Strategic Framework
2025 - 2030

IMPACT

Shaping practices
Influencing policies
Impacting lives

REACH | PANDA | AGORA

CEO PREFACE

When we created IMPACT in 2010, our vision was clear: to support humanitarian and other solidarity actors in making better decisions, informed by reliable data and driven by partnerships with communities. These were the early days of what would evolve into the current humanitarian architecture, characterized by a common belief that our collective efforts would lead to greater global solidarity and progress towards the international community's responsibility to those affected by crises.

Over the years, our vision has come to life through our initiatives: REACH, PANDA and AGORA. Since 2010, our teams and partners have worked to provide the evidence requested by aid actors to improve their decision-making at both crisis and global levels. The high demand and appreciation for our work have driven IMPACT's development, enabling us to play an important role in the collective commitment to evidence-based humanitarian action.

However, recent years have brought new challenges. The spread of conflict and the acceleration of climate change are affecting more people than ever, disproportionately impacting the most vulnerable. Rising international tensions and disengagement from multilateralism have resulted in less interest in collective approaches and reduced funding and access for aid action. What once seemed self-evident to most, such as having good data from crisis-affected communities to inform decisions, is now under threat.

In response to these challenges, we have developed our first Strategic Framework, covering the period 2025-2030, in close consultation with our governance, teams and partners. Building on our 15 years of learning,

this framework will guide us in setting new standards for research quality and to provide international solidarity actors with the evidence needed to support the most vulnerable populations in a people-centered and effective manner across all contexts of crisis. Our commitment to strengthening our organizational capacity will ensure that IMPACT remains resilient and fit-for-purpose, optimizing performance, fostering continuous learning, and cultivating a diverse and skilled team ready to operate wherever needed.

As we release this document, the humanitarian and aid landscape is shifting at an alarming pace. In just the past few months, we have seen a sharp decline of funding, growing constraints on access, and a deepening erosion of the principles that underpin impartial and needs-based humanitarian action. Operational resources are being stretched beyond capacity and the humanitarian structures are under immense pressure to reform. In this context, this Strategic Framework, and the mission and objectives it sets out, are more important and relevant than ever.

I am grateful to our dedicated staff, partners, and supporters. Your commitment and collaboration have been the bedrock of our achievements so far. Together, we have built a strong foundation, and together, we will continue to drive positive change, shaping a future where humanitarian and other actions that support the most vulnerable are more informed, responsive, and impactful.

Thank you for your continued support and belief in IMPACT's mission.

LUCA PUPULIN
IMPACT CEO

August 2025 Version

Cover photo: Data collection in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

ABOUT IMPACT

Founded in 2010 and headquartered in Geneva, IMPACT Initiatives is a leading applied research organization and the largest independent provider of data in crisis-affected contexts. Through our initiatives—REACH, AGORA, and PANDA—we enable humanitarian and other aid actors to make better, evidence-based decisions by delivering timely, relevant, and methodologically rigorous data and analysis. Our extensive presence across crisis-contexts allows us to collect data directly from crisis-affected people wherever needed, including among the most vulnerable and hard-to-reach.

1
INTRODUCTION

The Evolving Landscape: Crisis and Data

The human impact of conflict and climate crises has worsened significantly in recent years. According to the World Economic Forum, approximately 2 billion people—one quarter of humanity—currently live in conflict-affected countries[1]. The International Organization for Migration estimates that climate change could force up to 200 million people to migrate across borders by 2050[2]. These crises disproportionately affect the most vulnerable populations, exacerbating humanitarian needs.

Despite the increasing severity of crises, Official Development Assistance (ODA) is significantly dropping since its peak in 2023. According to ALNAP, government-funded humanitarian assistance is projected to fall from $37.5 billion in 2023 to just $22.7 billion in 2025—a drop of nearly 40%[3]. While international climate financing shows more optimistic prospects, only a fraction of it is directed to the most vulnerable countries that are suffering the brunt of climate change[4].

International polarization is eroding trust in information, as the waning interest in collective action shifts focus away from achieving a common understanding based on rigorous data. Coupled with a trend of decreased access to crisis-affected areas, this environment fosters the spread of misinformation and disinformation, which drive self-interest, conflict, and tension. As a result, it is increasingly difficult for actors working on international development, humanitarian or climate action to have the evidence they need to support the most vulnerable.

To face these challenges, it is of foremost importance to renew our collective commitment to evidence-based decision-making. Good data from populations is an essential enabler for effective, needs-based and people-centered assistance, serving as a foundation for fostering greater trust and collaboration among humanitarian and other aid actors. The evolving data landscape also presents numerous opportunities that should be seized. Increased global interconnectivity allows for more participatory, bottom-up information sharing, promoting inclusion and accountability. Advancements in digital technologies and artificial intelligence offer new tools for information actors to analyze and interpret data more efficiently and effectively.

---

1   World Economic Forum, *Why Global Cooperations is More Important than Ever in a World at War*, January 2025, available **here**.

2   IOM, Migration, *Climate change and the Environment*, 2009, available **here**.

3   ALNAP, *Global Humanitarian Assistance 2025 Report*, available **here**.

4   Climate Policy Initiative, *Global Landscape of Climate Finance*, 2023, available **here**.

Our Key Strenghts

Leveraging 15 years of learning, we are uniquely positioned to transform the landscape of humanitarian and other solidarity action through rigorous, ethical, and transparent research. This Strategic Framework will leverage on our unique value:

Research Rigor

IMPACT is recognized for conducting rigorous, ethical, and transparent research in crisis contexts. We are dedicated to continuously enhancing our methodologies and sharing our knowledge to improve the overall availability and quality of data and analysis in these challenging environments.

Presence where Needed

Present in over 30 crisis-affected countries, we gather key evidence where it is needed most. Our unique operating model, enables us to collect and analyze data across nearly all crisis contexts, including the hardest-to-reach areas.

Driven by Local Knowledge

All our evidence comes from speaking directly with people living through crisis. Through our research, we listen to communities and their voices, experiences, and priorities are at the center of our work.

Independence and Impartiality

As a research-focused organization, we strive to offer an unbiased and impartial perspective. Our independence from direct aid delivery enables us to remain free from conflicts of interest.

Working in Partnership

Our research directly supports decision-making by our partners, including UN agencies, NGOs, and donors, at crisis and global level. Our recognition and integration within multilateral coordination structures allow us to multiply our impact and strengthen data use for collective decision making.

Our Team

IMPACT is powered by a dedicated team of professionals who are driven by our core mission and contribute unique and diverse talents and skills to deliver research in contexts of crises. We thrive in a dynamic and agile organizational culture built from 15 years of learning.

IMPACT Shaping practices Influencing policies Impacting lives
REACH PANDA AGORA
Strategic Framework 2025 - 2030   4

IMPACT Shaping practices Influencing policies Impacting lives
REACH PANDA AGORA
Strategic Framework 2025 - 2030   5

2
WHAT WE AIM TO ACHIEVE

Our ambition for 2030

By 2030, across all major crisis contexts, IMPACT will have delivered rigorous and impartial research to inform needs-based, people-centered and effective assistance, which will meaningfully improve the lives of the world's most vulnerable populations.

OBJECTIVE	1. Evidence-based Decisions	OBJECTIVE	2. Pioneering Research Excellence	OBJECTIVE	3. Forging a Resilient and Fit-for-Purpose Organization
SUB-OBJECTIVES	1.1 Needs-Based Assistance 1.2. People-Centered Assistance 1.3 Effective Assistance 1.4 Strengthening and Diversifying Our Research	SUB-OBJECTIVES	2.1 Research Quality 2.2. Technological Innovation and AI Integration 2.3 Knowledge and Learning 2.4 Data as a Public Good	SUB-OBJECTIVES	3.1 Performance and Learning 3.2 Resilience and Efficiency 3.3 Our People and Culture 3.4 Operational Agility

Please see the following section for more information on each objective and sub-objective.

Objective 1: Evidence-based Decisions

By 2030, IMPACT's research will enable humanitarian and other aid actors to provide people-centered and effective assistance to those most in need. We will expand the availability of evidence by growing our presence and data collection capacity in under-served and hard-to-reach crises and by building partnerships with local actors. We will strengthen our analytical contribution for the questions that matter most for crisis response. We will increase the use of our evidence by continuing to support and strengthen collective coordination and planning systems, while building our voice to provide independent perspectives when needed.

1.1 Needs-Based Assistance

By 2030, we will enable needs-based prioritization within and across crises by increasing the availability of evidence and analysis grounded in a transparent and consistently applied understanding of need.

This will require defining and rolling out a normative framework for measuring need, which balances global comparability with contextual specificity. We will provide independent crises insights, while continuing to support collective analysis processes, seeking to share learning where applicable. We will scale up the production of essential evidence in the world's worst crises, adapting the frequency and methodology of our research to match collective and agency specific decision-making requirements and timelines.

KPI: By 2030, IMPACT's research will support humanitarian prioritization within and across 100% of the world's crises.

1.2 People-Centered Assistance

By 2030, IMPACT will provide humanitarian and other aid actors with evidence that enables them to deliver assistance based on community priorities, feedback and capacities.

We will produce analysis on what matters most to people affected by crisis and how they want support to be delivered. We will strengthen our qualitative and participatory methods, deepen our partnerships with local actors and systematically embed people's voices in our core research. We will take a more intentional approach to reaching and representing marginalized groups, promoting joint analysis and seeking to understand and elevate local systems and capacities as a foundation for effective response.

KPI: By 2030, IMPACT will have embedded community priorities, feedback, and capacities questions into its research in 90% of the world's crises.

1.3 Effective Assistance

By 2030, IMPACT will consistently produce clear, actionable evidence and analysis on aid effectiveness, supporting aid actors to design, deliver, and adapt programs that truly improve lives.

To achieve this, we will develop and apply a normative framework for effectiveness, generating independent insights that guide critical decisions on program design and adaptation. This will be supported by a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation research package that provides direct, timely insights into aid program performance. We will actively disseminate findings to shape policy discussions on what aid action works and how aid can be delivered most effectively across diverse settings.

KPI: By 2030, IMPACT will produce and disseminate actionable evidence or analysis on aid effectiveness in at least 70% of the world's crises.

1.4 Strengthening and Diversifying Our Research

By 2030, IMPACT will have stayed ahead of emerging challenges by evolving its research to better respond to the shifting nature of crises and vulnerability.

We will continually monitor context and adapt our research to ensure it remains relevant. We will remain agile in response to emergencies, embedding climate risk into our research and advancing integrated humanitarian-development approaches.

We will expand and diversify partnerships—especially with local actors—and strengthen our analytical capacity to shape more data-driven and accountable aid decisions. We will sharpen and strengthen our organizational voice to ensure that our evidence informs action across the humanitarian, development and climate sectors.

KPI: By 2030, IMPACT will have responded to 90% of new sudden-onset crises within 72 hours and launched research in response to at least 10 emerging slow-onset climate crises.

IMPACT
REACH PANDA AGORA
Shaping practices Influencing policies Impacting lives

Strategic Framework 2025 - 2030   6

IMPACT
REACH PANDA AGORA
Shaping practices Influencing policies Impacting lives

Strategic Framework 2025 - 2030   7

Objective 2: Pioneering Research Excellence

By 2030, IMPACT will have consolidated its learnings from 20 years of running robust research in contexts of crises and be recognized as a leader in the application of technology and rigorous, ethical, and impartial research methods in crisis contexts. In complex and data-scarce environments, holding ourselves to the highest research standards is how we ensure our work has integrity, stands up to scrutiny, and contributes meaningfully to understanding and action. Over the coming years, this means investing in the methodological, technical, and institutional architecture required to embed research quality and technological innovation across the full cycle of evidence generation, analysis, and dissemination.

2.1 Research Quality

By 2030, IMPACT's research will be recognized as the benchmark in contexts of crisis. To achieve this, we will develop a robust and widely recognized Research Quality Framework and build the capacity to apply it effectively across all our research projects, including necessary skillsets and systems. We will transparently monitor compliance through mechanisms such as Institutional Review Boards and external peer reviews. We will strive to continuously improve our standards to ensure the highest quality of research.

KPI: By 2030, at least 80% of IMPACT research cycles meet required Research Quality Framework standards.

2.2 Technological Innovation and AI Integration

By 2030, IMPACT will have enhanced the timeliness, accuracy and accessibility of our data through technological innovation, including a specific focus on Artificial Intelligence (AI). This will require us to strengthen IMPACT's data infrastructure, internal capacities and processes to enable the integration of emerging innovations in AI and digital technologies for better research practices and outcomes across all our contexts of operation.

KPI: By 2030, IMPACT will have established and rolled out a digitalized and interoperable data infrastructure and leveraged on AI solutions to deliver core research programs.

2.3 Knowledge and Learning

By 2030, IMPACT will have fully integrated learning and innovation principles throughout its research processes and established a robust innovation capacity to continue incorporating better practices into our research design. This will be achieved by mainstreaming internal learning and knowledge management, identifying, piloting, and rolling out innovative research methods required to achieve our objectives. We will not learn alone and will seek to build two-way learning and knowledge exchange partnerships.

KPI: By 2030, IMPACT will have implemented a strategic learning agenda, including at least three partnership-driven initiatives that strengthen research practice.

2.4 Data as a Public Good

By 2030, IMPACT will have become a recognized producer of data for academic knowledge production. IMPACT data will be actively used in academic and scientific research, particularly in crisis-affected and data-scarce environments. We will achieve this through collation and accessible dissemination of data; and by fostering collaborations with academics, think tanks, and policy stakeholders to enable collective knowledge production.

KPI: By 2030, IMPACT data will be cited and used in over 4 academic publications per year.

Objective 3: Forging a Resilient and Fit-for-Purpose Organization

By 2030, IMPACT will have developed the organizational capacity and resilience to deliver our Ambition. We will optimize performance, implement continuous learning, and ensure strategic staffing while cultivating a culture of care and inclusion. IMPACT will embrace operational agility through varied operational models and by fostering local partnerships. We will implement strategic risk management, strengthen funding and brand identity, and enhance efficiency through digitalization.

3.1 Performance and Learning

By 2030, IMPACT will have optimized performance and become a Learning Organization. This will be achieved through the optimal implementation of this Strategic Framework, and by ensuring that IMPACT decisions are driven by data through evidence-based organizational planning. We will foster a culture of continuous learning to strengthen capacity and performance.

KPI: By 2030, IMPACT will have rolled out our strategic plan, monitored our collective performance against KPIs and made course corrections to achieve our objectives.

3.2 Resilience and Efficiency

By 2030, IMPACT will be a more resilient and efficient organization built on solid foundations, and able to anticipate and mitigate risk. This will be achieved by implementing a strategic risk management system to identify, prioritize, and address risks, including cybersecurity and compliance, diversifying funding sources, increasing reserves, securing long-term and core funding, developing cohesive branding to enhance internal cohesion and visibility, and strengthen operational efficiency and our value-for-money proposition by leveraging on digital solutions and optimized resource allocation.

KPI: By 2030, mitigation plans will be in place and regularly monitored for key organizational risks.

3.3 Our People and Culture

By 2030, IMPACT will position the right people in the right places, establishing a diverse and engaged workforce which is aligned with organizational needs and values. This will be achieved by creating an inclusive and supportive work environment rooted in positive collaboration, trust, and responsibility, identifying and supporting talent development within the organization, and developing a fit-for-purpose HR infrastructure to enable efficient operations and informed decision-making.

KPI: By 2030, IMPACT will have an annual retention rate of 75%.

3.4 Operational Agility

By 2030, IMPACT will have the required operational models, partnerships, and agility to meet our Ambition. This will be achieved by establishing various operational models, empowering local teams, and expanding partnerships with local actors to enhance operational agility. These actions will ensure that we can effectively respond to changing contexts, needs and access considerations.

KPI: By 2030, IMPACT will have the operational capacity to deliver the planned evidence and research in 100% of crises.

IMPACT Shaping practices Influencing policies Impacting lives
REACH PANDA AGORA
Strategic Framework 2025 - 2030 **8**

IMPACT Shaping practices Influencing policies Impacting lives
REACH PANDA AGORA
Strategic Framework 2025 - 2030 **9**

3
NEXT STEPS

✓ HOW WILL WE USE THE STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

In a world of increasing turbulence, our Strategic Framework serves as our roadmap to achieving our Ambition for 2030. It is more than just a document; it's our compass, guiding us to become more purposeful and coherent, ultimately better contributing to positive outcomes for crisis-affected populations.

Our Strategic Framework strengthens our commitment to transparency and greater accountability. It drives organizational decision-making. Resource prioritization choices will be taken against the objectives laid out in this document.

To remain accountable and track progress KPIs will be reported annually and key course corrections will be identified and implemented through our senior leadership team quarterly planning processes.

Importantly, our Strategic Framework is flexible and iterative, designed to evolve with our learning and the external environment. It captures our commitment to continuous improvement and our readiness to adapt to new challenges and opportunities.

Join us on this journey as we strive to make a lasting impact, driven by rigorous research, ethical practices, and a commitment to supporting the most vulnerable.

🌐 www.impact-initiatives.org

in @IMPACT Initiatives
f

✉ geneva@impact-initiatives.org