



Strategic Plan

Year 2025 - 2030

(Jan 1 – Dec 31, 2026)

Transformative Strategy & Strategic Plan (2025–2030)

Institutional Framework for Evidence-Based, Community-Led Response in Nigeria

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1. Foreword & Institutional Overview

As the global humanitarian architecture undergoes significant structural shifts, the demand for localized, data-driven, and transparent interventions has never been more urgent. The Grassroots Researchers Association (GRA) Strategic Plan (2025–2030) serves as our foundational blueprint to address complex humanitarian, peacebuilding, and development realities across Nigeria’s most vulnerable regions.

Over the next five years, this plan guides GRA’s evolution from an implementing partner into a premier, self-sustaining national institute. By bridging the gap between primary field research and multi-sectoral execution, we ensure aid ceases to be a reactive commodity and becomes a proactive, community-owned catalyst for long-term recovery, social cohesion, and climate resilience.

2. Our Story & Evolution

The Grassroots Researchers Association (GRA) was founded on the principle that sustainable development, social equity, and transitional justice must be rooted in community-driven solutions. Conceived in 2009 in Maiduguri, Borno State, as a multi-disciplinary collective of independent field researchers monitoring intra-

communal conflicts, GRA formally registered with the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC) of Nigeria in 2016.

Since its inception, GRA has evolved into a prominent, evidence-based non-profit organization facilitating local initiatives that promote recovery, protection, rights-based advocacy, and climate adaptation. Operating directly at the frontlines of insecurity, economic inequality, and environmental shocks, GRA translates the lived realities of marginalized communities into impactful, systemic change.

3. Vision, Mission, and Core Values

Our Vision

To be a premier global catalyst for grassroots research, sustainable development, transitional justice, and survivor support—empowering women, youth, and children through inclusive policies, evidence-based advocacy, and resilient solutions.

Our Mission

To mobilize grassroots women, youth, children, and community stakeholders to drive transformative change, improve the total quality of human life, and promote social justice through evidence-based advocacy, research, and community-driven initiatives.

Our Core Values: The REPLICA Framework

- **R – Result-Oriented:** Committed to delivering tangible, lasting impact guided by primary evidence, cost-effectiveness, and measurable outcomes.
- **E – Engagement:** Active collaboration with grassroots communities, civil society networks, line ministries, and international partners through participatory co-creation.
- **P – Passion:** Empathetic commitment to advancing human rights, survivor dignity, and community safety in complex environments.
- **L – Local Content:** Prioritizing homegrown solutions, indigenous knowledge systems, and local execution to guarantee cultural congruence and sustainability.
- **I – Innovation:** Embracing adaptive methodologies, digital technology, and predictive analytics to solve complex structural challenges.
- **C – Capacity:** Systematically strengthening the technical skills, governance, and physical resources of local leadership bodies and grassroots institutions.
- **A – Accountability:** Upholding the highest standards of transparency, anti-fraud compliance, and financial responsibility to communities, partners, and regulatory bodies.

4. Institutional Theory of Change (ToC)

[Primary Grassroots Research] + [Co-Designed Local Governance Structures]↓[Integrated 6-Pillar Execution (Protection, FS, Health, EiE, AA, CSJ)]↓[Dignified, Timely, and Culturally Competent Assistance]↓[Systemic Resilience, Reduced Dependency & Long-Term Stability]

Logic Statement:

- **IF** GRA conducts localized primary field research to map vulnerabilities, security dynamics, and community needs;
- **AND IF** GRA co-designs targeted, multi-sectoral interventions directly with grassroots governance structures utilizing local content;
- **THEN** humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding assistance will be significantly more dignified, timely, secure, and culturally competent;
- **BECAUSE** operational responses shift from external assumptions to evidence-based, community-owned solutions that build long-term local capacity, systematically breaking the cycle of aid dependency.

5. Contextual Situational Analysis

PESTLE Matrix

Factor	Contextual Realities & Risks	Strategic Institutional Response
Political & Security	Insurgency in the BAY states, ethno-religious and farmer-herder conflicts in the Middle Belt, and widespread rural banditry in the Northwest.	Formal alignment with SEMAs, NEMA, and UN Clusters; deploying community-accepted local staff to maintain unconditional access.
Economic	Macroeconomic shocks, exchange volatility, and hyper-inflation shrinking purchasing power.	Transitioning to flexible Cash & Voucher Assistance (CVA); implementing institutional cost-efficiency; diversifying donor streams.

Social	Severe trauma among CRSV survivors, exclusion of Children Born Out of War (CBOW), GBV prevalence, and barriers facing Persons with Disabilities (PWDs).	Structuring trauma-informed MHPSS, legal aid, social reintegration models, and barrier-free protection tracking.
Technological	Fragmented connectivity in remote border areas; data surveillance risks against civil society.	Deploying offline-capable tools (KoboToolbox, GIS); hosting cybersecurity and digital literacy training for field actors.
Legal & Regulatory	Stringent compliance laws via CAC, SCUML, and state-specific NGO frameworks (e.g., Borno State NGO policies).	Standardizing automated accounting, external audits, and dedicated compliance frameworks to maintain legal standing.
Environmental	Desertification, seasonal flooding, and land degradation driving resource competition and displacement.	Mainstreaming Anticipatory Action (AA), climate-smart agriculture, solarized infrastructures, and environmental conflict mediation.

SWOT Matrix

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deep trust with traditional leaders and local structures. • Established operational footprint across 8 Northern & Middle Belt states. • Proven capacity in the Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) nexus. • Specialized research methodologies for sensitive cohorts (CRSV, CBOW). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High reliance on short-term project grants. • Need for upgraded automated HR/finance/MEAL software. • Equipment constraints in remote project sub-offices. • Staff retention risks due to competition from global INGOs.

Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global Grand Bargain mandates favoring direct localization. • Expanding donor focus on Anticipatory Action and climate resilience. • Mobile money and GIS advancements for remote monitoring. • Policy windows around transitional justice and durable solutions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active conflict escalations risking field safety. • Inflationary pressures eroding grant budgets. • Sudden military or bureaucratic access restrictions. • Entrenched aid dependency in long-term IDP settings.

6. Geographical Focus & Operational Footprint

Between 2025 and 2030, GRA will optimize its operational footprint across three strategic zones:

- **The Northeast Strategic Zone (Borno, Adamawa, Yobe - BAY States):** Focusing on protracted conflict recovery, trauma-informed care for CRSV survivors, protection for children born out of war (CBOW), emergency education, WASH, and community-led protection monitoring.
- **The Northwest & North-Central Resilient Axis (Sokoto, Zamfara, Katsina, Plateau States):** Targeting hubs impacted by rural banditry, climate-induced food insecurity, and farmer-herder conflicts through peacebuilding, climate-smart agriculture, Anticipatory Action, and inclusive justice.
- **National Liaison & Advocacy Headquarters (FCT, Abuja):** Coordinating national policy advocacy, institutional donor reporting, and high-level engagement within federal line ministries and international coordination bodies.

7. Strategic Goals & Quantified 2030 Targets

Strategic Area	Quantified 2030 Target	Focus & Deliverables
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Community Leadership	5,000 Leaders Trained	Civic engagement, local governance, and conflict mediation.
Livelihoods & Skills	10,000 Households	Market-driven skills, agricultural inputs, and financial self-reliance.
Survivor Support	5,000 GBV/CRSV Survivors	Free legal aid, medical referrals, MHPSS, and economic reintegration.
Climate Adaptation	15,000 Beneficiaries	Climate-smart farming, water conservation, and Anticipatory Action.
Digital & Advocacy	500,000 Individuals	Reached via data-driven rights campaigns and human rights tracking.

1. **Goal 1 (Community Engagement & Peacebuilding):** Train 5,000 community leaders, women, and youth in local governance; facilitate 100 community-led peace dialogues across conflict-strained rural areas.
2. **Goal 2 (Gender Equality & Survivor Support):** Deliver direct legal aid, medical care, and MHPSS to 5,000 survivors of GBV/CRSV; support at least 5 state or national protection policy reforms.
3. **Goal 3 (Climate Action & Resilient Food Systems):** Provide 15,000 smallholders, pastoralists, and fisherfolk with climate-smart agricultural inputs, solarized WASH, and forecast-based financing support.
4. **Goal 4 (Digital Rights & Data-Driven Solutions):** Train 5,000 grassroots activists in digital security; utilize secure data platforms to document human rights dynamics and reach 500,000 people through online advocacy.
5. **Goal 5 (Institutional Growth & Governance):** Secure multi-year direct bilateral partnerships, establish non-grant revenue channels, and maintain full compliance with international financial and HR standards.

8. Programmatic Focus: The 6 Structural Pillars

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		GRA INTEGRATED PROGRAMMI NG MATRIX		
Pillar 1: General Protection (GP)	Pillar 2: Food Security (FS)	Pillar 3: Health & Care (HC)	Pillar 4: Education in Emergencies (EiE)	Pillar 5: Anticipator y Action (AA)
		Pillar 6: Conflict, Security & Justice		

Pillar 1: General Protection (GP)

Strategic Objective: Safeguard the rights, dignity, and physical safety of vulnerable, marginalized, and conflict-affected populations in accordance with International Humanitarian Law (IHL).

- **Protection Monitoring & HLP:** Continuous protection risk analysis, human rights monitoring, pro bono legal aid, civil documentation support, and Housing, Land, and Property (HLP) counseling.
- **Child Protection (CP):** Unaccompanied child tracking, family tracing and reunification, youth MHPSS, and community-led prevention of child recruitment by armed groups.
- **Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Prevention & Response:** Operationalizing Women and Girls Safe Spaces (WGSS), survivor-centered Clinical Management of Rape (CMR), integrated trauma care, and rapid referral networks.

Pillar 2: Food Security (FS)

Strategic Objective: Eradicate immediate hunger, protect vulnerable livelihoods, and build climate-resilient local food systems through data-backed interventions.

- **Emergency Food Assistance:** Provision of flexible Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA) and targeted in-kind food distributions during acute crises.
- **Climate-Smart Agriculture & Pastoral Support:** Distributing certified drought-resistant seeds, farming tools, micro-irrigation systems, and livestock health/veterinary aid.

- **Livelihoods Restoration & Market Support:** Income-generating activity (IGA) grants, local market system reinforcement, and vocational skills training.

Pillar 3: Health & Care (HC)

Strategic Objective: Improve equitable access to quality healthcare and strengthen decentralized health systems in underserved and crisis-affected communities.

- **Sexual & Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR):** Delivery of Maternal, Neonatal, and Child Health (MNCH) services, Emergency Obstetric Care, and comprehensive clinical care.
- **Mental Health & Psychosocial Support (MHPSS):** Community-based counseling, Psychological First Aid (PFA), trauma recovery programs, and psychiatric referral loops.
- **Communicable Disease Control & Surveillance:** Training community health workers in early warning disease surveillance, epidemic preparedness, and rapid response campaigns.

Pillar 4: Education in Emergencies (EiE)

Strategic Objective: Ensure children and youth affected by crises retain continuous, safe access to inclusive, protective, and quality learning opportunities.

- **Early Childhood Development (ECD):** Establishing safe early-learning spaces and equipping parents with positive caregiving skills.
- **Primary & Secondary Emergency Education:** Setting up Temporary Learning Spaces (TLS), rehabilitating damaged classrooms, distributing teaching/learning kits, and training educators in trauma-informed pedagogy.
- **Accelerated Learning & Non-Formal Education:** Catch-up academic programs, foundational literacy/numeracy drives, and life skills/vocational training for out-of-school youth.

Pillar 5: Anticipatory Action (AA)

Strategic Objective: Prevent predictable climate hazards and natural shocks from escalating into humanitarian disasters through forecast-based interventions.

- **Risk Communication & Early Messaging:** Broadcasting hazard alerts, evacuation route guidance, and actionable preparedness information via SMS and local channels.
- **Pre-Arranged Financing & Early Cash:** Activating pre-agreed financial triggers and releasing pre-disaster cash transfers to vulnerable households ahead of peak shock impact.

- **Early Physical Interventions:** Infrastructure reinforcement (embankment stabilization, drainage clearing) and strategic pre-positioning of emergency stockpiles.

Pillar 6: Conflict, Security & Justice

Strategic Objective: Address root causes of instability through community-anchored peacebuilding, human-rights-centered security governance, and accessible justice systems.

- **Conflict Resolution & Peacebuilding:** Facilitating community mediation, tracking conflict early warning indicators, supporting DDR processes, and promoting social cohesion.
- **Security Sector Governance:** Promoting democratic oversight, community-oriented policing, safety monitoring, and Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) control awareness.
- **Justice & Rule of Law:** Expanding free legal aid, integrating customary law with formal judicial systems, supporting transitional justice, and advocating for penal reform.

8. Cross-Cutting Operational Pillars & Integration

To maintain comprehensive coverage across humanitarian standards, GRA integrates **WASH** and **Nutrition** across its six primary pillars:

- **WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene):** Construction and rehabilitation of solar-powered water schemes, gender-segregated community latrines, distribution of hygiene kits, and community-led hygiene promotion.
- **Nutrition:** Community-Based Management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM), outpatient therapeutic programs (OTP), Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) counseling, and routine malnutrition screening.

9. Target Beneficiaries & Inclusion Criteria

GRA's 2025–2030 strategy targets populations experiencing acute hardship and historical marginalization:

- **Survivors of Conflict-Related Sexual Violence (CRSV):** Women and girls recovering from wartime abuse, provided with trauma care, stigma mitigation, and legal accompaniment.
- **Children Born Out of War (CBOW):** Children fathered by members of armed groups, focusing on civil documentation, protection from discrimination, and educational integration.

- **Persons Living with Disabilities (PWDs):** Individuals with physical or cognitive impairments, ensuring barrier-free access to infrastructure, skills acquisition, and justice.
- **Vulnerable Agricultural & Pastoral Households:** Smallholders and herders affected by climate degradation, flooding, and armed conflict.
- **Out-of-School and At-Risk Youth:** Children denied education due to conflict and youth vulnerable to exploitation or radicalization.

10. Financing & Resource Mobilization Strategy

To ensure operational stability and reduce grant vulnerability, GRA implements a three-tiered financial model:

1. **Strategic Consortia & UN Partnerships:** Co-implementing multi-year programs alongside UN agencies, international non-governmental organizations, and international foundations.
2. **Bilateral Direct Procurement:** Upgrading internal systems—including financial software, independent audits, and compliance mechanisms—to qualify for direct bilateral funding (e.g., USAID, EU, foreign embassies).
3. **Social Enterprise & Research Consulting:** Commercializing GRA's localized field research, GIS mapping, and Third-Party Monitoring (TPM) capacity to generate non-grant revenue for core operations.

11. MEAL, Quality Assurance, and Accountability (AAP) Framework

Quality assurance across all interventions is governed by a robust Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning (MEAL) framework:

- **Digitized Real-Time Tracking:** Mobile-based field data collection using encrypted, cloud-backed tools (KoboToolbox, GIS mapping) to monitor project indicators in real-time.
- **Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP):** Standardized Community Feedback and Response Mechanisms (CFRM), including confidential, toll-free phone lines operating in local languages (Hausa, Kanuri, Fulfulde) and physical community suggestion boxes.
- **Evidence-Driven Adaptability:** Quarterly data reviews by program leadership to adjust project parameters based on shifting field realities and emerging community needs.

12. Partnership, Networking, and Cluster Coordination Strategy

GRA operates as an interconnected partner within the broader humanitarian-development-peace landscape:

- **Humanitarian Cluster Integration:** Active participation in national and sub-national UN OCHA cluster matrices (Protection, Food Security, Health, Education, WASH, Nutrition) to prevent aid duplication and align with global standards.
- **State & Traditional Governance Liaison:** Coordination with State Emergency Management Agencies (SEMAs), relevant line ministries, and traditional Emirate/Community Councils to secure operational access and align with local development agendas.
- **Survivor-Led Advocacy Support:** Technical and organizational capacity-building for survivor-led networks, enabling direct engagement with national policymakers and international human rights platforms.

13. Strategic Conclusion

The **GRA Strategic Plan (2025–2030)** lays out a structured, evidence-based roadmap for organizational growth and community impact. By anchoring all interventions in primary field research, local content, survivor-centered care, and anticipatory planning, GRA reinforces its commitment to moving communities from crisis vulnerability toward self-reliance, dignity, and lasting peace.