Theme: Reclaiming an Enabling CSO Operating Environment for Inclusive Sustainable Development in Zimbabwe.
Participants posing for a group photo during the 12th NGO Directors Summer Retreat
Acknowledgements

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A membership-driven 12th NGO Directors’ Summer Retreat

Editorial Letter to CSOs members, Stakeholders, and Partners;

The 12th NGOs Directors’ Summer Retreat has been successfully held and NANGO would like to thank you for your participation in this edition. Unlike the previous editions, the 12th Summer Retreat was highly collaborative and member-driven. Various CSOs members of NANGO were actively involved during the planning through consultations for the co-creation of the event programme, defining the content and format of the retreat, and many of them participated as discussants and panellists during the sessions covered.

This report, therefore, aims to allow us to share the vibrant discussions that took place during the two days of the Summer Retreat. We hope you enjoyed, as much as we did, this space for dialogue that allowed us to reconnect amongst the NANGO members, strengthen our partnerships with the private sector, share perspectives with government stakeholders, experiences, and learnings, and celebrate our diversity.

We hope to see you soon at other NANGO activities and flagship events. Remember to follow us on social media @nangozimbabwe and visit our website for more updates including upcoming events as we wrap up the year and plan for a better 2023 for the CSOs fraternity in Zimbabwe.

Yours in Service;

____________________________
Ernest Nyimai
Acting Executive Director
National Association of Non-Governmental Organisations
Introductions, Background & Objectives of the Retreat

The National Association of Non-Governmental Organisations (NANGO), a coordinating body of 1270 NGOs operating in Zimbabwe, values the need for a vibrant, strong, and free civil society, essential in advancing sustainable development through democracy and good governance. The 'Whole of Society' approach adopted by the Government of Zimbabwe affirms that, ‘CSOs are independent development actors in their own right, playing a vital role in advocating respect for human rights, in shaping development policies and in overseeing their implementation.’ However, the current legal, administrative, and policy pronouncements by the government are inhibitive in forwarding the interests of CSOs operating in Zimbabwe. Legislations governing CSOs in Zimbabwe have increasingly become more restrictive with the enactment of new laws or amendments that curtail civil society activities and compromise their autonomy such as the Private Voluntary Organisation (PVO) Amendment Bill of 2021. These include excessive and expensive administrative procedures in the areas of advocacy, human rights, or other democracy and governance-related interventions. From NANGO's perspective, it is imperative for CSOs to collectively dialogue on how to safeguard the operating environment even in a very complex and restrictive context. Joint action by CSOs is also essential to strengthen security and protection mechanisms to safeguard the civic space. Sustainable development and democracy cannot be achieved in the absence of a robust and independent civil society or respect for human rights and human dignity.

NANGO organised the 2022 NGOs Directors Summer Retreat to gather its CSOs members' views and foster exchanges and collective reflection across the CSO sector and beyond for the co-creation of an enabling CSOs operating environment in Zimbabwe. In its broadest sense, an enabling environment means establishing mechanisms for enhanced civic engagement. In such an environment, there should be equitable access, dignity, and safety for all individuals and groups. Development partnerships enable collaborative efforts between NGOs and other stakeholders to ensure that inclusive and sustainable development takes place. As part of its mandate, NANGO should provide a platform for CSOs and other stakeholders to come together and forge ties for inclusive and sustainable development. With this in mind, NANGO took the 2022 NGOs Directors Summer Retreat as an opportunity for NGOs to identify gaps and opportunities in enabling joint advocacy actions amongst CSOs and areas of possible collaboration with other stakeholders.

Below are the Specific Objectives which underpinned the 2022 NGOs Directors Summer Retreat:

- To collectively reflect on the context and map the way forward towards the creation and safeguarding of the CSO’s operating environment in Zimbabwe.
- To better understand the strategies civil society uses or can use to engage and protect their space, even in restrictive environments.
- To stimulate sustainable development through collective agenda-setting and the co-creation of priority policy recommendations necessary to achieve inclusive and sustainable development in Zimbabwe.
- To provide and facilitate a space for NGO leaders’ renewal, reconnection, networking, and celebration of the individual, organisational and collective victories.

Expected Outcomes of the 2022 NGO Directors Summer Retreat:

- Consensus building on the strategic approaches of creating a CSOs enabling environment in Zimbabwe through better coordination and a shared common understanding.
• Greater partnerships and collaboration between CSOs and other non-state actors as well as the government for an enhanced CSOs operating environment.
• CSOs’ leadership support to focus on holistic wellness and strategies for leading in a restrictive operating environment.

Reach Analysis and Demographic Profiling of Participants

NANGO Regions Representation

Northern: Harare Metropolitan, Mash East
: Mash Central & Mash West.
Western: Bulawayo Metropolitan, Mat North
and Mat South.
Eastern: Manicaland Province
Midlands
Southern: Masvingo

NANGO Thematic Clusters Representation

- Women and Gender 15%
- Youth and Children 13.8%
- Media, Arts & Culture 3.8%
- Economic, Climate Justice, and Natural Resource Governance
- Human Rights and Humanitarian
- Disability
- Health and Well-being

Health & Wellbeing 26.3%
Disability 7.5%
Human Rights 16.3%
Economic... 17.5%
Total Reach Disaggregated by Sector

- Directors/Leaders of Local NGOs: 61.5%
- Facilitators and NANGO Staff: 11.1%
- Media Partners: 3%
- Representatives of Academia: 3%
- Private Sector Representatives: 11.9%
- Development Partners and International NGOs: 7.4%

Total Reach: 135

Disaggregation of Participants by Gender

Gender Chart

Gender representation of the 12th NGO Directors Summer Retreat participants.

- Male: 51.9%
- Female: 48.1%
OVERVIEW SUMMARIES OF SESSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

SESSION ONE:
Unpacking Current Context & Issues in the CSOs Operating Environment – Global Perspective

The session sought to reflect on the state of the CSOs operating environment at a global, continental and regional level as well as major shifts in the CSOs landscape based on evolvements and emerging developments around the world. The first presentation under the session was made by Deirdre De Burca, an Advocacy Coordinator at Forus network, a global CSO network that empowers civil society for effective social change. The presentation was titled, ‘Unpacking the role of Civil Society in today’s turbulent world. How can we achieve real transformational change.’ The presentation highlighted the importance of a vibrant and independent civil society which is vital for open civic space, healthy democracy, and social justice.

Despite the turbulent operating environment for CSOs characterised by repressive instruments which are shrinking the civic space, CSOs continue to play a pivotal role through informing and raising public awareness, mobilising people to work together, defending human rights, designing and delivering services to groups or areas not covered by public service as well as monitoring the effects of public policy and holding public authorities to account. It is, therefore, imperative for CSOs to work together with unified agenda in protecting fundamental freedoms, especially freedom of expression, assembly, and association in pursuit of creating a CSOs enabling environment. The need for an enabling operating environment is strongly underscored under Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16 of the Agenda 2030. CSOs need to be much more proactive in line with SDG 16. In light of this, civic space and good governance should be at the top of the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) agenda and CSOs in Zimbabwe were encouraged to develop shadow reports which speak to issues of shrinking civic space as inhibitors in the drive towards achieving the ambitious 17 SDGs by the year 2030.

CSOs were encouraged to identify policies and frameworks both national, regional, and internationally adopted by the government that promote and encourage the participation of CSOs for example the Agenda 2030 that provides for CSOs to come up with an Alternative report on SDGs. The other provisions that CSOs can take advantage of are the fundamental human rights provisions like freedom of expression, assembly, and Association. Again, CSOs were encouraged to keep on reminding the government of SDGs 16 and 17 which promote peace, improve the CSO operating environment and encourage global partnerships respectively. For effective working relationships with the government, CSOs should enhance their capacities to produce high-quality, well-researched, and factual reports.

The second presentation under this session was done by Ennie Chipembere, the Director for Locally Led Development at Humentum. The presentation was titled ‘Sharing major strategic shifts in the CSO sector at Global Level - What CSOs should know.’ The presentation highlighted two things to consider in the CSOs’ work: How we think about development (politics) and How we do things (approach). CSOs leaders should be able to identify new emerging issues within the sector. The presentation touched on the changes in the development sector which brings opportunities for CSOs such as the need to decolonise aid, shift power, come up with locally driven solutions, and have diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging.
Decolonising aid is an opportunity for transformation because it leads to locally driven solutions that should be led by civil society and not by externals or people outside the area of operation. Local solutions are already there but they need to be valued and amplified by the CSOs themselves. The role of funding partners should shift to encompass locally-led solutions and development once CSOs start to set the agenda. It is interesting to note that some INGOs and development partners are in the process of changing after realising that their interventions were not yielding results.

CSOs need to interrogate their systems to promote local sustainable ideas. To avoid gatekeepers who would want us to define for example adequate research in the use of traditional and complementary medicines in Africa. To push locally led issues there is a need to change the definition of development, especially on the primary and secondary sectors for sustainability since it has been mainly focused on to do with services and not on the primary and secondary sectors for example mining, textiles. Further to this, more need to be done to equip young people to produce using our natural resources so there is a need to equip the youth to ensure locally driven development.

Key Recommendations and Action Points

• NANGO to assist with identifying ports of funding as part of unlocking funding streams for its members.
• CSOs to partner with INGOs that are focusing on locally-led interventions as this will help local CSOs in setting and amplifying their agenda.
• For trust among the CSOs, there is a need for healing programmes that happens in the sector because the toxicity is driven mainly by how funders design their funding.
• Local CSOs to work together in a well-coordinated manner in safeguarding the civic space as a unity as opposed to disjointed efforts and fragmentation.
• CSO advocacy should focus on the inclusion of local NGOs in various existing dialogue platforms at multiple levels.
• NANGO to make use of civic space indicators to routinely monitor the civic space and defend the space proactively.

SESSION TWO:
Shrinking Civic Space and Erosion of Democratic Values: Solution-Based Conversation

This session sought to collectively reflect on CSOs’ operating environment and share sector-specific experiences to inform the advocacy initiatives moving forward. The session focused on policy inhibitors, Legal Frameworks – PVO Bill, Patriotic Bill, and Administrative requirements for CSOs to operate both at district and provincial levels e.g., clearance letters and MOUs. The session included an overview of the CSOs operating environment in Zimbabwe and it was divided into mini-workshops for the Women, Youth, Human Rights and Governance; and Disability sectors. Below are key highlights of the issues discussed and proposed solutions from the mini-group workshops as presented.
Block One: Youth Sector

The mini-workshop was constituted of 29 representatives from youth-focused organisations, led by Rosewitta Katsande – the Director for YETT. The group deliberated on experiences and thoughts about Policies, Legal frameworks, and Administrative Requirements that are affecting youth organisations as well as giving possible solutions and recommendations. The block agreed that there is a lack of coordination within the youth sector both at the civil society and government levels has resulted in competition for resources and space. Since young people in their nature are energetic and innovative, they have been perceived as a threat to the government and pushing regime change agenda.

Therefore, there is a need to ensure that youth organisations are non-partisan for credibility purposes. The socio-economic environment also negatively impacts youth mobilisation as most young people are not employed and do not have economic livelihoods hence their participation in most CSO activities tends to be incentive-based in anticipation of reimbursements, t-shirts among other incentives, etc. Youth as a sector is heterogenous and this necessitates the facilitation of intergenerational dialogue to bridge the gap in terms of age and income status amongst other key variables.

Key Recommendations and Action Plans

• Youth organisations to have interventions for behavior change, especially around the use of social media platforms by youth.
• Youth-focused CSOs to blend advocacy initiatives with livelihood interventions that facilitate employment and economic empowerment of young people. NANGO working with youth sector leads or coalitions can assist with the capacity enhancement of youth organisations for holistic programming which embeds various dimensions, especially the livelihoods component. This can also be achieved through fostering greater partnerships through the involvement of the private sector and business community for youth-friendly financing models.
• NANGO working with the youth sector leads should consider the capacity enhancement of youth organisations for monitoring, evaluation, documentation, and reporting of youth-oriented activities to profile their contributions at all levels.
• NANGO together with youth organisations to invest in research on youths' contribution to economic development through the productive sector (mining and agriculture) as well as civic and electoral processes (voter registration).
• NANGO and youth sector organisations to organise knowledge transfer and exchange programmes with other countries to draw some lessons from them. This may also be prudent in making efforts to harness youth in their numbers to register to vote and their participation in social, economic, and political development.
• It was recommended that with help from NANGO Secretariat, clarity should be sought in terms of payment of allowances for government officials to attend meetings as well as acquiring MOUs for CSOs to operate at local levels.
Block Two: Women Sector

The mini-workshop was constituted of 34 women and gender-focused organisations and it was facilitated by the National Coordinator of the Women’s Coalition of Zimbabwe (WCoZ), Sally Ncube. The block deliberated on Policies, Legal Frameworks, and Administrative Requirements that are affecting women’s organisations as a sector. They reported that women’s organisations have proved not to be fully aware of national policies in place, how they are applied, and their levels and structures. This is mainly due to different policy inconsistencies in terms of implementation. Women, therefore, are concerned with the selective approach to policy implementation. Some of the findings are that locally, regionally, and internationally, when it comes to women’s rights, gender, and empowerment instruments, Zimbabwe is quick to sign but the gap is mostly linked to a lack of resources.

The content of CSO programming has been questioned as some organisations are only allowed to carry out women and gender programmes but not service delivery or politics-related programmes. Rights holders have been intimidated and reduced their confidence because of the fragile solidarity framework and CSO rapid response mechanism and support. There are some instances where the content of programming and facilitators are checked and changed to suit the agendas of political officials. Internally, some international organisations give stakeholders allowances in doing their humanitarian work. Administratively their programmes are now being preferred to those without allowances.

Key Recommendations and Action Plans

• NANGO to facilitate the capacity enhancement of its members to align their strategic plans and priority pillars to national, regional, continental, and global policies, frameworks, and administrative procedures.

• NANGO to facilitate engagement platforms between CSOs and the government on the standard operating procedures including costs of some compliance procedures programming. This is because there are reports that the cost of compliance is now exceeding the cost of programming hence the need to engage with government departments.

• For Local CSOs to engage different media houses to raise awareness, change the mindset as well as communicate how CSOs are contributing to development.
Block Three: Human Rights and Governance Sector

This block was constituted of 31 representatives under the Human Rights and Governance sector led by Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum. Likewise, the block focused on Policies, Legal frameworks, and Administrative Requirements that are affecting human rights and democracy-focused organisations as a sector. The sector has noted mutual deep-rooted suspicion between the government and CSOs hence the need for CSOs to engage more, cooperate, be transparent and invite government representatives whenever necessary to their activities. This assists in avoiding the implementation of nefarious activities being carried out. The general fear of citizens to participate in general governance processes has contributed to the limited participation of women and youth in governance and human rights issues.

Human rights and governance work have been highly politicised becoming a cause of concern among CSOs in raising awareness of human rights. There is, therefore, a need for more innovative ideas in cascading issues to do with human rights and governance e.g., through mobile legal clinics and community dialogue in engaging the youth, women, and other marginalised communities.

Key Recommendations and Action Plans

• CSOs to advocate for complete institutional reforms including independence of the judiciary and law enforcement.
• Since a lack of social cohesion and integration starting from the community level was identified as a gap, CSOs coordinated by NANGO to have national dialogues inclusive of the church, media, skilled labourers, and other stakeholders.
• NGO sector to consider adopting a CSO Self-regulation mechanism as a way to defend and safeguard the CSOs operating environment.
• There is a need for a continuous effort by NANGO to bring CSOs together and have a shared vision and goals.
• CSOs to be accountable both to the Donors and beneficiaries. There is a need for all CSOs to account for the funds and activities held as well as give feedback to beneficiaries or communities.
• Mental health needs to be acknowledged as an area of priority by CSOs, the government, and the general citizenry. NANGO, together with other CSOs, to have engagements on the need for a change in the funding model to cater to the welfare of CSO staff.

Block Four: Disability Sector

The mini-workshop was constituted of 17 participants drawn from Organisations for Persons With Disabilities (OPDs). The block was facilitated by Bruce Nyoni, the director of Albino Trust of Zimbabwe. The group was in agreement that without the disability community, humanity will not be complete. There is a need to ensure that CSO programming is crosscutting and disability-inclusive. The group shared several case studies where OPDs have been barred from penetrating certain districts on account of the need for clearance letters and MoUs despite the urgency of the interventions which were to be implemented.
Key Recommendations and Action Plans

- CSO Self-Regulation is key. There is a need for NANGO to ensure that CSOs have sound administrative and governance systems and policies that can safeguard them through compliance.

- NANGO to facilitate engagement between CSOs and various line government line ministries and departments on the issue of administrative requirements to operate at the district level.

SESSION THREE:

Beyond the PVO Amendment Bill: Triggering Transformational Change

The session sought to use the lessons learnt and make strategic shifts and operationalisation of best practices on how to protect, defend, and safeguard the civic space in the long run. It also focused on learning the global landscape in the implementation and compliance to the Financial Action Taskforce (FATF) Recommendation 8 by countries. This session was divided into three segments reflecting on the areas the sector could target to trigger a transformational change in the implementation of programmes and in creating an enabling operating environment for CSOs beyond the Private Voluntary Organisations (PVO) Amendment Bill.

Summary of Key Highlights

The first segment aimed to critically analyse the unintended consequences of FATF Recommendation 8 which has led to a plethora of Counter Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing (CML/TF) regulations targeting CSOs that are being legislated across the region, including the PVO Amendment Bill in Zimbabwe. The session was conducted virtually by Ms. Sangeeta Goswami from the Human Security Collective and the Global NPO Coalition on FATF. She highlighted issues emerging from the implementation of the FATF Recommendation 8 by countries such as arbitrary, opaque, and ineffective risk assessment methodologies with minimal to no consultations with the sector; inadequate definitions and lack of data leading to the stigmatisation of the sector and defaulting to labelling it high risk; and, poor design/implementation and/or intentional misuse of FATF standards and evaluations to justify laws which adversely affect humanitarian aid and development programming. The interpretation and implementation of AML/CFT measures has produced unintended consequences and policy incoherencies including financial exclusion, shrinking of civic space, and the rollout of the SDGs. There exists a lack of clarity regarding CFT obligations and legal safeguards for civic space.

The second segment of the session sought to highlight where NGO action fits in with Universal Humanitarian Standards to assess whether the sector is fit for self-regulation. The segment was presented by Wonder Mufunda, the director of the Centre for Humanitarian Analytics (CHA). The session attempted to answer questions around whether the humanitarian architecture in the Zimbabwe NGO sector is fit for purpose, whether it can deliver what we need for the sector, and assessing the efficacy of the self-regulation model in Zimbabwe. The presenter discussed the grand bargain initiative and greatly emphasised quality and accountability. In a survey conducted by the CHA and NANGO, the results showed that there is a strong belief that standards and benchmarks would strengthen the sector’s quest for self-regulation of the sector whilst also increasing accountability and building trust between the government and NGOs. It is hoped that adopting standards and benchmarks will trigger transformational changes in the sector and enable it to thrive beyond the PVO Amendment Bill and any other shocks to the operating environment.
The last segment of the session sought to reflect on the role and impact of media in safeguarding CSOs’ Operating environment, especially in the context of the complex and restrictive operating environments in Zimbabwe. The session was led by Mr. Tobias Saratiel, the director of Community Solutions Zimbabwe. He highlighted the importance of media practitioners familiarising themselves with the principles and benchmarks of CSOs to correctly and responsibly carry out their duties concerning the dissemination of CSOs’ work.

Mr. Saratiel also highlighted how it is important for media practitioners to provide checks and balances not only on CSOs but on government agents as well. He noted that the role of the media is often undermined by fear of harassment and intimidation leading to self-censorship of the media. He acknowledged how freedom of expression is closely linked to freedom of association and the need to develop links and work together with CSOs for transformational change in both the media and CSO sector.

Key Recommendations and Action Plans

- Local CSOs to advocate for the application of the risk-based approach and NPO Risk Assessment using available tools and typologies within the FATF standards. The advocacy may target FIU and the National ML/TF Taskforce.
- Zimbabwe CSOs to advocate for the alignment of the goals of financial integrity, security, and inclusion to ensure policy coherence.
- CSOs to ensure the adoption of sector financial management standards and good practices to reduce the inherent risk of vulnerability to ML/TF.
- NANGO, in partnership with CHA, to conduct another survey to develop a position of diagnosis and a baseline on the standards agenda within the sector.
- NANGO to facilitate sensitisation meetings and conduct capacity strengthening on the standards agenda for CSO leaders in Zimbabwe.
- CSOs to make use of licenced community radio stations to provide access to information to communities about developmental issues.
- CSOs to empower media practitioners on the principles and operations of CSOs to ensure responsible and accurate information dissemination.
- Both sectors should foster the creation of synergies between the media and CSOs to protect human rights and freedoms such as freedom of association and freedom of expression.

SESSION FOUR:

Reflection on the State of the Economy in Zimbabwe

The session’s objective was to reflect on the state of the Zimbabwean economy, especially in line with the operations of CSOs, the public finance management system as well as the debt status of the country. The presenters looked at the current context vis-à-vis the community needs. The first presentation was done by Retlaw Mutorwa from the Harare Institute of Public Health (HIPH) titled ‘The State of Public Health Systems vis-a-vis Covid-19 Adaptation, Recovery and Resilience Efforts’. The presentation highlighted the dire situation in Zimbabwe’s Public Health which was then exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic that wreaked havoc from 2020 up to date.
It reflected the nexus between public finance management and the state of public health systems symbolised by corrupt activities where drugs could not be found in public hospitals but are available in abundance in private hospitals at exorbitant costs. Some of the challenges as noted during the discussion were no proper coordination in terms of responding to new variants and disease surveillance, obsolete equipment and machinery, brain drain, drugs remaining scarce, and the funds depleting.

The second presentation under this session was delivered by Tafadzwa Chikumbu, the director of Transparency International Zimbabwe (TiZ). The title of the presentation was ‘Public Finance Management (PFM) and the Debt Situation in Zimbabwe.’ The presentation unpacked the PFM system and its related legal and institutional frameworks including but not limited to, Chapter 17 of the Zimbabwe Constitution, the PFMA, the Public Debt Management Act, and the Finance Act. Some of the best practices in strengthening transparency and accountability systems in PFM which were discussed include the Open Budget Survey (OBS).

The debt situation in Zimbabwe is characterised by the violation of legal and constitutional provisions in respect of PFM and reporting as there are no steps to authorise unbudgeted expenditures.

Some of the case studies presented include the Government of Zimbabwe overdraft at the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe (RBZ) which exceeds the set limits in the RBZ Act; the current public debt which exceeds the limit set out in the Public Debt Management Act that is 70 percent Debt to GDP ratio; violation of the SADC Protocol on Finance and Investment benchmarks of 60 percent. Both the domestic and external debt levels violate the legal and constitutional provisions. Further to this, corruption of monumental and scandalous levels has contributed to the exponential growth in domestic debt in Zimbabwe for example the assumption of the US$495 million ZISCO Steel debt despite citizen contestation. The current debate is focused on aligning the PFM Act with the constitution.

The presenter made a strong emphasis on the need for CSOs to collectively intensify advocacy for the implementation of the Auditor General’s report as well as the institutionalisation of mechanisms to close leakages of the resources to curb corruption in Zimbabwe.

Key Recommendations and Action Points

- CSOs and other like-minded stakeholders to collectively work on strengthening and integrating community health systems through community systems strengthening interventions.
- CSOs involved in health promotion should work with informed people to disseminate or interpret information about public health to avoid misinformation.
- CSOs to facilitate conversations on the role of traditional and complementary medicines in fighting diseases using homegrown and local solutions.
- CSOs to complement government efforts for greater public-private partnership in the enhancement of health care services.
- CSOs in the economic governance sector to help in interpreting and unpacking PFM processes and economic jargon for movement-building purposes.
SESSION FIVE:

Accelerating the Implementation of SDGs in the Decade of Action

The fifth session of the retreat focused on identifying strategies to accelerate the implementation of SDGs in Zimbabwe in the decade of action. The session sought to come up with key priority areas for CSOs to effectively contribute to the attainment of SDGs through the implementation of programmes, advocacy, monitoring and evaluation of programmes earmarked for SDGs. The session also aimed at identifying key roles of CSOs in fostering greater partnerships as well as harmonisation of the national development plan to the SDGs and Agenda 2063. The first round of discussion session titled, ‘An Overview of the Zimbabwe United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation and Role of CSOs’ was facilitated by Mickelle Hughes, UN Zimbabwe Partnership and Development Finance Specialist. She focused on unpacking the UN Zimbabwe’s Cooperation framework, four pillars of the UNSDCF, its objectives and outcomes, and the proposed NGO Engagement Forum. Several participants highlighted the complexities and barriers to accessing financial support under the current funding models and how this inhibits grassroots movements and community-based organisations.

The session also explored ways for improved and better-structured engagements between CSOs and UN Country Teams and Agencies in the spirit of fostering greater partnerships under the new cooperation framework. The session produced several engagement initiatives, CSO suggested to the UN and development partners to conduct broad base consultations using the thematic focus of NANGO inclusively. It was strongly recommended that NANGO serve as the coordinating body for development partners’ efforts to build institutions, while also meeting the needs of its members. The session made it very evident that there is a knowledge gap regarding how the UN operates and the channels CSO should use to interact with the UN.
The second discussion which focussed on 'CSOs' roles in fostering greater partnership in this Decade of Action towards Agenda 2030', was facilitated by Dr. Bob Libert Muchabaiwa, UNICEF through a virtual call-in session. During this round of discussion, the facilitator shared some of the shocks and implications in terms of advancing sustainable development, and ideas on how CSOs can build resilience and accelerate the implementation of SDGs in Zimbabwe.

The session highlighted that the country is characterised by inadequate economic growth to create jobs, an unresolved debt crisis, a country riddled with debt, recurring floods, droughts, and other climate changes and recurring health emergencies.

These shocks are driven by inadequate, unfair, and sometimes ineffective public spending on basic and social services, weak social contracts between citizens and government, negative coping mechanisms, and low household disposable income consumption.

**Key Recommendations and Action Points**

- NANGO in collaboration with development partners to foster more systemic engagement with diverse civil society partners to strengthen strategic dialogue and shape policies and programmes developed by partners.
- NANGO in partnership with development partners to promote capacity strengthening for civil society actors.
- Development partners to facilitate enhanced CSO relations between the government and other partners and stakeholders.
- Development partners should cultivate a culture of listening and consulting with CSOs on a broad range of issues.
- NANGO to fight short-termism and address sustainability questions by facilitating the transformational exchange of ideas in partnership with resident development partners.
- CSOs should regularly monitor economic risks, shocks, and vulnerabilities for all demographic groups.
- Corporate governance should be strengthened by building personal and organisational trust.
- CSOs to support the association (NANGO) which will in turn help in building alliances and common ground within the CSOs sector in Zimbabwe.
- CSO should stick to their mandates to remain non-partisan and represent their communities as a way of avoiding existential threats from the government.

**SESSION SIX:**

*Strengthen the Relationship Between the Government and CSOs in Zimbabwe*

The session sought to understand the government’s perspectives on how its relationship with CSOs can be strengthened in pursuit of creating a CSOs enabling environment. The presentation was made by Patience Chiputura representing the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare. The presentation was titled 'An Overview Of Operations Of Private Voluntary Organisations In Zimbabwe Since Independence: Contributions To National Development, Challenges, And Opportunities.' The presentation traced the work done by CSOs from the liberation struggle to the present. It also highlighted periodic reviews of the laws governing the operations of PVOs in Zimbabwe that aimed at improving governance issues of the sector, enhancing transparency and accountability, and easing the registration process.

The presentation highlighted the role of NGOs as mainly to complement government efforts and to fill in gaps that would have been identified in society. Their operations are not only limited to the alleviation of suffering among human beings but to also address issues of animal welfare and environmental protection among others.

The presenter noted that PVOs’ contribution to the social protection of vulnerable groups in Zimbabwe cannot be over-emphasised as the sector has complemented government efforts during droughts and other climate change-related disasters. For example, the presenter acknowledged the immense assistance rendered to the victims of Cyclone Idai in Chimanimani and Chipinge through the provision of financial, material, and human resources and the construction of residential care facilities for society’s most vulnerable groups such as children, the elderly, and persons with disabilities. The presentation unravelled the government’s perception that CSOs lack good corporate governance as well as the existing lack of trust between ‘militant’ PVOs and the state which the presenter pointed to be mainly those CSOs in human rights advocacy.

The discussion also focused on the complexities and challenges around the requests for Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) by government ministries, departments, and local government structures. The absence of a policy provision and the standard operating procedures for acquiring such documents has been considered a grey area. CSOs also raised concern over requests by local authorities for payment of fees to allow the processing of these operational documents.

NANGO, therefore, committed to engage the permanent secretaries in all relevant ministries to address NGO concerns in greater detail. It also emerged during the discussion that the application and implementation of the FATF Recommendation 8 is not very transparent and in line with the risk-based approach as required by the FATF standards.
Key Recommendations and Action Points

- The government needs to take the whole-of-government approach and revisit the structural issues especially the duplication of requirements by different ministries concerning MoUs.
- CSOs to harmonise their relationship with the government by sticking to mandates of existence as per their constitution or deed.
- NANGO to facilitate an engagement between CSOs and the Ministry of Local Government to resolve the issue of MoUs.
- NANGO to engage FIU and the ML/TF national task force to agree on the application of the standard in the implementation of the FATF Recommendation 8 in Zimbabwe in particular the NPO Risk Assessment.

SESSION SEVEN: SECTOR-SIDE SESSIONS

Health Sector Highlights Summary

The side session’s objective was to collectively discuss and co-create recommendations on how to address challenges mitigating against CSOs around health community systems strengthening as well as opportunities to maximise the impact of global financing mechanisms especially the Global Fund (GF). The first presentation was made by Dakarayi Matanga of Transparency International Zimbabwe. The presentation was titled ‘Transparency and Accountability in the Health Sector and the Role of CSOs.’ The presentation highlighted the importance of allocative efficiency and technical efficiency, aligning advocacy issues and monitoring instruments. The presentation also shared some insights on how oversight bodies can influence transparency, accountability, and integrity in the public health sector with the role of the parliament as key in achieving this. The country cannot guarantee the right to public health if resources are being lost through corruption. Two tools of public oversight were noted; financial accountability and rule of law. CSOs were urged to focus on ensuring the equitable distribution of public resources as well as play their watchdog role. The presentation noted that Zimbabwe consistently underperforms in terms of delivering on the allocations towards public health but there is a positive correlation between high expenditure and the welfare of people.

The disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on different groups meant that the government had to avail resources to cater to the different groups. The weakest are the ones that were hit the most by the pandemic. COVID-19 led to the vast allocation of resources towards mitigating the pandemic and there was a creation of room for corruption, especially through procurement. Access to information was highlighted as a serious challenge in advocating for greater transparency and accountability in the allocation, utilisation, accounting, and oversight of COVID-19 resources. Various analyses on the use of COVID-19 resources exposed procurement malpractices, theft of essential medicines, bribery, nepotism, and false referrals among others. Reports such as the 2021 Special Report on COVID-19 and the Afrobarometer of 2021 further expose corrupt activities in the utilisation of COVID-19 funds by the government.

The second presentation focused on Social Contracting and ZNASP IV 2021-2025 highlighting the role of CSOs. The presentation was made by a representative from National AIDS Council (NAC). The presentation unpacked the goals and aspirations set in Zimbabwe National HIV/AIDS Strategic Plan (ZNASP) IV with a focus on HIV/AIDS and TB. The presentation looked at guiding principles such as results-based management, evidence-based, high-impact, and scalable interventions as well as multi-sectoral accountability.
The presentation indicated that ZNASP IV places Zimbabwe on the path to achieving the Fast Track 95-95-95 targets by shifting from a national-level planning approach to district-level targeting locations and populations based on evidence. The strategic plan target populations include adolescent girls and young women (10-24), women (25-49) including pregnant women, key populations as well as People living with HIV.

The presenter also highlighted the ongoing process of developing a one-year addendum extension to the ZNASP IV to ensure national ownership of interventions to be proposed for the 2024 – 2026 Global Fund cycle under the New Funding Model (NFM) 4. CSOs were urged to identify priorities, make a submission and ensure the inclusion of CSOs’ priorities in the addendum. Some of the areas proposed to be included in the ZNASP IV addendum include HIV and aging; Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs); treatment-palliation happening; health management; combined Pill-PrEP and oral contraceptives; service integration with other Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) services to help communities understand integration; chemotherapy for cancer especially breast cancer; shortage of nurses (brain drain); human resources for health; step up prevention strategies, especially looking at young people and children, mental wellness integration not only drug abuse; viral load coverage for age groups 5-10 years; promotion of PPPs; greater male involvement in HIV Prevention; new injectable PrEP rollout and awareness; children born and living with HIV; and removal of user fees.

Key Recommendations and Action Points

- CSOs to advocate for e-procurement systems that can help reduce corruption especially minimisation of human contact.
- CSOs to periodically produce shadow reports on the use of public funds in the health sector to assist parliament to play its oversight role.
- Comprehensive Whistleblower legislation to protect whistleblowers to help fight corruption as soon as possible
- Health-focused CSOs to be proactive in participating and influencing the GF country process as we build up toward the development of the NFM 4 Funding Request.
- NANGO, in collaboration with Zimbabwe AIDS Network (ZAN), to convene a dialogue session aimed at the stocktake of available reports and models to use as evidence during the NFM4 writing process.
- CSOs to facilitate meaningful involvement of grassroots communities in line with the community-led response concept to come up with workable solutions and home-grown solutions to some of the challenges currently faced.

Climate Justice Highlights Summary

The side session sought to explore, collectively discuss, and come up with CSOs-driven issues on climate change building up to COP-27. The major focus was on climate justice referring to the Paris Climate Agreement. The conversation was made around climate justice, accountability, and the causes of emissions as an area of interest during COP-27. A presentation by Actionaid Zimbabwe indicated that climate impact is getting worse by the day evidenced by a scarcity of water, veld fires, rising global temperatures, and crop failure amongst other noticeable climate-related changes. The presentation pointed out that fossil fuel and agriculture are the major contributors to greenhouse gas emissions and climate change. There is a need to relook at the approaches that we are taking in agriculture and agroecological agricultural practices to conserve the environment. The presentation also indicated that few resources are channelled to green solutions in developing countries thus climate change is seriously underfunded.
ActionAid Zimbabwe is focusing on shifting public and private finance away from harmful agribusiness and fossil fuels towards real solutions by shifting public investments and subsidies to climate-proofing initiatives, updating and implementing policies related to green agricultural and extractive sector management as well as lobbying for loss and damage financing facilities reflected at the different governance levels. For Zimbabwe to reach global financiers, there is a need for a campaign from the national to the global level up to COP-27 and beyond. It was agreed from the discussion that the climate change issue is now a crisis. A reminder was put across that CSOs are not negotiators rather they are observers and CSOs need to position themselves and also contribute to the discussions going on through the government.

On the role of CSOs in climate change, the presenters shared four major areas where CSOs can play a critical role; Mitigation, Adaptation, Resilience, and Loss and Damage.

Women were reported to be facing a lot of challenges caused by climate change impacts such as scarcity of water causing human-wildlife conflicts, violent conflicts at water sources, transactional sex to access water, and food insecurity leading women to be the sole providers of food in most households. CSOs can create community-based climate change champions that can assist in educating communities on green jobs as alternate sources of livelihood as well as advocating for devolution funds to cater to climate change. It is also important to analyse the national and international climate financing to inform local advocacy and lobby for laws and policies that are gender-responsive. The social inclusion of women and girls in climate-smart agricultural practices is critical.

Participants agreed that loss and damage finance should be part of the Agenda for COP-27 and the discussions should continue beyond COP-27 to ensure the implementation of adopted recommendations and resolutions by the government. It is also critical to lobby for resource allocation towards climate-smart technology to address food insecurity and the private sector should be engaged to assist in setting up national climate funds. There is a need for a clear climate disaster response strategy to avoid reactive measures. Budgets should be gender responsive and it is important to remind the financiers that Africa needs grants not loans for climate financing.

Key Recommendations and Action Points

- As a way of moving forward, participants agreed that there is a need to amplify the conversation around mainstreaming of climate change with the programming of most institutions to escalate the climate justice movement.
- We need a call to action for climate finance governance through ActionAid leading grassroots-based global finance to demand accountability of climate finance.
- There is a need for agroecology as a mechanism to improve the adaptation capacity of society to climate change.
- There is a need to improve coordination on climate interventions in the country and within CSOs to avoid a silo mentality.
- CSOs should influence policy reform and formulation, educate and raise awareness as well as engage the private sector.
SESSION EIGHT:

CSOs – Development Partner Exchange – Know Your Partners Better

The session sought to provide an opportunity for an interface between CSOs leaders and development partners with the aim of better understanding how various partners operate, their strategic pillars or areas of focus, and the funding/grant-making models. The section was graced by four representatives of development partners or donor agencies. These were OXFAM in Southern Africa represented by Lynn Chiripamberi, Sightsavers Zimbabwe represented by Peter Bare, East-West Management Institute (EWMI) represented by Robert Nyakuwa, and GIZ BACKUP Health represented by Dr. Fortune Nyamande. These representatives had an opportunity to respond to questions from the audience being facilitated by Dr. Lamiel Phiri (NANGO Board Chairperson).

OXFAM SAF shared its recent evolution process with a major strategic shift to the localisation agenda and a strong emphasis on strategic partnerships with local CSOs. The key priority is now working with local partners in regions of interest and these are Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and America. With the new architecture and structure, OXFAM aims to empower local institutions and advance partnerships both locally and globally. This new approach aims at enabling local actors to take action in their regions of presence. Three Pillars that OXFAM represents in Southern Africa include Just Economies Pillar which encompasses Fiscal Justice, Public Finance Management, Resource Governance, Transformative Agriculture, and Food Systems; Gender Justice Pillar include issues to do with Transformative leadership, SRHR, Girls’ Education, Ending Violence against Girls and Women and Unpaid Care Work and Humanitarian Pillar which houses Food and Economic Security, Disaster Risk Reduction, Humanitarian Advocacy, Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Governance. Currently, OXFAM SAF is developing a Regional Operating Framework for the 2023 cycle which is likely to end in January. They are currently shortlisting local CSOs that submitted an expression of interest in response to the call for partners under the new localisation framework and will respond to partners’ proposals by giving feedback by early February 2023. OXFAM aims to work with women’s rights organisations as key agencies locally.

Sightsavers is mandated to protect sight. The core focus of Sightsavers is Protecting Sight, Fighting Diseases, and being Hypersensitive to Disability. The organisation is interested in empowering OPDs and is interested to partner with any organisation advancing the call to promote disability inclusion. Sightsavers also support educational programmes for PWDs, especially visually impaired persons. Currently, the organisation is supporting a 5-year programme aimed at trachoma elimination. Sightsavers also seeks to launch a programme that will focus on the Employment and Economic Empowerment of PWDs working with OPDs. Sightsavers has three approaches to CSOs support which are: providing financial support to the organisation implementing disability programmes, issuing calls for proposals, and supporting organisations on an ad hoc basis through concept note submission. Proposals submitted to Sightsavers have to include a disability component as the organisation is disability hypersensitive.

EWMI is a fund manager institution that mainly focuses on Democracy and Governance programmes. The institution is interested in knowing issues affecting CSOs and the citizens of Zimbabwe and designing programmes that assist in ameliorating the challenges faced by CSOs and citizens. EWMI has three main pillars which are Civic Engagement, Participation of Women in Leadership, and Positive Youth Development (Youth Participation). The EWMI has adopted the Social Labs methodology and this is now a requirement for grant selection. The Social Lab methodology requires the co-creation of project proposals with every stakeholder, partner, or beneficiary who will be involved in the grant implementation.
EWMI looks at how organisations are working with stakeholders. The institution encourages innovation in proposing interventions and approaches to deal with complex issues in an ever-changing environment. EWMI has different funding mechanisms which include issuing calls for proposals and their financial year runs from October to October. Participants were urged to be on the lookout for calls as EWMI will be issuing calls for proposals soon. Organisations were urged to pay attention to the terms of reference for calls as they have specifications that need to be adhered to.

GIZ BACKUP Health’s overall mission seeks to improve effective and efficiency of Global Financing Mechanisms. The BACKUP Health Initiative seeks to improve governance and the national coordination of globally financed programmes, strengthen specific institutions of the health sector that contributes to global financing mechanisms as well as enhance the capacity of health institutions to maximise the impact of the global financing mechanisms on health. The initiative is largely hinged on the new GF Strategy that seeks to achieve a people-centred approach which has risen as a result of previous GF Initiatives being critiqued as being parallel and vertical to already existing Health Systems. The Initiative also supports interventions that seek to mitigate the impact of Covid-19 on the Health Care System. Support to CSOs is mainly through grant agreements, local subsidies, or consultants for partner organisations.

Key Recommendations and Action Plans

- CSOs to propose methodologies or implementation approaches that they are quite versed with and ensure that they can implement using the proposed approach and achieve the intended results.
- CSOs Directors to conduct thorough situational and contextual analysis and beneficiary mapping and needs assessment when writing a proposal. With the new shift that has taken a toll regarding primary stakeholders’ involvement in project design, CSOs leaders were enlightened on the importance of primary stakeholders’ involvement as they know exactly what is affecting them and how the problem can be solved whilst promoting sustainability. Contextual analysis is of paramount importance during a project design and this is one of the reasons many organisations are failing to secure grants as they lack clear demonstration and exhibiting evidence for having conducted the contextual analysis as part of the project design.
- CSOs leaders to clearly understand the terms of reference when a call for proposal is issued. It was highlighted that this will save both the donor and applying organisation time. Failing to understand TORs have made organisations ineligible to apply for funding that is beyond or not in line with their area of focus and at times they are ineligible for the grant but would still apply.
- CSOs to demonstrate innovation and creativity when seeking funding. CSOs leaders were made aware of the importance of uniqueness when applying for funding as this is what donors are looking for. New ideas breed a perfect environment to birth positive changes and improve from what was done before by other organisations for the betterment of primary stakeholders in different communities. Innovation comes from a thorough situational and contextual analysis by applying organisations and brainstorming with their teams in a bid to identify new innovative ideas that will bring the anticipated desire to fruition.
- CSOs leaders to pay attention to detail and show passion in the form of delivering results that will be visible to all. It has been noted that many organisations are focusing on meeting targets without prioritising the quality of results that are being attained. Documentation of results was identified as a gap that needs to be covered and leaders of organisations were recommended to value documentation as donors are now seeking or paying interest on what is already being done by organisations as opposed to what organisations are proposing to do when they are awarded funding. It was highlighted that organisations are implementing life-changing programmes and projects but the documentation part is not being well executed.
• Donors are seeking evidence regarding organisations’ capacity to execute projects or programmes without expatriates being involved. Directors were enlightened on the need to improve their demonstration of the capacity they possess when convincing donors during proposal writing. Leaders were given a glimpse in the sense that donors acknowledged that local leaders and their organisations do possess the capacity to operate and manage grants with local skills but the ability to portray this skill is lacking.

• CSOs to adhere to standards as this is the new norm that will assist organisations to secure funding. Many organisations do not have standards that they adhere to and this has made them perform poorly and fail to secure donors’ confidence.

### Action Plan Summary

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<tr>
<th>Focus Area</th>
<th>Action Plan</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Resource Mobilisation &amp; Fund Raising</strong></td>
<td>Facilitate consortiums</td>
<td>NANGO</td>
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<td>Forge strategic partnerships with the private sector</td>
<td>CSOs</td>
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<td>Adopt alternative resource mobilisation strategies such as social enterprise and income-generating projects.</td>
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<td><strong>Innovation and Creativity in programming</strong></td>
<td>Adopt locally-led development or interventions in programming.</td>
<td>CSOs</td>
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<td>Make use of co-creation strategies when responding to calls for proposals</td>
<td>CSOs</td>
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<td><strong>CSOs Operating Environment</strong></td>
<td>Conduct regular inclusive CSOs social movement-building meetings.</td>
<td>NANGO</td>
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<td>Proactive forecasting of potential threats to the civic space through enhanced tracking, monitoring, and documentation of the state of the CSO operating environment.</td>
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<td>Adopt, subscribe and operationalise wide sector NGO standards.</td>
<td>NANGO/CSOs</td>
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<td>Facilitate engagement with MoPSLSW on the administration of the PVO Amendment Bill before its enactment.</td>
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<td>Continuous engagement with media practitioners on the role and operations of CSOs.</td>
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<td>Advocate for the application of the risk-based approach in conducting ML/TF NPO Risk Assessment using available tools and typologies within the FATF standards.</td>
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<td>Facilitate engagements between CSOs and the Local Government structures to resolve administrative and operational issues – MoUs and Clearance Letters.</td>
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<td><strong>Policy dialogues and engagements</strong></td>
<td>Improve stakeholder engagement at multiple levels for sector-specific issues.</td>
<td>CSOs</td>
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<td>Convene a platform for dialogue and engagement between CSOs and; development partners and INGOs.</td>
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<td>Capacity Enhancement</td>
<td>Intensify social media and digital platforms usage for youth engagement.</td>
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<td>Design programmes for transformative leadership, knowledge management, and skills development</td>
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<td>Facilitate exchange programmes and study tours</td>
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<td>Research</td>
<td>Build strategic partnerships with academic and research institutions in conducting research to inform advocacy</td>
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<td>NGO Sector strengthening</td>
<td>Affiliation to networks, coalitions, and associations for unified agenda setting</td>
<td>CSOs</td>
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<td>Maintain non-partisan character for increased legitimacy, sector independence, and organisational autonomy.</td>
<td>CSOs</td>
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60th Anniversary Celebrations in Pictures

“Celebrating 60 Years of Harnessing CSOs’ Contributions to Inclusive and Sustainable Development in Zimbabwe”
Congratulations

To the winners of the NANGO Annual NGO Awards 2022

**Donor/Development Partner of the Year**
Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit - GIZ

**NGO Director of the Year**
Sally Ncube

**Human Rights Role of Honour**
Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum

**NGO Communicator of the Year**
National Association of Youth Organisations

**Community Development Award**
Hand in Hand Zimbabwe

**NANGO Chairperson Award for Excellence in Corporate Governance**
Transparency International Zimbabwe

WE VALUE THE SIGNIFICANT IMPACT YOU ARE MAKING ON THE UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES IN ZIMBABWE.
2022 NANGO NGO AWARD WINNERS IN PICTURES

Transparency International Zimbabwe (TiZ) Representatives posing for a picture with their award trophy.

Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum Representatives posing for a picture with their award trophy.

Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit - GIZ Representatives posing for a picture with their award trophy.

National Association of Youth Organisations (NAYO) Representatives posing for a picture with their award trophy.

Sally Ncube, National Coordinator for Women’s Coalition of Zimbabwe (WCoZ) posing for a picture with her trophy.

Hand in Hand Representative posing for a picture with the award trophy.
Thank you to our Partners and Sponsors

A simple ‘thank you’ does not even begin to describe the overwhelming gratitude we have for our partners and sponsors. Our mission to strengthening, representing and coordinating the work of NGOs in Zimbabwe by creating space, promoting networking, dialogue and engagement to enable fulfillment of members’ visions and missions would not be possible without the backing of our community. We invite you to continue with your financial and technical support as we aim to better our community and inclusive sustainable development of Zimbabwe.
The National Association of Non-Governmental Organisations (NANGO) is the official voluntary coordinating body of registered NGOs in their diversity operating in Zimbabwe. NANGO is registered as a Private Voluntary Organisation (PVO) under the PVO Act Chapter [17:05]. It is a non-partisan, non-profit making and non-denominational organisation mandated to strengthen the voice of NGOs for the betterment of the people in Zimbabwe.

NANGO’s operations are guided by its constitution which is the supreme operational document that governs the conduct of NANGO secretariat, board and members. The board holds the oversight role over the functions and activities of NANGO. The board members are elected after every three years during an elective Annual General Meeting. Administratively, NANGO is decentralised into five regional offices that coordinate the activities of the CSOs in all ten provinces of Zimbabwe.

Cognisant of diversity of membership, members are clustered into 10 thematic sectors in line with their programmatic focus and these are; Media, Arts and Culture, Children, Disability, Economic, Health, Human Rights, Humanitarian, Land and Environment, Women, AND Youth. Concomitantly NANGO bears the responsibility of unifying these various sectors by creating spaces for collaboration, networking, knowledge exchange, mutual support, and the development of common best practices.

For more information on NANGO:

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Thank you to our Overall Facilitators

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RUMBIDZAI VENGE

ENNIE CHIPEMBERE