that enhance the capacity of leaders, staff and volunteers to implement gender-transformative approaches across sectors and communities.
- Promote community-led campaigns to reinforce protective practices and gender awareness.

8.3 Pillar 3: National Society Development, Outreach and Volunteer Engagement

Strategic Goal: Increased engagement, retention and competency of volunteers and staff to deliver sustainable, high-quality and inclusive humanitarian services.

Result Outcome: Volunteers are retained through structured recognition, mentorship, and sustainable engagement frameworks.



Strategic Objective: By 2030, volunteer motivation and engagement improve, benefiting from structured recognition, incentives, and career development opportunities.

Core Strategies:

- Implement a standardized volunteer recognition program at all branches, highlighting achievements quarterly.
- Introduce tangible incentives (certificates, skill development opportunities, awards) to reward consistent performance.
- Create clear pathways for volunteers to progress into leadership roles or specialized functions within ZRCS.
- Strengthen volunteer engagement and retention by monitoring satisfaction, addressing evolving needs, and adapting programs accordingly.

Strategic Objective: By 2030, volunteers are retained, benefiting from improved volunteer management systems, mentorship, and effective capacity building.

Core Strategies:

- Develop and deploy a centralized volunteer management system capturing data on recruitment, retention, skills and performance.
- Establish structured mentorship programs pairing experienced volunteers with new recruits, especially youth.
- Strengthen branch coordinators' capacity in volunteer management through continuous development, support, and application of best practices.
- Monitor volunteer progression and retention metrics quarterly to identify gaps early.

Strategic Objective: By 2030, enhance member and volunteer core humanitarian competencies.

Core Strategies:

- Develop and implement structured training curricula for all volunteer and member roles.
- Introduce continuous professional development programs aligned with international humanitarian standards (Sphere, CHS, IFRC).
- Establish mentorship and coaching systems to transfer institutional knowledge and practical skills.

Strategic Objective: By 2030, skill gaps among members and volunteers are reduced

Core Strategies:

- Upgrade learning materials and resources to reflect contemporary humanitarian practice.
- Introduce e-learning and digital training platforms to expand reach and accessibility.
- Monitor and evaluate training effectiveness to continuously improve programs and outcomes.

Strategic Objective: By 2030, increase the proportion of board members with relevant technical expertise and diverse professional backgrounds

Core Strategies:

- Revise board selection criteria to prioritize skills, diversity and governance experience.
- Expand and strengthen outreach initiatives to attract qualified professionals from diverse sectors.
- Establish transparent nomination and selection processes aligned with best governance practices.

Strategic Objective: Reduce governance gaps and improve board effectiveness by 2030

Core Strategies:

- Develop and implement a board succession plan to ensure continuity and knowledge transfer.
- Provide structured induction, orientation and continuous governance training for all board members.
- Monitor board performance and institutionalize accountability mechanisms for strategic oversight.

Strategic Objective: By 2030, increase the sustainability of school-based volunteer pipelines.

Core Strategies:

- Develop and implement a long-term NS school-club strategy aligned with ZRCS youth engagement goals.
- Build institutional partnerships with schools, parent associations and local community leaders to anchor clubs.
- Strengthen institutional capacity for school-based NS clubs by developing a comprehensive framework for leadership, governance and mentorship at school and branch levels.
- Monitor and evaluate school-club performance to guide improvements and ensure sustained engagement.
- Embed youth empowerment and volunteer development into ZRCS organizational culture as a core priority.

Strategic Objective: Increase community satisfaction with project access and service delivery by 2030

Core Strategies:

- Strengthen community awareness and understanding of project distribution criteria through sustained engagement and communication frameworks.
- Establish accessible feedback and grievance redress mechanisms at branch level.
- Strengthen communication channels between HQ and branches for real-time reporting.
- Promote inclusive planning forums that involve marginalized groups in decision-making.

Strategic Objective: Increase branch operational capacity by 2030

Core Strategies:

- Decentralize decision-making and resource allocation to improve branch responsiveness and local program ownership.
- Invest in comprehensive branch capacity development for leadership, technical skills and operational efficiency.
- Implement standardized performance monitoring systems across branches to measure impact, quality and accountability.
- Foster a culture of continuous learning and innovation to strengthen branch adaptability and program delivery.
- Institutionalize branch-level operational planning and evaluation frameworks aligned with national ZRCS strategy.
- Establish a standardized framework for creating and managing NS clubs across all targeted schools.
- Forge formal partnerships with the Ministry of Education and local education authorities to institutionalize NS clubs.
- Allocate dedicated resources and mentorship programs to support school-level club activities.
- Design youth-friendly engagement programs that promote leadership, civic responsibility and humanitarian principles.
- Integrate NS club activities into school calendars to ensure consistent participation and visibility.

Strategic Objective: Increase youth participation in ZRCS programs by 2030

Core Strategies:

- Develop structured volunteer pathways for students participating in NS clubs to transition into community-level engagement.
- Implement mentorship and peer-leadership programs linking experienced volunteers with school clubs.
- Design consistent youth-focused programs that build humanitarian skills, leadership and social responsibility.
- Mobilize resources to fund youth activities, workshops and competitions that encourage active participation.
- Create awareness campaigns targeting students, parents and teachers to promote the value of NS club membership.

Strategic Objective: Increase ZRCS digital integration by 2030, enhancing connectivity, data-driven decision-making, and service delivery

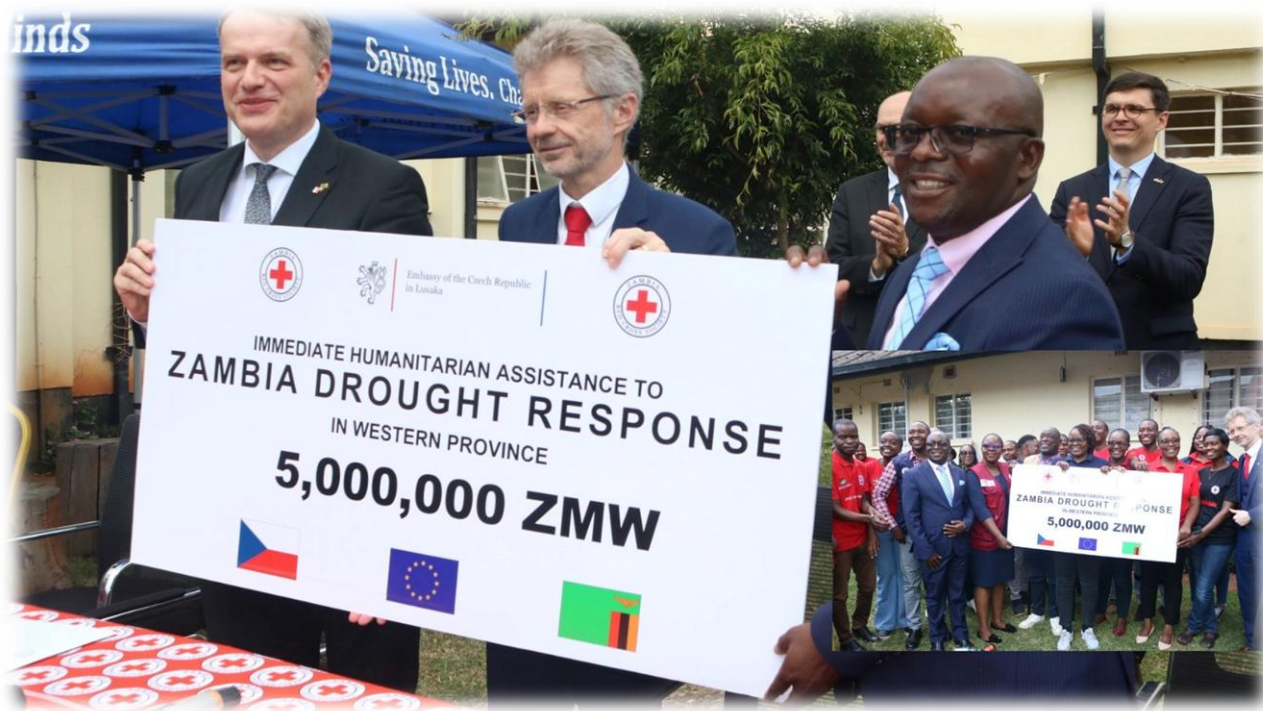
Core Strategies

- *Upgrade and Expand Digital Infrastructure:* Strengthen connectivity, hardware, and software systems across all operations, including remote and hard-to-reach areas, to ensure reliable and resilient digital platforms.
- *Enhance Cybersecurity and Data Protection:* Implement robust cybersecurity measures, secure networks, and data governance policies to protect sensitive information and maintain stakeholder trust.
- *Build Digital Skills and Capacity among staff:* Train staff and volunteers in digital tools, systems, and data management, fostering a culture of innovation and technology adoption throughout the organization.
- *Promote Inclusion and Community Access:* Develop digital solutions that improve service delivery and communication with vulnerable and hard-to-reach populations, ensuring equitable access to humanitarian assistance.
- *Enable Data-Driven Decision-Making:* Integrate digital systems to capture, analyze, and report information in real time, supporting evidence-based planning, monitoring, and response.
- *Strengthen Partnerships and Innovation:* Collaborate with government, private sector, and other humanitarian actors to leverage technology, share best practices, and pilot innovative solutions for effective response.

8.4 Pillar 4: Financial Sustainability and Adaptation

Strategic Goal: Increase resource mobilization, organizational capacity, resilience and operational efficiency across all ZRCS structures

Result Outcome: Enhanced capacity of ZRCS to mobilize financial resources domestically by 2030.



Strategic Objective: Increase ZRCS's share of domestic humanitarian funding to at least 10% of all humanitarian financing available in Zambia by 2030.

Core Strategies:

- Strengthen domestic resource mobilization mechanisms through targeted fundraising campaigns, corporate partnerships, and high-value donor engagement.
- Develop and implement a National Fundraising and Philanthropy Strategy that aligns ZRCS humanitarian priorities with national development goals.
- Leverage digital fundraising tools, mobile giving platforms, and online campaigns to diversify and expand donor reach.
- Strengthen ZRCS visibility and brand equity through consistent storytelling, impact documentation, and public engagement.
- Institutionalize strategic partnerships with government, private sector, and development partners to secure long-term domestic humanitarian funding.

Strategic Objective: Increase ZRCS's domestic revenue portfolio to at least over 50% of annual income by 2030 through diversified and sustainable funding streams.

Core Strategies:

- Expand and professionalize income-generating ventures such as commercial first aid, occupational health and safety training, and logistics services.
- Establish and scale social enterprises under a holding company separate from the organization's humanitarian activities aimed at supporting and financing ZRCS's humanitarian work.
- Strengthen the corporate and individual membership base through structured subscription models and value-added membership benefits.
- Foster branch-level fundraising initiatives, community-based philanthropy, and locally driven income projects to build grassroots ownership.
- Reinvest surplus revenues from income-generating activities into \Other investment vehicles, diversified income generation initiatives, and institutional development.
- Strengthen the First Aid brand as the leading provider of certified, high-quality training in Zambia by increasing annual revenue by at least 10% every year.

Strategic Objective: Increase organizational adaptability and institutional resilience by 2030.

Core Strategies:

- Implement an organizational change and capacity development framework that strengthens leadership, governance, and technical competencies.
- Invest in digital transformation initiatives, including data management systems, automation tools, and digital learning platforms.
- Strengthen monitoring, evaluation, accountability, and learning (MEAL) systems to enable data-driven decision-making.
- Foster a culture of agility, learning, and continuous improvement to enable timely adaptation to evolving humanitarian and development contexts.
- Establish risk management and business continuity planning to safeguard operations and ensure institutional sustainability.

Strategic Objective: Increase local fundraising revenue by 2030

Core Strategies:

- Develop and implement a Resource Mobilization Strategy to guide structured local fundraising campaigns across branches and the Secretariat.
- Operationalize strategic partnership frameworks with private sector actors, local businesses and diaspora networks to diversify funding sources.
- Strengthen branch-level fundraising teams through capacity building, mentorship, and performance - based incentives.

- Promote community led initiatives such as charity events, crowdfunding and social impact projects to mobilize local support.

Strategic Objective: Reduce dependency on international donors by 2030

Core Strategies:

- Develop and implement a Comprehensive Resource Diversification Strategy integrating government, private sector and philanthropic contributions.
- Institutionalize sustainable income generating projects aligned with ZRCS's humanitarian mandate, including social enterprises and consultancy services.
- Introduce digital fundraising platforms, mobile giving solutions and an online donor management system to broaden the donor base.
- Consistent application of the ZRCS Cost Recovery Framework at (10–15%) recovery rate across all programmatic operations.
- Explore innovative financing mechanisms such as impact bonds, blended finance and social investment partnerships.

Strategic Objective: Increase involvement and impact of ZRCS Branches in resource mobilization and income generation by 2030

Core Strategies:

- Develop a comprehensive volunteer retention, incentives and recognition framework to reward commitment and performance.
- Establish mentorship and leadership development programs to enhance volunteer participation and staff career progression within ZRCS.
- Strengthen partnerships with schools, communities and youth networks to expand a reliable volunteer pipeline.
- Implement competitive income generation, community partner engagement, and other resource mobilization and fundraising initiatives at the local Branch level

Strategic Objective: Increase ZRCS market visibility and brand recognition by 2030

Core Strategies:

- Launch a national branding and advocacy campaign emphasizing ZRCS's unique value proposition and auxiliary role.
- Enhance targeted communication strategies to differentiate ZRCS services from other NGOs and private First Aid providers.
- Strengthen digital and traditional media presence to highlight impact stories, success cases and community engagement.

- Institutionalize regular stakeholder engagement forums to showcase leadership in First Aid and humanitarian response.

Strategic Objective: Increase integration of financial sustainability and resource mobilization into all ZRCS operations by 2030.

Core Strategies:

- Develop and include resource mobilization and financial suitability initiatives and capacity building in ZRCS programming
- Establish strategic alliances with private sector, government and community organizations to co-fund programs.
- Invest in legal and policy advocacy to protect and enhance ZRCS's auxiliary role and ensure regulatory recognition.
- Implement robust internal monitoring of revenue sources to track integration and diversification progress to minimize donor reliance.

9.0 STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

This Implementation Framework provides a clear roadmap for translating vision into action, ensuring that strategic priorities are delivered effectively, sustainably and inclusively.

ZRCS acknowledges that it does not currently have the resources to fully implement all strategies at once. Success will therefore depend on strategic prioritization, phased implementation and strong partnerships with the Government of the Republic of Zambia (GRZ), the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, local communities, private sector actors and international partners.

Phased and Prioritized Implementation

To remain realistic and impactful, implementation will be rolled out in phases:

- **Short-term (2026–2027):** Quick-win interventions such as community awareness, capacity building and policy development.
- **Medium-term (2028–2030):** Larger investments such as health and education infrastructure, livelihood projects and systems strengthening.
- **Long-term (beyond 2030):** Ambitious, resource-intensive initiatives such as climate-smart infrastructure, digital transformation and large-scale resilience programs.

A Strategic Implementation Matrix will guide this process, outlining timelines, responsibilities, resources and performance indicators for each initiative.

From Strategies to Projects

The Strategic Plan is designed to easily translate into bankable project proposals. Evidence-based strategic issues identified in the plan will form the foundation for well-structured proposals that

partners and stakeholders can support. Strategic objectives were deliberately kept broad to allow flexibility in project design, aligned with partner priorities and available resources.

Annual Operational Planning

Implementation will be broken into annual operational/work plans, developed with the participation of the NS Board, management and stakeholders. These plans will:

- Translate long-term objectives into yearly activities.
- Set annual milestones and performance targets.
- Be monitored quarterly and evaluated annually.
- Incorporate lessons learned into the next cycle.
- This rolling system ensures accountability, learning and agility.

Investment and Resource Mobilization

No plan can succeed without sustainable financing. ZRCS will adopt a dual approach:

Resource Mobilization:

Strengthen the Resource Mobilization Unit and Finance Committee to secure government support, donor grants, humanitarian partnerships and community contributions.

Investment Promotion:

Develop bankable business plans, attract private sector partners through Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) and explore sustainable ventures such as renewable energy, smart agriculture and climate-resilient enterprises.

A Society Revenue and Expenditure Framework (SREF) will ensure financial transparency, strict accountability and anti-corruption safeguards.

Partnerships for Impact

Implementation will succeed only through strong partnerships. ZRCS will:

- Deepen collaboration with Constituency Development Committees (CDFs) to channel local funds into humanitarian priorities.
- Convene an Annual Humanitarian Investment Forum to connect local and international partners, private investors and government institutions.
- Strengthen networks with civil society, academia, faith-based organizations and private sector actors to pool resources and expertise.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL)

ZRCS will establish a robust MEL Framework to track progress, ensure accountability and inform decision-making. Key elements include:

- KPIs aligned with each strategic pillar (e.g., health, resilience, climate adaptation, livelihoods).
- Gender-disaggregated and youth-sensitive indicators to guarantee inclusivity.
- Digital MEL system using mobile tools for real-time tracking.
- National Society Humanitarian Scorecard (NSHSC) to communicate progress transparently.
- Annual reviews and a mid-term evaluation (2028) to assess progress and recalibrate strategies.

Risk Management

A proactive Risk Management Plan will identify and address potential challenges such as inadequate funding, climate change, governance gaps, or health emergencies. ZRCS will mitigate these risks through:

- Strengthened governance and accountability.
- Diversified funding streams.
- Climate-smart interventions.
- Stronger health, ICT and security systems.

In Summary

The Implementation Framework ensures that the ZRCS Strategic Plan is not just a document but a living roadmap - driven by partnerships, sustained by smart financing, guided by evidence and anchored in accountability. By rolling out priorities in phases, mobilizing resources strategically and measuring impact rigorously, ZRCS will deliver resilient, inclusive and transformative humanitarian action for the people of Zambia.

Table 4: Stakeholder Mapping and Analysis

Mapped Stakeholders	Level of Engagement	Importance to ZRCS
Government and State Institutions		
Disaster Management and Mitigation Unit (DMMU)	High	Critical for disaster preparedness, response, and national coordination
Ministry of Health	High	Essential for health interventions, epidemics, and blood services
Zambia National Public Health Institute (ZNPHI)	High	Key for public health surveillance and emergency preparedness
Ministry of Education	Medium	Health education, school health clubs, youth engagement
Ministry of Defence	Medium	Strategic for logistics, security, emergency support
Ministry of Green Economy (Forestry and Meteorological Dept.)	Medium	Climate resilience, early warning, environmental management
Ministry of Agriculture	Medium	Food security, livelihoods, resilience programming
Ministry of Local Government and Housing	Medium	Decentralized service delivery, community development
Ministry of Community Development and Social Services	High	Social safety nets, vulnerable groups, OVCs
Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock	Low	Livelihood diversification, food security
Ministry of Finance and National Planning	Medium	Resource mobilization, budget alignment, national planning
Ministry of Water and Sanitation Development	Medium	WASH interventions, water security
Ministry of Home Affairs and Internal Affairs	Medium	Disaster response, refugee protection
Fire Brigade	Low	Fire safety, disaster response support
International and Multilateral Organizations		
International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)	High	Technical support, funding, capacity strengthening
Netherlands Red Cross	High	Bilateral support, funding, program implementation
International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)	Medium	Humanitarian diplomacy, protection, conflict-related support
UNICEF	High	Child protection, education, WASH
WHO	High	Epidemics, health systems strengthening
Africa CDC	Medium	Regional health security

Mapped Stakeholders	Level of Engagement	Importance to ZRCS
Global Fund	High	HIV, TB, Malaria funding
International NGOs (World Vision, Oxfam, WaterAid, ADRA)	Medium	Program collaboration, technical expertise
Private Sector and Corporates		
Corporates (ZANACO, ZAMGOLD, Fresh-mark, Shoprite, Total Zambia)	Medium	CSR, financial and in-kind support
Chamber of Mines	Low	Resource mobilization, community investment
Civil Society and Community Structures		
Community Leaders	High	Mobilization, trust-building, community ownership
Civic Leaders	Medium	Policy influence, advocacy support
Traditional Leaders	High	Gatekeepers, cultural authority, community mobilization
Local Faith-Based Organizations (Islamic Groups, Pastors' Fellowship)	Medium	Social mobilization, moral authority, community trust
Volunteers	High	Backbone of operations, service delivery
Media and Academia		
Media Houses (ZNBC, Radio and TV Stations)	Medium	Awareness raising, advocacy, communication
Higher Institutions of Learning (UNZA, CBU, MU, Rusangu, ZAOU)	Medium	Research, innovation, training, youth engagement

Do you Have feedback or Concerns?

***We're here to help! Call our Toll-Free Line at
7373 for any complaints or inquiries. Your
satisfaction is our priority.***



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