



## Highlight of the JRCS International Activities in FY 2025– Summary Part1: Leaving no humanitarian vacuum in the world

In 2025, the international community witnessed an escalation of geopolitical tensions. In addition to the ongoing humanitarian crises in Ukraine and in Israel and Gaza, large-scale armed conflict erupted in Sudan, further increasing global humanitarian needs. At the same time, communities around the world were struck by a succession of severe natural disasters, including a major earthquake in Myanmar, devastating hurricanes across the Caribbean, and widespread flooding in Southeast Asia.

As a member of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (the Movement), the Japanese Red Cross Society (JRCS) has been working in close cooperation with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), and 191 National Societies to deliver humanitarian assistance to those affected.

This month, as an expression of our deep gratitude and accountability to all those who support the activities of JRCS, we will look back on our international activities over the course of the past year (FY2025) in a four-part series.

### Implementation of the NHK International Helping Hand Campaign

人道支援に  
空白地帯をつくらない。

赤十字は、  
動いている!



NHK International Helping Hand Campaign is an annual fundraising initiative jointly organized by NHK (Japan Broadcasting Corporation) and JRCS each December. In 2025, the campaign marked its 43rd year.

For this 43rd campaign, amid an increasingly challenging environment surrounding humanitarian assistance, NHK, JRCS, and volunteers came together under the message **“Leaving no humanitarian vacuum in the world.”** The campaign called for solidarity to protect lives, health, and dignity of people facing a wide range of humanitarian crises—including conflict, disasters, and disease—and to ensure that support also reaches humanitarian emergencies that tend to receive less attention.

In FY 2025, the campaign received 81,828 donations, amounting to a total of 872,323,696 Japanese yen. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to those who generously contributed.

The funds raised will be used to support Red Cross and Red Crescent humanitarian activities around the world, leveraging the strength of the Red Cross and Red Crescent network, and guided by three key pillars:

1. assistance for refugees and internally displaced people affected by conflict;

2. responses to increasingly frequent and severe disasters; and
3. initiatives to strengthen people's resilience and capacity to recover from crises.

A detailed report on the supported activities will be published on the JRCS' website later this summer.

## Dissemination of International Humanitarian Law

Under International Humanitarian Law (IHL), it is stipulated that personnels and objects bearing the Red Cross or Red Crescent emblem must not be targeted in attacks. Nevertheless, humanitarian personnel continue to suffer harm in conflict zones to this day. It is reported that 32 volunteers and staff members of the Movement lost their lives while carrying out humanitarian efforts in 2024, followed by 27 fatalities in 2025.

In response to this grave situation, JRCS issued a statement in April 2025 calling for the protection of humanitarian operations in situations of armed conflict. This statement was released in support of, and in alignment with, a statement issued by the IFRC Governing Board, reaffirming JRCS's strong commitment to respect and compliance with IHL. The statement was published on JRCS website and was also displayed at the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement Pavilion at the Osaka Kansai World EXPO 2025.



Statement displayed on signage at the pavilion

The Movement is able to carry out humanitarian activities even in armed conflict and to reach those most in need because IHL requires parties to a conflict to respect and protect medical and humanitarian actors, including the Movement, and to allow and facilitate the safe, rapid, and unimpeded delivery of humanitarian assistance. Respect for IHL is essential to ensure that humanitarian actors can continue to save lives and alleviate suffering in the midst of violence.

Together with the Movement, the JRCS remains firmly committed to promoting understanding of IHL and advocating for its full respect and implementation. As part of these efforts, the JRCS held an online IHL dissemination seminar for staff nationwide on 17–18 February 2026. 60 participants from across Japan came together online to exchange views and deepen their understanding of effective approaches to promoting IHL in their respective fields of work.

The seminar benefited from the valuable contributions of speakers from within JRCS, as well as from ICRC Delegation in Japan, the Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs Division the Foreign Policy Bureau, Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Judge Advocate General the Ground Staff Office Ministry of Defense; and the Arms Control and Disarmament Division, the Disarmament, Non-Proliferation and Science Department Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Through these perspectives, participants gained insight into the respective roles and ongoing efforts of key stakeholders engaged in the promotion and implementation of IHL.

Participants are expected to carry the knowledge and perspectives gained through the seminar back to their work and to play an active role in strengthening awareness of IHL, thereby contributing to the protection of humanitarian action and those affected by armed conflict.

## Advancing Humanitarian Diplomacy



Chairperson Babé delivering remarks at the EXPO site

From 13 April to 13 October 2025, the Osaka Kansai World EXPO was held at Yumeshima, Osaka, where JRCs hosted a pavilion representing the Movement.

On 8 May, the Movement Special Day was held at the EXPO site, commemorating World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day, which marks the birthday of Henry Dunant, the founder of the Red Cross. The ceremony was attended by Ms Mercedes Babé, Chair of the Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, as well as representatives from ICRC and IFRC.

Delivering remarks on behalf of the Movement, Ms Babé emphasized that the Pavilion was not merely a space to showcase activities, but a place that reminds us that “humanity is stronger when it comes together in times of need.” She called on the international community to “be inspired by the stories of hope” through the power of humanity and international cooperation, and to “build a more just, compassionate future for generations to come.”

An overview of the Pavilion is available [here](#).

During her stay in Japan, Ms. Babé also visited the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum and laid flowers at the Cenotaph for the Atomic Bomb Victims, paying tribute to those who lost their lives.

## Advancing Women’s leadership

From 9 to 10 September 2025, GLOW Red— Global Network for Women leaders in the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement that aims to promote and develop women leaders (GLOW Red; see details [here](#))—hosted a series of talk sessions at the WA Space of the Women’s Pavilion in collaboration with Cartier. The sessions focused on the themes of “**Building diverse organizations**” and “**Women as leaders in crisis**”.

By opening half of the seating to the general public, each session was held to a full audience. The Q&A sessions that followed featured lively and meaningful exchanges, reflecting strong public interest and engagement on the role of women’s leadership within humanitarian action.



Scene from the talk session

Following the talk session held at Osaka Kansai World EXPO, the GLOW Red 5th Annual Meeting took place from 11 to 13 September 2025 at the JRCS Headquarters in Tokyo. The meeting brought together more than 40 women leaders from 21 countries, who gathered in Japan to exchange perspectives and strengthen collaboration.

The meeting was attended by IFRC President Ms. Kate Forbes, alongside women members of the IFRC Governing Board, as well as female presidents and senior managers from National Societies around the world.

An overview of the events held at Osaka Kansai World EXPO, and the GLOW Red Annual Meeting in Tokyo is available [here](#).

## [Toward the elimination of Nuclear Weapons](#)

In 2025, marking 80 years since the end of the World War II, JRCS renewed its efforts to raise public awareness of the inhumanity of nuclear weapons. At a time when progress on nuclear disarmament remains limited within the international community, the President of JRCS and the President of ICRC issued a joint statement. The statement calls on States to remember the tragic events that took place in Hiroshima and Nagasaki 80 years ago and urges them to continue making sustained and meaningful efforts to rid the world of nuclear weapons that cause devastating humanitarian consequences. The full text of the joint statement is available [here](#).

In April, a Senior Counsel, IHL from the American Red Cross visited Hiroshima. He has led programs aimed at promoting IHL among younger generation in the United States and engaged in dialogue with U.S. youth on the inhumanity of nuclear weapons.

During the visit to Japan, in addition to touring key sites in Hiroshima, including the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum, a public briefing session was held for the media and the general public. The session presented initiatives jointly undertaken by U.S. youth and JRCS on nuclear weapons and IHL.



Scene from the Briefing Session (at JRCS Hiroshima Chapter)

Further details on other initiatives marking 80 years since the end of the World War II are available in [this article](#).

On 24 September 2025, JRCS, in cooperation with ICRC and the Norwegian Red Cross, hosted an online event entitled the “Hiroshima Dialogue”, aimed at advancing efforts toward the elimination of nuclear weapons.

The event brought together 76 participants, including representatives from ICRC as well as National Societies from around the world.

The programme featured a testimony by Ms. Keiko Ogura, a hibakusha (atomic bomb survivor), followed by a presentation on disarmament by a researcher from the Norwegian Seismic Array (NORSAR). Participants then exchanged views and shared information on the current situation and ongoing initiatives related to nuclear disarmament, reaffirming their commitment to continued collaboration within the Movement toward the elimination of nuclear weapons.