

— January - June 2026 —

HUMANITARIAN NEWS

A newsletter produced by the LNRCS Communication Office



Red Cross volunteers distribute relief items to storm- and fire-affected families in Nimba and Lofa Counties.

‘HUMANITY IN ACTION, HOPE IN MOTION’

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Our Programs



Health and Care: Promotes hygiene, water and sanitation, epidemic response, outreach, and psychosocial support.



Disaster and Crisis Response: Provides emergency relief, risk reduction, first aid, and livelihood recovery across all 15 counties.



Migration and Displacement: Offers food, shelter, health care, and family reunification for migrants, returnees, and IDPs.



Values, Power & Inclusion: Ensures gender equity, safeguarding, and inclusion for marginalized groups.



Climate & Environment: Advances climate-smart agriculture, clean energy, reforestation, and community resilience.



**TOGETHER,
LET'S SUPPORT
HUMANITY !**

**WE ARE
WHERE THE
NEED EXISTS:**

**SERVING COMMUNITIES,
SAVING LIVES**

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**PRESENT IN ALL
15 COUNTIES OF LIBERIA**



HUMANITY



IMPARTIALITY



NEUTRALITY



INDEPENDENCE

HOPE REBUILT:



Families gather to receive relief items as LNRCS volunteers distribute shelter and household supplies in nimba

RED CROSS DELIVERS LIFELINE TO 531 FAMILIES AFTER FIRE AND STORM

As recovery efforts close, Liberia's Red Cross turns to face a new and rising threat – flooding across Monrovia and beyond.

The Liberia National Red Cross Society (LNRCS) has completed cash and material assistance to 531 families devastated by fire outbreaks and windstorms that tore through five counties in March – even as it braces for an escalating flooding emergency in Monrovia and other flood-prone areas.

Secretary General and CEO Gregory T. Blamoh said the aid – delivered with support from the IFRC, the European Union, and the Swedish Red Cross – reached 158 fire-affected families and 373 windstorm-affected families, including 238 female-headed households.

“Every day of delay deepens the suffering of families who have already lost their homes and livelihoods. The time to act is now.

— GREGORY T. BLAMOH, Secretary General & CEO, Liberia National Red Cross Society

“These achievements reflect not only the physical recovery of homes and livelihoods but also the emotional and social healing of families,” Blamoh told reporters. “Families can smile again, sleep safely, and look to the future with renewed confidence.”

BACK-TO-BACK DISASTERS IN MARCH

In March, Liberia was struck by two emergencies in quick succession. Fires affected 1,643 people across five counties, damaging 61 houses. Days later, a windstorm tore through Nimba and Lofa, affecting 3,704 people and damaging 213 houses. Families lost homes, food, and belongings overnight.

A local LNRCS appeal for US\$50,000 fell short, prompting the IFRC to step in with roughly US\$520,000 in emergency funding – US\$365,000 for the windstorm response and US\$170,000 for the fire response.

HOW THE ASSISTANCE REACHED FAMILIES

Windstorm-affected families in Nimba and Lofa each received USD 202 in cash, plus zinc sheets, cement, and household essentials such as blankets, mosquito nets, and water containers, depending on the damage to their homes. Fire-affected renters received USD 227 each for food and essential needs, while 61 homeowners whose houses were destroyed received USD 572 each for combined food and shelter recovery.

In Bethel Town, River Cess County, the Red Cross is helping families “build back better,” constructing 27 durable homes and repairing houses belonging to widows, single mothers, and elderly women. The Red Cross also trained 100 women across 10 communities in Lofa and Nimba in Climate-Smart Agriculture, distributed cleaning tools, and continued repairing water points for safe drinking water in other affected communities.



A beneficiary in Nimba County accesses her cash assistance via mobile money.



LNRCs volunteers walk through floodwaters to reach affected residents in Robertsports, July 2026

NEXT FOCUS: RISING FLOODWATERS IN MONROVIA

Even as it closes out fire and windstorm operations, the LNRCs is now turning to a worsening flooding crisis in Monrovia and other flood-prone areas that has left families homeless and struggling to meet basic needs.

A July 7 Rapid Needs Assessment of 233 households found 73 percent experienced flooding inside their homes, 74 percent reported unsafe shelter, and over 90 percent lost food stocks. Ninety-one percent of water sources were contaminated, and 88 percent of communities showed poor sanitation.

As before, the crisis is hitting hardest among female-headed households, persons with disabilities, the elderly, and children under five, who face compounded risks to their health and safety.

“The scale and severity of these findings make clear that the needs on the ground far exceed our current resources,” Blamoh said. “We are calling for urgent and increased support to scale up emergency food assistance, restore safe water and sanitation, and protect the dignity of those bearing the heaviest burden of this crisis.”

The LNRCs has allocated USD 10,000 from its annual government support toward immediate flood relief, but says the scale of need far exceeds available resources — and is appealing for expanded support from government, partners, and the public as the rainy season continues.

and secure a brighter future.

“THE RAINS WON'T WAIT — AND NEITHER SHOULD WE.

Stand with families facing Liberia's flooding crisis. Give, volunteer, or partner with the Liberia National Red Cross Society today.”



Volunteers clear debris and waste from a flooded drainage channel in Monrovia



A flooded home in Robertsports after heavy rains

WHEN THE WIND TOOK EVERYTHING: A WIDOW'S FIGHT TO REBUILD IN NIMBA



A destroyed home in Gbor Gwehlay Town after the March windstorm



A resident sorts through zinc roofing sheets delivered for rebuilding in Nimba County.

In Gbor Gwehlay Town, a single mother lost the last gift her late husband gave her — their home. Her story is one of thousands behind Nimba and Lofa's windstorm emergency.

AL ate one evening in Gbor Gwehlay Town, Twah River District, Nimba County, the sky turned dark and heavy. Children who had been playing outside ran for cover as violent winds tore through the community. In minutes, homes were ripped apart, leaving families exposed to the storm's fury.

MARTHA'S STORY

Among those affected was Martha Wisseh, a single mother of three. Her home, built by her late husband, was completely destroyed — the roof torn away, the walls collapsed, everything inside lost. For Martha, it was never just a house. It was her husband's last gift, and the foundation of her family's dignity.

Single mothers like Martha carry the heaviest weight when disaster strikes. With no partner to share the burden, she had to protect her children, find shelter, and secure food — all while grieving the loss of her home. The storm left her not only homeless but hopeless, sleeping in a friend's hallway with her children.

“I don't know where to start life again. — MARTHA WISSEH, Single Mother, Gbor Gwehlay Town

A home is more than shelter. It is a mother's shield, a child's comfort, a family's pride. Without it, families are reduced to sleeping outdoors or in crowded halls, exposed to disease and humiliation. Martha's words echo the pain of countless women who feel abandoned in despair.

A WIDENING CRISIS

The storm damaged more than fifteen houses in Gbor Gwehlay Town alone. Families were displaced and hungry, forced to sleep under the open sky as children cried in the cold. Across Nimba and Lofa, 213 houses were destroyed in March, and Martha is one of 2,604 people from 372 households affected.

RED CROSS STEPS IN

The IFRC has approved over USD 520,000 in emergency funds to support the Liberia National Red Cross Society — a financial lifeline for families like Martha's. Shelter materials will help rebuild homes, so children no longer sleep in unsafe conditions and families regain dignity and safety.

Multipurpose cash assistance will let mothers buy food, clothing, and essentials, giving families control over their own recovery. Health and hygiene support will guard against malaria and disease in crowded shelters, protecting women and children from new outbreaks.

Beyond immediate relief, livelihood recovery support will help families restart small businesses and farming — a chance for widows and single mothers to regain independence and rebuild their lives on their own terms.

REKINDLING HOPE

For Martha, and countless women across Nimba and Lofa, this intervention is more than aid — it is hope. It is the promise that dignity can be restored, that children will not sleep in the cold, and that widows will not be forgotten. With solidarity and compassion, the Red Cross is turning tears into resilience, and despair into renewed strength.

THE SMILES OF BENEFICIARIES:

Red Cross Restores More Than Needs



Red Cross volunteers distribute relief items to storm- and fire-affected families in Nimba and Lofa Counties.

As beneficiaries in Lofa and Nimba respond with hugs, handshakes, and tears of joy – a reminder that no family had been forgotten.

There is something powerful in a hug, a handshake, a shared smile between neighbors and humanitarians who have walked through hardship together. In July, that power was on full display as a Liberia National Red Cross Society (LNRCS) team carried its windstorm distribution mission across communities in both Nimba and Lofa Counties, delivering not only essential household items but something families said they needed just as much: presence, warmth, and human connection.

As staff distributed zinc, cement, cooking pots, buckets, blankets, sleeping mats, mosquito nets, tarpaulins, cleaning tools, and farming materials across the two counties, the response from beneficiaries was overwhelming. People embraced the red-vested volunteers with tears, laughter, and dance, turning a routine distribution into an emotional reunion.

“When I saw our beneficiaries running to hug us before we even finished unloading the truck, I nearly cried myself,” said Marietta Doe, an LNRCS Disaster Management Volunteer Assistant who helped lead the distribution. “We came to give them zinc and cement, but what they gave us back was so much bigger – trust, love, and gratitude. That is why I do this work.”

“We came to give them zinc and cement, but what they gave us back was so much bigger – trust, love, and gratitude. – MARIETTA DOE, LNRCS DM Volunteer Assistant.

For families who lost everything when the storm tore through their community, the visit meant more than replacing damaged roofs. Disaster does not only take away shelter and belongings – it takes away peace of mind, leaving behind fear and anxiety that can linger long after the physical damage is repaired.

“I was afraid nobody remembered us after the cameras left,” said one widow in Gbor Gwehlay Town, Nimba County, who received shelter materials and a cash grant. “But when I saw the Red Cross team come back, I felt like my family mattered again. I hugged the woman who handed me my blanket, and I did not want to let go. For the first time since the storm, I slept without crying.”

Stephen Broh, another LNRCS staff member on the distribution team, said moments like these are the true measure of humanitarian work. “You can count the bags of cement and bundles of zinc, but you cannot put a number on a mother’s smile when she knows her children will sleep safely again,” he said. “Every handshake, every embrace, told us our work is not just logistics. It is dignity restored.”

A father of five in Lofa County who received cleaning tools and farming materials echoed that gratitude. “The Red Cross did not just give us things to rebuild our house,” he said. “They gave us hope to rebuild our life. I shook every volunteer’s hand and told them: because of you, my children will eat, and we will farm again.”





Beneficiaries in Lofa County embrace Red Cross volunteers during the windstorm relief distribution

“The Red Cross did not just give us things to rebuild our house. They gave us hope to rebuild our life”. — BENEFICIARY, Father of Five, Lofa County

Albert L. Kesselley, who also took part in the distribution, said the emotional reception reaffirmed why the Red Cross insists on returning to communities in person rather than simply delivering aid from a distance.

“Materials alone cannot heal a family’s fear,” Kesselley said. “But when we show up, again and again, with compassion, people feel seen. That is when real recovery begins — not just of homes, but of hope.”

LNRCs leadership say the response reflects a broader philosophy guiding the storm recovery mission across Nimba and Lofa Counties: that humanitarian assistance must address emotional wounds as much as physical ones.

Beyond the distribution, the Red Cross continues supporting affected households in both counties with livelihood recovery assistance, health and hygiene support, and ongoing monitoring to ensure no family is left behind.

For the volunteers who spent the week distributing supplies under the sun, the embraces and tears of joy were reward enough.

“To every volunteer, staff member, and partners including the IFRC, the EU, and others who made this response possible — thank you for showing up, again and again, with compassion,” the Lofa County Field Officer Blessings Hallie acknowledged. “In the end, humanity in action is what restores joy.”

As one beneficiary put it simply, wiping tears from her eyes as she carried her new sleeping mat home: **“Today, I remembered what it feels like to smile.”**



REBUILDING AFTER THE FLAMES:



Women in Bethel Town celebrate the arrival of zinc and cement for rebuilding, delivered by LNRCS volunteers.

How the Red Cross is rebuilding back better in Bethel Town

In remote Rivercess County, families who lost everything to fire are rebuilding with zinc, cement, and dirt bricks – and voicing deep gratitude to the partners who made it possible.

When fire tears through a home, it does not just destroy walls and roofing sheets – it destroys a sense of safety. In Bethel Town, a remote community in Dodain District, that pain became reality in February 2026 when flames swept through the village, destroying 24 homes and 27 kitchens and leaving more than 150 women and children without a place to call home.

Families were displaced, hungry, and forced to sleep under the open sky. Many crowded into a town hall and the two houses that survived the blaze, while others remained outdoors in unsafe, congested conditions that threatened new outbreaks of disease, including malaria. For a community already stretched thin, the fire did not just take shelter – it took dignity.

Today, that story is beginning to change. With emergency funding from the Swedish Red Cross Initial Response Fund and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) through its Disaster Relief Emergency Fund, the Liberia National Red Cross Society (LNRCS) has moved into Bethel Town with cement, zinc, dirt brick molds, shovels, wheelbarrows, and a team of technical volunteers to help the community “build back better.”

Structures are rising. Thousands of dirt bricks have already been produced, and food items including rice and oil have been distributed alongside awareness campaigns on fire prevention, health, and hygiene. For residents who spent weeks sleeping in the open, the arrival of trucks loaded with zinc and cement was cause for celebration.

“When I saw the truck arrive with zinc for our roof, I could not hold my tears,” said one mother of four in Bethel Town who lost her home in the fire. “We had nothing left, not even a mat to sleep on.

Now I know my children will sleep under a strong roof again. I thank the Red Cross and everyone who did not forget us.”

“When I saw the truck arrive with zinc for our roof, I could not hold back my tears. Now I know my children will sleep under a strong roof again”. – MOTHER OF FOUR, Bethel Town





Community members gather beside banners on fire prevention and hygiene promotion in Bethel Town.

Another resident, an elderly widow whose kitchen was destroyed, said the support meant more than material relief. “I did not think anyone would remember Bethel Town. This is a place people forget because we are far away. But the Red Cross came to us themselves, and now our hands are also molding bricks for our new homes. That gives me strength.”

Liberia National Red Cross Society CEO Gregory Blamoh, who visited Rivercess County to oversee the response, said the intervention is about far more than supplies. “Our support to the people of Bethel Town is more than charity — it is a lifeline. It is a chance to give back dignity and stop a child from sleeping in the cold,” Blamoh said.

He added that the tragedy was a painful reminder of how quickly lives can be shattered. “In the spirit of humanity and solidarity, we extend our empathy to the people of Bethel Town and call for increased support for their recovery,” he said. “These are mothers, fathers, and children who once had shelter, food, and dignity — now reduced to sleeping outdoors with nothing. They may be far away, but they are not forgotten.”

Beyond distributing shelter materials — three bundles of zinc, cement, and nails per household — the Red Cross is working with the community to transition from traditional mud-dug houses to more durable dirt brick structures, guided by skilled local technicians and contractors.

For Rivercess County Superintendent Byron W. Sahnwea, the response has been a turning point for a community that felt forgotten. “We are deeply thankful to the Red Cross for demonstrating true humanity,” Sahnwea said. “Your presence here means a great deal to the people of Bethel Town. You are the first to come on the ground to show empathy and announce such significant support for recovery with hope and dignity.”

Community leaders in Bethel Town echoed that gratitude, directing their thanks not only to Red Cross staff on the ground, but to the partners whose funding made the response possible.

“We want the Swedish Red Cross and the IFRC to know that their support reached us when we had nothing,” said a town elder who helped coordinate the distribution of materials. “Because of them, Bethel Town will rise again. We may never meet them face to face, but we will never forget what they did for us.”

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The Red Cross has also expressed gratitude to the Swedish Red Cross and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) for their initial support, while CEO Blamoh met with the County Superintendent to discuss further collaboration.

“Recovery begins with solidarity,” Blamoh said. “We encourage everyone — partners, organizations, and individuals — to stand with Bethel. Your support is crucial to help families recover better.”

As dirt bricks rise into walls and zinc sheets are lifted onto new roofs, Bethel Town is slowly transforming from a scene of devastation into one of resilience.

For the mothers, elders, and children who once slept beneath the open sky, the message from their community is simple and heartfelt: **thank you for not forgetting us.**



The remains of a mud-brick home destroyed by fire in Bethel Town.



A new shelter structure takes shape as part of the rebuilding effort.

A LIFELINE WHEN HOPE WAS FADING:

The Story of Oldman Jackson Matahn

At 85, alone in his fight to shelter five dependents, one man's story shows what it means when humanitarian aid arrives not a moment too soon.

At 85 years old, Oldman Jackson Matahn, a resident of Fiaplay Community in Zoe-Geh District in Nimba -had already lived through more hardship than most.

But nothing prepared him for the night the wind tore the roof from over his family's heads, leaving him, physically challenged and aging, responsible for five dependents with nowhere safe to sleep.

For a man with limited mobility and no reliable income, the windstorm did not just destroy a house. It stripped away the one thing he had left to offer his family: shelter, and with it, his sense of purpose as the head of his household.

"I had already lost hope," Jackson would later say, holding back tears as he unfolded a mosquito net from the relief package in front of him. "I keep asking myself what would have happened to my family if the Red Cross had not come to help us at this point. I had nowhere else to turn."

"I had already lost hope. I keep asking myself what would have happened to my family if the Red Cross had not come to help us at this point. I had nowhere else to turn. — OLDMAN JACKSON MATAHN, 85, Fiaplay Community

The Liberia National Red Cross Society (LNRCS), with support from the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) Disaster Response Emergency Fund (DREF), identified Jackson as one of the most vulnerable survivors of the windstorm that swept through Fiaplay Community.

Given his age, disability, and the number of dependants relying on him, he was prioritized for an integrated package of humanitarian assistance designed to meet both his physical and emotional recovery needs.

The support included USD 202 as unconditional cash assistance to meet urgent household needs, two bundles of zinc roofing sheets, assorted nails, and bags of cement to repair his shattered home, insecticide-treated mosquito nets to protect his family from malaria, and continuous psychosocial support to help him process the trauma of losing everything almost overnight.

When the materials arrived, Jackson sat quietly for a long moment before reaching for the mosquito net closest to him. As he examined it, turning it over in his weathered hands, the weight of the past weeks seemed to catch up with him all at once.



Oldman Jackson Matahn, 85, examines a mosquito net from his relief package in Fiaplay Community, Nimba County.

Also, in a special remark, AFL Chief of Staff Maj. Gen. Davidson F. Forleh pointed out that: "The Armed Forces of Liberia remains committed to upholding humanitarian principles, and this joint dissemination workshop reflects our dedication to professionalism and respect for the rule of law in all operations."

"We value the Red Cross' partnership and the support of the ICRC, and we encourage continued joint efforts to expand IHL awareness across all levels of the AFL and other security agencies." The AFL Chief of Staff maintained.

International Humanitarian Law (IHL) seeks to protect those not taking part in hostilities and regulate the means of warfare. Integrating IHL in peacetime creates a culture of respect for human dignity, which can guide decision-making during operations and foster trust between the military and the civilian population.

"Even today, I still look at these materials as if I am dreaming," he said.

For Jackson, the assistance was never just about replacing what the storm had taken. The cash meant his family couldn't go hungry while he found his footing again. The zinc and cement meant a roof his grandchildren could sleep safely under. The mosquito nets meant that mosquitoes wouldn't cause his children to get malaria. And the psychosocial support meant that, for the first time since the storm, someone was checking not just on his house, but on him.

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**— OLDMAN JACKSON MATAHN, 85,
Fiaplay Community**



An elderly beneficiary in Nimba County receives insecticide-treated mosquito nets as part of the integrated relief package.



An LNRCS volunteer embraces Jackson during the distribution visit.

This story is one of thousands playing out across Nimba and Lofa Counties in the aftermath of this year's windstorms, but it captures something the statistics alone cannot: what it means to be the last line of protection for a family, at 85 years old, with nothing left to give — and then to be reminded that you are not facing it alone.

The Windstorm DREF operation was built on that same principle: that recovery is not just about rebuilding roofs, but restoring the dignity and confidence of the people beneath them.

For Jackson, an integrated response combining cash, shelter materials, health protection, and emotional support did more than repair a house. It gave an old man permission to believe, once again, that he could still care for the people who depend on him.

Today, as Jackson begins rebuilding his home in Fiaplay Community, he carries with him a story that Red Cross volunteers say they will not forget — a reminder of why they do this work, one family, one roof, one act of humanity at a time.

BUILDING WHERE IT MATTERS:

Red Cross constructs Branch Offices to Strengthen its Local Presence Across Liberia



Newly constructed LNRCS branch office buildings in Zoe-Geh District, Nimba County.

Newly constructed branch offices are giving Red Cross volunteers a permanent home in the communities they serve, turning local presence into faster, more trusted humanitarian response.

For decades, reaching a family in a flood-prone village in River Gee or a fire-affected community in remote Rivercess has depended on one thing above all: having Red Cross volunteers already there, living in the community, before disaster strikes.

That is the thinking behind a renewed push by the Liberia National Red Cross Society (LNRCS) to construct and strengthen branch offices across the country, anchoring its humanitarian work more firmly in the very communities it serves.

The LNRCS is represented in all 15 counties through chapters, and in 92 districts through branches, supported by a network of volunteers and members nationwide. But a branch on paper is not the same as a branch with a physical presence on the ground where volunteers can meet, train, and coordinate their activities. The new branch office construction initiative is designed to close that gap, giving the local Red Cross teams a permanent home from which to serve their communities.

“A branch office is more than a building — it is where trust is built. When people see a Red Cross presence standing in their own town, not just arriving after a disaster, they know we are truly one of them”. -Gregory T. Blamoh, Secretary General/CEO, Liberia National Red Cross Society

The construction effort is being carried out with support from the Swedish Red Cross, currently the only Movement partner maintaining an in-country presence supporting LNRCS, through a multi-year project focused on strengthening chapter and branch development, volunteer management, and community resilience.

“Our partnership with the Liberia National Red Cross Society is built on a simple belief: humanitarian work is strongest when it is rooted in the community it serves,” said the Swedish Red Cross Country Representative Armel Komena.

“Investing in branch offices is investing in that local connection. It means volunteers have a base to organize from, communities have a trusted point of contact, and the Red Cross can act faster and stay longer, because it never truly left.”

“We are not just funding walls and roofs. We are funding a system where LNRCS branches remain active, trusted, and self-sustaining long after any single project ends”. -ARMEL KOMENA, Country Representative, Swedish Red Cross

Each new branch office is expected to serve as a hub for disaster preparedness and response, health and hygiene promotion, and community-based protection work. For many rural branches, the offices will be the first dedicated Red Cross facility their district has ever had.

What makes many of these projects possible in the first place is something money cannot buy: land. In the majority of cases, the ground on which a new branch office now stands was not purchased but donated, given freely by community members who wanted a permanent Red Cross presence in their own town. Before a single brick was laid, these communities had already made their own investment in the project, a gesture LNRCS leadership points to as one of the clearest signs of how deeply local ownership runs through the initiative.



Newly constructed LNRCS branch office buildings in Ownesgroves, Grand Bassa County.



A red-roofed pavilion at a newly built LNRCS branch office

Local volunteers say the difference is already being felt. In counties where branch infrastructure has improved, community members increasingly view the Red Cross not as an outside responder that appears only in emergencies, but as a fixture of daily life – present at community meetings, running health outreach, and training young volunteers long before any disaster occurs.

“For me, the Red Cross was always the people who came from Monrovia or from the city when something bad happened,” said a longtime volunteer Moore Kruah in Nimba. “Now, with our own office here, we are the Red Cross. Our neighbors know where to find us, and we know our community better than anyone driving in from outside ever could.”

That sense of ownership shows up in the construction itself. In several communities, Red Cross volunteers did not simply wait for their branch office to be built – they helped build it. Volunteers rolled up their sleeves to mold bricks by hand and support the physical construction work alongside contractors, turning the project into something closer to a barn-raising than a hand-out. For them, the finished office will not be a building the Red Cross gave them; it will be one they helped raise themselves, brick by brick.

The LNRCS Secretary General emphasized that the branch construction program is part of a broader strategy of decentralizing humanitarian capacity, so that response decisions and resources sit closer to the communities most at risk. “Disasters do not wait for permission from headquarters,” the Secretary General said.

“The stronger our branches are, the faster and more dignified our response can be, because it is led by people who live there, who understand the terrain, the culture, and the needs, long before the emergency occurs.”



“A branch office is more than a building – it is where trust is built. When people see a Red Cross presence standing in their own town, not just arriving after a disaster, they know we are truly one of them.” – Gregory T. Blamoh, Secretary General/CEO, LNRCS

As construction continues across multiple counties, LNRCS leadership says the branch office construction reflects the Red Cross's founding purpose, dating back more than a century: to be present wherever Liberians need help, before, during, and after crisis. For communities that have long felt distant from national Headquarters, a permanent Red Cross office in their own town carries a message that goes beyond bricks and cement – it says they have not been forgotten.

“This is what local presence really means,” the LNRCS President said. “Not a flag that appears for a week and disappears. A door that is always open, in every corner of this country.”

Each office will serve as a resource center for youth and community members, equipped with solar lighting and television, designed to bring people together and put humanitarian services within reach. This is what it means to be truly present: not just visible, but accessible. Every branch office stands as a symbol of humanity, hope, solidarity, and love – a place where the community can turn for support, information, and connection.



THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF HENRY DUNANT

FOUNDER OF THE RED CROSS

"My dream is that one day
all nations may learn to extend
helping hands to one another."

– Henry Dunant



TIMELINE



MAY 8, 1828 Born in Geneva, Switzerland.



1859 **Battle of Solferino**
Witnessed the suffering of wounded soldiers during
the Battle of Solferino in Italy.
This experience inspired him to help regardless of sides.



1862 Published the book *A Memory of Solferino*,
proposing:
• Care for wounded soldiers
• Creation of neutral volunteer groups



1863 Co-founded the **International Committee
of the Red Cross (ICRC)** in Geneva.



1864 First **Geneva Convention** signed,
protecting wounded soldiers and
medical workers.



1901 Awarded the first-ever **Nobel Peace Prize**
for his humanitarian work.



**OCTOBER 30,
1910** Passed away, leaving a legacy
of compassion and humanity.



ICRC



His vision continues to save lives and inspire millions.
Thank you, Henry Dunant, for reminding the world
that humanity comes first.



HENRY DUNANT MEDAL:

WHEN SERVICE BECOMES A LEGACY

Every volunteer carries a quiet dream:

that one day, someone will recognize that years of service were not given in vain.

The Henry Dunant Medal represents one of the highest forms of recognition within the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement for exceptional humanitarian service and dedication. Yet its deepest meaning is not found in the medal itself, but in the story behind the name.

In Solferino in 1859, Henry Dunant witnessed wounded soldiers suffering without adequate care. He did not ask who they were or which side they belonged to. He saw human beings in need and chose to help. His compassion became an idea, and that idea helped inspire a global humanitarian movement.

For every volunteer, this is the real lesson: the goal is not simply to receive a medal, but to live a life worthy of its meaning — to serve when no one is watching, protect human dignity, remain faithful to humanitarian principles, and give without expecting recognition.

Many volunteers may never stand on a stage. Yet they save lives, teach lifesaving skills, comfort families, protect communities, and bring hope to people facing their darkest moments. A medal may shine on the chest, but the greatest honor is the impact left in another person's life.

The true dream of a volunteer is not merely to wear the Henry Dunant Medal, but to live its values every day.

“The greatest honor is not having your name engraved on a medal or certificate, but having your impact engraved in the memory of a person whose life you touched”.

BEYOND THE MEDAL: THE VOLUNTEER WHOSE HUMANITY BECOMES IMMORTAL

A medal can be placed on a chest, but true humanitarian service is engraved in the lives of people. Every volunteer begins with a simple choice: to care when others may look away, to serve when the road is difficult, and to stand beside people in moments when hope seems almost impossible.

The Henry Dunant Medal carries a powerful legacy. It reminds us that humanitarian recognition is not simply about achievement; it is about exceptional dedication to humanity and service to the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

Henry Dunant himself did not begin with a dream of receiving honors. At Solferino in 1859, he witnessed thousands of wounded soldiers and responded to their suffering as human beings first.

His compassion helped inspire an international humanitarian movement whose principles continue to guide volunteers around the world.

That is why the deepest meaning of the medal begins long before the ceremony. It begins with the volunteer who arrives before anyone asks. With the medic who treats the injured without asking who they are. With the volunteer who listens to a frightened child. With the person who works for hours without cameras, applause, or recognition.

These moments may never appear in official records, yet they can become unforgettable chapters in someone's life. Not every volunteer will receive the Henry Dunant Medal.

But every volunteer can live its values: humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity, and universality.

“The medal may be awarded once. The responsibility it represents must be renewed every day. Because the greatest recognition is not standing beneath bright lights while people applaud. It is returning home knowing that, somewhere in the world, one person is alive, safer, stronger, or more hopeful because you chose to help.

The medal may shine for a lifetime, but the humanity behind it can shine for generations. **“Do not seek the medal before you seek the mission. When service becomes a way of life, your greatest award is the life you changed.**

GENERATIONS UNITED:

Students, Volunteers, and Stakeholders Celebrate Red Cross May Month



From street parades to classroom first aid lessons, this year's Red Cross Month brought students, former volunteers, and stakeholders together – a reminder that humanity is a movement carried across generations.

Streets that are usually filled with the ordinary rhythm of city life took on a different energy this May, as students, stakeholders, former staff, and volunteers of the Liberia National Red Cross Society (LNRCS) came together to mark Red Cross Month under the global theme “United in Humanity.”

From a spirited parade through the streets of Monrovia to a celebration at Unification Park, and a full calendar of indoor and outdoor activities and community service stretching across the month, the commemoration was as much a call to action as it was a celebration.

May is recognized worldwide by the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement in honor of the birthday of founder Jean Henri Dunant, and this year the Government of Liberia reaffirmed its own commitment to the mission. President Joseph Nyuma Boakai, Sr., Chief Patron of the Liberian Red Cross, proclaimed May 1 to 31, 2026 as World Red Cross Month and May 8 as World Red Cross Day, calling on civic organizations and government agencies alike to actively participate in LNRCS-organized programs.

For LNRCS Secretary General and CEO Gregory T. Blamoh, this year's celebration carried special weight. “This recognition by the Government of Liberia highlights the essential role of the Red Cross in protecting humanity and addressing urgent needs across our nation,” Blamoh said. He added that the celebration is about more than symbolism.

“The Red Cross is not merely an institution; it embodies the heartbeat of humanity in Liberia. In times of storms, fire, or health crises, our volunteers are at the forefront as a beacon of hope. United in Humanity, we renew our commitment to serve humanity impartially, compassionately, and tirelessly – because humanity is not just our strength; it is our destiny.”

What set this year's celebration apart was the breadth of participation. Beyond current staff and volunteers, the month's events deliberately reached out to students, community stakeholders, and former staff and volunteers whose service laid the foundation the Red Cross stands on today. Schools joined outdoor activities including the street parade and volunteers engaged in community clean-up campaigns, while indoor sessions brought students face-to-face with Red Cross history, first aid demonstrations, and conversations about what it means to serve without discrimination.

For many students, it was a first real glimpse into the scale and spirit of humanitarian work. “I never knew the Red Cross did so much until this month,” said one secondary school student who joined the parade to Unification Park. “Seeing all the volunteers, hearing their stories, made me want to become one myself. It gave me hope that young people like me can also make a difference.”





Students, volunteers, and stakeholders gather at the Unification Park celebration marking World Red Cross Day.

“Seeing all the volunteers and hearing their stories made me want to become one myself. It gave me hope that young people like me can also make a difference. — SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENT, at the May Month Program said.

Another student, who took part in an indoor first aid demonstration organized as part of the month's activities, said the experience left a lasting impression. “We learned how to save a life with just our hands and a few simple steps,” the student said. “It was exciting, but it also felt important — like we were being trusted with something bigger than ourselves.”

Volunteers, too, spoke of the celebration as a reminder of why they serve. “Every May, this is when we feel most connected — to each other, to the communities we serve, and to the very idea of humanity,” said one longtime LNRCS volunteer who took part in the Unification Park celebration. “Seeing former volunteers return, seeing students excited to learn, reminds us that this movement does not belong to one generation. It belongs to all of us.”

“Seeing former volunteers return, seeing students excited to learn, reminds us that this movement does not belong to one generation. It belongs to all of us”.

— LNRCS VOLUNTEER, Unification Park Celebration

A former staff member, who returned for the month's activities after years away from active service, Alexander T. Johnson described the reunion as deeply emotional. “Being back among the vests, the flags, and the songs, I remembered why I joined in the first place,” Johnson said. “This celebration is a reminder that once you serve humanity, it never really leaves you.”

Following the May 8 parade and Unification Park celebration, LNRCS leadership expressed gratitude for the turnout in a message to participants: “Today, we felt deeply appreciated, honored, and inspired. We truly witnessed the strength in unity. The turnout was overwhelming, and words alone cannot fully express our gratitude... You are all true ambassadors for humanity, demonstrating compassion, unity, and the spirit of service to others.”

Throughout the month, the Red Cross has intensified its community presence across the country, offering services including cleanup campaigns, health and hygiene promotion, First Aid training, recruitment of new members and volunteers, as well as fundraising and resource Mobilization to support and sustain Red Cross local Humanitarian Actions.

“This celebration serves as a reminder that humanity begins at home,” Blamoh said, underscoring that the month's festivities are inseparable from the Red Cross ongoing community services.



JARKANDA FARMERS:

CULTIVATING RESILIENCE, GROWING HOPE



A joint ECOWAS-Red Cross monitoring team visits Jarkanda Cooperative farmland to assess project impact.

Rising from the Floods in Grand Cape Mount

In the quiet town of Gohn Zuodua, in the Garwula District of Grand Cape Mount County, a story of resilience and determination is unfolding. The Jarkanda Farmer Cooperative, a group of 38 members including single mothers, widows, and pregnant women, has transformed 10 acres of land into a thriving hub of mixed cropping — peppers, cassava, corn, and cucumber. Born out of hardship after the devastating floods of 2024, their journey is now a beacon of hope for sustainable agriculture and community empowerment in Liberia.

The farmers celebrated when a joint monitoring team — comprising ECOWAS, the National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA), and the Liberia National Red Cross Society — arrived at their farm to collect firsthand stories of how the ECOWAS-funded project “Strengthening Resilience and Supporting Disaster-Affected Populations in Liberia” has changed their lives, and to understand the challenges they continue to face.

The farmers hold to an old saying: that “the fertilizer for the garden is the human shadow” — a reminder that presence, encouragement, and the support of partners walking alongside them is what truly nurtures resilience and growth.



A pepper crop thrives on Jarkanda Cooperative farmland, part of the group's mixed-cropping recovery project.

SUPPORT THAT RESTORED HOPE

With support from the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Liberia National Red Cross Society (LNRCS), in partnership with the NDMA, October 2025 saw the distribution of essential farming inputs — cutlasses, wheelbarrows, hoes, shovels, rakes, spraying cans, watering cans, rain boots, and a variety of seeds — to 200 farmers across Lofa, Bong, Grand Cape Mount, and Montserrado Counties.

Agricultural chemicals such as pesticides, insecticides, fungicides, and fertilizers have further boosted productivity. For Jarkanda, these tools have been life-changing, enabling the cooperative to recover from disaster and rebuild their livelihoods.

“We are deeply grateful to ECOWAS, the Red Cross, and our Government for standing with us when we had nothing,” said Lucy Gbaryee, Project Women Head for the cooperative.

“The floods destroyed our farms, our homes, and our hope. Today, because of this support, we are back on our feet, planting, harvesting, and dreaming again”.

— LUCY GBARYEE, Project Women Head, Jarkanda Farmer Cooperative

The cooperative's leader, A. Boakai Kromah, echoed that gratitude: “This project gave us the tools to start again. We thank ECOWAS for the support, we thank the Red Cross for working with us, and the Government for believing in us. Without their help, we would not be here today. But our journey is not finished — we still need a processor, better transportation, and our own water pump to truly transform our lives.”



A joint ECOWAS-Red Cross monitoring team visits Jarkanda Cooperative farmland to assess project impact.

The Jarkanda farmers have embraced smart agriculture practices, and the cooperative is not just farming for survival — they are farming for transformation. “Before this project, many of us had lost everything to the floods,” said Mary Kpadeh, a single mother and member of the cooperative.

“We were hopeless. But today, I can stand proud knowing that the soil we cultivate is giving us food, income, and dignity. This support has changed our lives.”

— MARY KPADEH, Single Mother, Jarkanda Farmer Cooperative

CHALLENGES AND DETERMINATION

Despite their progress, challenges remain. Transportation of produce to the nearest market is costly and difficult, and the cooperative currently rents a water pump once a week — a burden that drains their limited income. “We spend too much money renting a water pump,” explained Kromah. “If we had our own, we could irrigate regularly, increase production, and reduce costs. We are committed, but we need more support to overcome these barriers.”

For Lucy Gbaryee, the project has restored dignity and hope: “This would not have been possible without ECOWAS, the Red Cross, and the Government. We say thank you for giving us back our future.” The cooperative has already engaged community leadership to request additional land for expansion, with a clear vision: to remain engaged in smart agriculture until the lives of their members are transformed.

Jarkanda's story reflects a broader vision of resilience and dignity. The farmers are collectively implementing climate-smart practices that enhance productivity while protecting the environment. Their first harvest is a milestone — and a reminder of the potential that lies ahead if their remaining challenges are addressed.

“We will continue this project until we see changes in the lives of our members,” said the group's leader with conviction. “We are determined to invest more in the soil, but we cannot do it alone. We need partners to stand with us.” **“Every seed we plant is a step toward freedom from poverty”**, — A. BOAKAI KROMAH, Leader, Jarkanda Farmer Cooperative

A CALL FOR CONTINUED SUPPORT

The ECOWAS-funded initiative has strengthened communities like Jarkanda, distributing tools and seeds to hundreds of farmers across Liberia. “This project is not just about providing tools and seeds — it's about empowering local farmers to rebuild their lives, strengthen their resilience, and become self-reliant,” emphasized Gregory T. Blamoh, CEO of the Liberia National Red Cross Society.

“The support will help them increase food production, improve household income, and build stronger communities capable of withstanding future shocks.”

As Liberia rebuilds from disaster, Jarkanda stands as a living testament to resilience, unity, and hope. Their journey is not just about crops — it is about dignity, empowerment, and transformation. With additional support, their vision of thriving families and resilient communities can become reality.



A member of the Jarkanda Farmer Cooperative carries produce through the group's mixed-crop farmland in Grand Cape Mount County.

LNRCs TRAINS STUDENTS AND CORRECTION OFFICERS IN LIFE-SAVING FIRST AID



Students demonstrate casualty-handling technique during the session



Correction officers practice a coordinated patient-carrying technique during the training.

Under the theme “Safety First, save a Life,” the Liberia National Red Cross Society (LNRCs), with support from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), conducted a four-day Basic First Aid Training for 50 students from five schools in Monrovia and 12 correction officers from central prisons in five counties, equipping both groups with life-saving skills to respond to emergencies in their schools, communities, and correctional facilities.

The training was held in two phases at the LNRCs Montserrado Chapter office in Paynesville, Jacob Town. Fifty students — 21 males and 29 females — from Paynesville Community High School, Special Project High School, Paynesville Community School, O’Nance International Christian School, and Christ Arena School System took part in the first session, held on April 15 and 16.

From April 21 to 22, 12 correction officers, evenly split between six males and six females, traveled from central prisons in Montserrado, Margibi, Bong, Gbarpolu, and Grand Bassa Counties for the second session.

Participants were trained in core first aid techniques, including maintaining an open airway, controlling bleeding, handling fractures, dressing wounds, managing shock, and safely transporting victims during emergencies.

Beyond the technical skills, students and officers were also introduced to the Red Cross’s emergency roles and services, its Fundamental Principles, and the importance of respecting and protecting the Red Cross emblem.

For the correction officers, many of whom manage volatile situations daily inside Liberia’s central prisons, the training carried immediate professional relevance — a reminder that confidence in crisis is what first aid is all about.

“This training gave us real confidence. Inside the prison, emergencies can happen without warning. Now we know what to do in those first critical minutes, before help arrives”.

— CORRECTION OFFICER, Grand Bassa Central Prisons.

“Students from the participating schools were also excited and eager to learn new skills and build their confidence in responding to life-threatening situations in their schools and communities. At the close of each session, the LNRCs Disaster Management and First Aid (DM/FA) Unit distributed ten First Aid Kits to the participating schools and correctional institutions, giving each team practical tools to apply what they had learned.

The field officer of the Montserrado Chapter of the Liberian Red Cross, Johnny Jones, who helped coordinate the training, said the collaboration between Red Cross school clubs and prison authorities reflected the kind of partnership the Liberian Red Cross hopes to build on.

“When students and correction officers train side by side, it shows that life-saving skills belong to everyone, not just health workers. We are grateful to the ICRC for making this possible”.

—LNRCs FIELD OFFICER Johnny Jones, Montserrado Chapter.





EMERGENCIES DON'T WAIT!

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The training is part of the LNRCS's broader mandate to strengthen humanitarian assistance, with first aid being one of its core pillars nationwide — because every second counts, and knowing first aid can mean the difference between life and death.

Beyond programs like this one, delivered in partnership with the ICRC, the LNRCS also offers commercial first aid and CPR training and sells first aid kits of various kinds to private companies, schools, and other institutions across Liberia.

These commercial first aid trainings allow the Liberian Red Cross to build emergency lifesaving capacity among institution and generate fund to support and sustain its humanitarian actions across the country.

The LNRCS First Aid Trainer Coordinator and national trainer, Cianna M. Dwalu, noted that the success of the April training has already generated demand for more.

She added that correction officers in particular have requested continued capacity-building sessions, citing the direct relevance of first aid skills to their daily work, which requires managing emergencies within prison facilities.

The LNRCS First Aid Trainer has emphasized the need for quarterly training cycles to sustain preparedness and expand the pool of Liberian correctional officers equipped to respond in the critical moments before professional medical help arrives.

As Liberia continues to strengthen its emergency response capacity, the LNRCS noted that trainings like this one — spanning schools and correctional institutions — remain central to its mission: putting life-saving knowledge directly into the hands of the people who need it most. As the Red Cross puts it: first aid is the first step to saving lives — and everyone has the power to be a hero.



UNFORGOTTEN TRAGEDY:

Princess Zarwah Recounts the Pain of Losing Her Husband and Home in Bethel Town



The remains of Princess's home destroyed during the attack on Bethel Town.



Princess Zarwah with her infant daughter, born months after the violence that destroyed her home.

Every morning, Princess Zarwah wakes up hoping that one day her husband will walk back through the path he disappeared on more than five months ago. Instead, she is reminded of a painful reality: the husband she loved vanished without a trace, their home was burned to ashes, and she was violently assaulted while carrying their unborn child.

For Princess, February 10, 2026, remains a day she will never forget.

Her husband, Garlaryee Zarwah, left home that morning after working on a friend's farm. Before departing, he told his wife he intended to hunt for wild meat to feed the people who would soon begin work on their own farm.

“My husband told me that after finishing work on our friend's farm, he would go into the forest to hunt for meat for the people who were going to work on our farm. Since he left that day, we have not seen him again.”— Princess Zarwah

As news of his disappearance spread, the Town Chief and residents of Bethel organized search parties, combing the surrounding forests in the hope of finding him. Despite days of searching, no trace of Garlaryee was found.

On February 24, 2026, groups of men from neighboring communities in Bah Clan—including Kargbo Town, Charlie Town, Dehgar Town, Suakondehba Town, Zingbo-Zohn Town, and Doe Town—entered Bethel Town in Zarquiee Clan. Believing someone in the community knew what had happened to the missing hunter, they attacked the town.

Princess Zarwah, heavily pregnant at the time, became one of the victims.

“They beat me badly. I was carrying my baby, and after the attack I had to leave my town and seek shelter in a nearby community where I received treatment until I gave birth.”— Princess Zarwah

The violence destroyed not only her home but also the sense of security she had once known. Forced to raise her newborn daughter without knowing whether her husband is alive or dead, Princess has endured months of uncertainty, grief, and displacement.

Following the violence, the Liberia National Red Cross Society provided humanitarian assistance to affected families, including food and essential household items. The Red Cross is also supporting the reconstruction of homes destroyed during the attack. After receiving assistance, Princess expressed heartfelt gratitude.

“My house was burned down, and I have nowhere to live. I thank the Liberia National Red Cross for restoring my hope. My baby and I will have a new home again.” — Princess Zarwah

Although the assistance cannot erase the painful memories or answer the haunting question of what became of her husband, it has given her the courage to begin rebuilding her life. Today, Princess continues to care for her infant daughter while holding onto hope that one day the truth about Garlaryee Zarwah's disappearance will be known.



THE 7 FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

OF THE RED CROSS MOVEMENT

The Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is guided by
7 Fundamental Principles that shape our mission and conduct.



1

HUMANITY

We are motivated by the desire to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found.



2

IMPARTIALITY

We do not discriminate based on nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions. We only seek to relieve suffering.



3

NEUTRALITY

We do not take sides in hostilities or engage in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.



4

INDEPENDENCE

We are independent. The Movement is auxiliary to the public authorities in their humanitarian work and subject to the laws of each country.



5

VOLUNTARY SERVICE

It is a voluntary relief movement not prompted in any manner by desire for gain.



6

UNITY

There can only be one Red Cross or Red Crescent Society in any one country. It must be open to all and carry on its humanitarian work throughout its territory.



7

UNIVERSALITY

The Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is worldwide. All Societies have equal status and share equal responsibilities and duties in helping each other.



LNRCS volunteers clear debris from a flooded drainage canal in Monrovia during community clean-up efforts.



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