

2022



*Strengthening the voice of  
NGOs operating in  
Zimbabwe*

# ANNUAL REPORT

## NANGO Western Region

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# National Association of Non-Governmental Organisations (NANGO) Western Region Annual Report 2022

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**Designed by:** Chris Katsaura

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## List of Acronyms

AGM	Annual General Meeting
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
CIASA	Citizens in Action Southern Africa
FATF	Financial Action Task Force
FIU	Financial Intelligence Unit
FNF	Friedrich Naumann Foundation
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
GCAP	Global Call to Action Against Poverty
GF	Global Fund
HRC	Human Rights Commission
MoU	MOU: Memorandum of Understanding
MoJLPA	Ministry of Justice Legal and Parliamentary Affairs
MoPSLSW	Ministry of Public Service Labour and Social Welfare
NANGO	National Association of Non-Governmental Organisations
NDS1	National Development Strategy 1
NEC	National Executive Committee
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisations
PVO	Private Voluntary Organisation
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UPR	Universal Periodic Review
REC	Regional Executive Committee
RBZ	Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe
SGBV	Sexual Gender-Based Violence
WOZA	Women of Zimbabwe Arise
ZCC	Zimbabwe Council of Churches
ZIMSODI	Zimbabwe Sotho Development Initiative
ZITF	Zimbabwe International Trade Fair
ZWLA	Zimbabwe Women Lawyers Association



## NANGO Western Region Chairperson's Note

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I am deeply honoured to have been chosen as the new regional chairperson for NANGO Western Region, alongside my esteemed colleagues Mr. Justice Zvaita, Mr. Kasirayi Hweta, Ms. Cinderella Ndlovu, and Mr. Trevor Mhlanga. We are humbled by the trust and confidence placed in us by the region, and we are committed to serving our members with the utmost dedication and professionalism.

As we take on our new roles, we are mindful of the challenges facing our region and our nation as a whole. The Covid-19 pandemic has had a profound impact on our communities, and we are committed to working tirelessly to support those in need and help our region recover and rebuild. We also mourn the loss of our former executive director, Mr. Mandishara, who passed away soon after we took office and we offer our deepest condolences to his family and loved ones. May his soul continue to rest in peace.

Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) are still reeling from the impact of the pandemic as operations had halted or slowed down due to lockdowns, the operating space for CSOs was restricted,

and funding for non-health sectors was constrained. The new REC embraced the operational challenges presented post-Covid-19 by embracing innovations and adaptations to the new normal and addressed regionally unique challenges such as those related to the visibility and relevance of the association in the region.

Many activities began transitioning back to normal in early 2022, and this included the return of children to the classrooms, the resumption of face-to-face activities, unrestricted movement hours, and eventually the removal of masks.

In 2022, the key issue of concern that impacted the work of CSOs in Zimbabwe was the PVO Amendment Bill, which poses an existential threat to civic organisations. This Bill resulted in CSOs in the region operating in a volatile, uncertain, complex, and arbitrary environment. The efforts to positively influence the Bill by CSOs in the region exposed both the strengths and weaknesses of the region in a broad sense. The Bill highlighted the extent to which CSOs in the region can collaborate and work towards a unified position and agenda, and it also put in the spotlight the weaknesses within the CSO sector such as competition and fragmentation which worked to derail sectoral efforts.

It was encouraging to note the willingness of member organisations to participate and collaborate on matters of mutual concern. Participation in activities concerning the Bill and preparations for the upcoming elections was high.

The region's operations were often dictated by circumstances, some of which are experienced nationally, and others that are unique to the region. Highlighted below are some of the major areas of concern facing the region.

There is increased dependence on the informal sector and artisanal mining in the region; these have resulted in high Gender-Based Violence (GBV), and incidences of violence within mining communities; sexual exploitation of children of children within these mining communities are being reported, and the risk of an increase in the spread of HIV/AIDS can be anticipated.

The region came under the spotlight for GBV and child sexual abuse after reports circulated of a case of a 9-year-old girl from Tsholotsho giving birth. In the region, there is a preference to use the more easily accessible informal justice system for Sexual Gender Based Violence (SGBV) matters although the system is notoriously biased against women. The structure and use of the informal justice system to address GBV are being challenged by local regional organisations such as Emthonjeni Women's Forum

calling for stiffer minimum mandatory sentences for SGBV as well as a more gender-balanced informal justice system

The region is historically an opposition stronghold characterised by Gukurahundi-related concerns; although CSOs continue to conduct activities around elections, delimitation processes, and voter registration, voter apathy is highest in the region which has thus far recorded the lowest voter registration numbers nationwide. CSOs have formed election coalitions to better position themselves to address challenges around free and fair elections as well as to mobilise resources as funding partners have shifted towards preferring consortiums.

In the year under review, a member organisation was accused of scamming and misleading communities by promising non-existent initiatives. The REC notes and accepts that in every working environment, there will be bad apples, however now more than ever, it is imperative and encouraged for CSOs to put their best foot forward to reclaim CSO operating space and demonstrate the legitimacy and credibility of CSOs as genuine human rights and development actors.

Despite these challenges, the region continued to witness interest in joining the association, and there was a 100% increase in the number of members who paid subscriptions, a positive and

welcome improvement. In 2022, a total of 10 local organisations paid their subscriptions in full 2022, indicating a 100% increase from the total of five who had paid in 2021, and the region approved four new membership applications, confirming that there is still an appetite to become a part of the association. The newly approved organisations are Hand in Hand Zimbabwe, Least of these Ministries, ZIMSODI, and Equal Opportunities Trust. The region was particularly thrilled to see the return of a revamped and renamed NGO Directors' Summer Retreat, an activity that has traditionally attracted buzz for NANGO, both amongst members and other partners, particularly the private sector. The success of the revamped Summer Retreat motivated the push for regional retreats which will allow for more participation and networking of members within their regions. During the first Annual General Meeting (AGM) for the new REC, several issues concerning and affecting membership were raised. These include the need for the revival of thematic sectors, the review of several organisational policies such as the Constitution and the Terms of Reference for sector representatives, and a recurring issue around the review of membership fees. It is our belief as the REC that if some of the recommendations from the regional AGM are implemented, we will begin to see positive growth for the association in the region. We also believe that most of this growth will not be possible without adequate fundraising and

properly implemented strategic plans such as communication policies that are region-centric. We are convinced that beginning the transformation from within will have a positive downstream impact on addressing the challenges around visibility and the contested relevance of the NANGO in the region. We have since started adopting practices to increase our reporting and accountability to members such as ensuring activity updates are shared with members during or shortly after activities are conducted.

This annual report highlights some of the milestones achieved and the challenges faced during this past year, 2022. We have participated as a region and as part of national initiatives in programming on issues ranging from civic space, health sector coordination and capacity enhancement, policy advocacy around fiscal transparency and accountability, enhancing CSOs advocacy and influence on access to justice and state party reporting, census and the elections, to harnessing the role of CSOs in the acceleration of sustainable development. The increasing restrictions on civic space necessitate the need for NANGO to demonstrate its leadership and take up space through coordination and fostering greater collaboration of CSOs in the region. We anticipate challenges in the coming year as the CSO sector awaits the outcome of the PVO Amendment Bill and as the election temperature gets charged by each day. The region is particularly



vulnerable to volatility as a traditional opposition stronghold. The achievements documented in this annual report are a testimony of the resilience not only of our NGO sector but of our resilience as a region. I believe that with concerted efforts and continued support from our very capable Regional Executive Committee (REC), National Executive Committee

(NEC), and the Secretariat, the position of NANGO in the region will be transformed and elevated.

*Michael Ndiweni*  
**Western Region Board Chairperson**



### **NANGO Western Region Coordinator's Note**

2022 was a turning point for many countries as the world began to recover from the devastating effects of Covid-19. The pandemic had not only affected people's health, but it had also left a trail of destruction on issues such as access to education, access to justice, access to aid; the state of human rights was left fragile and economies the world over crumbled, the effects of which are still being felt and will continue to be felt for the next few years. COVID-19 is still prevalent and the likelihood of discovering new variants remains a possibility. It is unsurprising that CSOs in the region and country overall could not quickly bounce back from the effects of the pandemic. This was partly due to the iniquities in the distribution of protective equipment and vaccines to Africa from the developed world; this meant that Africa, its economy, and its citizenry were slower to respond and recover from the pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the need for strengthened community-led response systems during natural disasters and health crises; CSOs are a key component of community-led response systems and they ensure that no one is left behind, they enable the speedy and accurate collection and dissemination of real-time data and information, allowing for evidence-based decision making, and they can remain sustainable beyond donor funding.

NANGO, like other CSOs, is operating in a space that is increasingly shrinking and becoming globally competitive for ideas and resources. To stay relevant, there is a need to take up space across different sectors, explore the opportunities created by changes in the operating environment such as technology, explore the shifts in funding mechanisms, diversify our resource mobilisation portfolio, and effectively take up space leveraging our coordinating and convening power.

Generally, the socio-economic context is aiding in reversing gains made around marginalised populations both by the government and by CSOs. For example, financial constraints are leading to sexual exploitation, child marriages, and increased school dropouts in peri-urban areas. The region's proximity to the Botswana and South African borders results in high migration rates in search for greener pastures and conversely, increased child-headed homes. The 2022 Census revealed an overall population increase (more women than men, therefore more vulnerability for women as an already marginalised sector), increased urbanisation, and inflation and unemployment rates remain high. Unemployment has been linked to increased drug and substance abuse in the region and there are calls for more rehabilitation support facilities.

Members of NANGO continued to face both regulation and administrative challenges as a result of intensified operational requirements and community gatekeeping at the district level by local authorities.

Members continued to report requests for clearance letters and Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) by local government structures despite a ruling by the high court declaring them illegal. Although illegal, entry point requirements such as MOUs are often accepted as normal requirements to operate in the region. These illegal requirements, alongside the premature implementation of the PVO Amendment Bill before its passing, have continued to negatively impact the operating space for CSOs and threaten the implementation of programs for members and other human rights activists. There is a need to engage line Ministries that require MOUs to advocate for the uniform application of legally mandated administrative requirements across the board and to encourage members to ensure good working relations with district gatekeepers.

The PVO Amendment Bill remains a threat to the CSO operating environment amongst other Bills (such as the Patriotic Bill) and awareness of the possible impact of the Bill is reasonably high in the region. The challenge and opportunity remain in empowering CSOs to become proactive rather than reactive, and they are relying on NANGO to provide guidance and leadership on regulation and compliance matters.

As there were no candidates available for selection as sector representatives in the previous year's AGM, the region did not have any sector representatives or sector meetings in 2022. This presented difficulties in having appropriate platforms for members to discuss and address trending issues and challenges in their sectors. This challenge was countered through the use of the WhatsApp regional group, however, this platform can be inappropriately utilised. There remains a need for physical platforms for sectors to meet and interact.

The region intensified efforts to mobilise region-specific resources and took part in several proposals writing initiatives to this effect and quickly established the need to shift towards diversifying the region's resource portfolio through pioneering locally led initiatives peculiar to the needs of the region.

Donor funding continued to shrink amid an increase in the number of organisations competing for the same resources. The Russia-Ukraine conflict also affected development aid inflows, whilst the Covid-19 pandemic saw funding partners prioritising the health sector, perceiving the country as high risk due to the possible impacts of the PVO Bill, and there is a general feeling of donor fatigue and apathy. NANGO acutely felt the impact of limited resources and it impacted the organisation's ability to fulfill some of its mandates.

Despite the many challenges faced in the region, many organisations have continued to rebuild and adapt. The region is now tasked with remaining proactive, and not reactive in developing strategies/plans of action to protect the operating environment for CSOs and find innovative and sustainable ways to mobilise resources.

I am immensely grateful for the unwavering support provided by the REC, the positive commitment and constructive feedback from our esteemed Membership, and the invaluable assistance of my Secretariat colleagues. Their collective efforts have enabled me to seamlessly navigate my first year as a member of the NANGO Secretariat, and have paved the way for the remarkable achievements highlighted in this report.

While we have made significant progress, there is still ample room for growth and improvement. As we look towards the future, our region must strive to reach even greater heights in the upcoming year.

***Esnath Chambiwa***

***NANGO Western Region Coordinator***



## REGIONAL OVERVIEW FOR THE YEAR 2022

In 2022, the region, as part of other national programs, implemented various interventions to achieve the organisational objectives, vision, and mission as follows; The **GIZ Backup Health** project sought to strengthen CSOs' watchdog role in the implementation of Global Fund (GF) supported initiatives in Zimbabwe through capacity enhancement of CSOs to monitor, effectively participate, evaluate, and positively influence global financing mechanisms on health particularly the Global Fund program in Zimbabwe. The project developed and adopted a framework for community-based monitoring and impact assessment by 15 trained CSOs and CBOs who were purposively selected to be part of the project. Activities conducted in the region under this project included training and follow-up quarterly feedback meetings with the selected CSOs and Health Centre Committees. The results of the project will be used to identify gaps and inform the development of programs that can be supported under the Global Fund in Zimbabwe. The intended outcomes of the project include CSOs capacity enhancement in tracking the performance of development-oriented programs; and strengthened positioning of smaller CSOs to take up space in Global Fund-related initiatives. The project is expected to end in March 2023 and it presents an opportunity for NANGO to possibly subgrant to CBOs for further institutional strengthening of the sustainability of the program.

For the realisation of national and international **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**, the association mobilised members across the regions to take part in the 2022 Global Week of Action, especially the People's Assembly processes. The initiative placed marginalised voices such as persons with disabilities, women, children, and youths at the centre to analyse crucial issues, plan together and develop key demands and messages for decision-makers to take proactive policy decisions to address the gaps identified in the implementation of the agenda 2030.

For the National People's Assembly, a total of 32 CSOs representatives were mobilised and took part in the process. 43 CSOs representatives participated in the Africa People's Assembly. A demand charter was developed and presented to the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare (MoPSLSW) for the government's consideration of the country's SDGs implementation efforts.

The CSOs Enabling Environment Project, supported by OXFAM, aimed to tackle restrictive policy and legislative instruments regulating CSOs operating environment. Through the project, NANGO created platforms for increased civil society advocacy and representation on issues around the PVO Amendment Bill. Activities conducted under this project in the region included virtual PVO Amendment Bill update meetings with members in the region, support for CSOs to attend a meeting with the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on the PVO Amendment Bill in Kadoma; as well as a social movement building meeting in partnership with CIASA. NANGO continued to make efforts to strengthen the voice of CSOs particularly amongst policymakers and key stakeholders through creating platforms for engagement with; stakeholders including the parent Ministry for Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), the Ministry of Public Service Labour and Social Welfare (MoPSLSW) and the Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU) of the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe (RBZ). Following the summer retreat in Nyanga whose theme and program focused on experience sharing, strategic thinking, and identification of mechanisms to safeguard the CSOs Operating Environment, 4 partners expressed interest in supporting the follow-up action namely: USAID DG's Office (Self-Regulation & Operational Issues at Local Government Level); EWMI (Engagement with Ministries of Public Service and Local Government on the issues of MoUs); Sightsavers (Pioneering locally-led development for OPDs) and OXFAM SAF (CSOs Accountability and Legitimacy).

The NANGO Institutional Strengthening Initiatives, supported by FNF. To effectively fulfil its mandate as a coordinating body for CSOs, NANGO as an institution requires constant strengthening from within. With this in mind, FNF supported the region to conduct orientations for the incumbent board. It was necessary to familiarise the new board with the governing structures and policies of the organisation.

In efforts to further strengthen the institution, the region also took part in a strategic planning meeting in Harare which sought to review and update the organisation's strategic plan to represent the trajectory the organisation wishes to take given the changes prompted by Covid-19 and the prevailing operating environment.

Based on the outcomes of the strategic planning meeting, there is a need to review the following

institutional policies for strengthened institutional capacity - Finance Policies and Procedures Manual, Conditions of Service and Employment Policy, Communication Policy and Strategy, Data Management and Protection Policy, PSEA referral and reporting pathway guidelines, and; the Membership Handbook.

Finally, the **NGO Directors' Summer Retreat** is an annual flagship event that seeks to bring together civil society leaders from all the regions to reflect on the year that was and share ideas on addressing mutual challenges. The event is a vital platform to engage and lobby the government, and network with funding partners, academia, and the private sector in Zimbabwe and beyond. It is also a platform to enhance the capacity of attendees on various trending issues. The success of the 12th NGO Directors Summer Retreat after a two-year hiatus due to Covid-19 was no small feat. The resounding success of the event confirmed the convening and brand power associated with NANGO and affirmed the appetite for high-quality flagship events.

The development landscape in which NANGO operates is profoundly affected by global regulatory challenges (such as those prompted by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) Recommendation 8, or new information technologies around data privacy and data protection), new forms of development focus, and new funding methodologies. A shift in the balance of power from the West to countries in the East such as China and Russia may see a shift in ideologies towards the radical far left wing, and CSOs will require a constant appraisal of the continuing shift as their areas of programming may need to shift in line with the priorities of the changing database. It will be necessary to integrate new development focuses at national, regional, continental, and global levels for the sustainability of NANGO and its members. More importantly, it is necessary to cultivate a culture of domestic resource mobilisation.

# ANALYSIS OF THE MILESTONES ACHIEVED IN 2022

## a) Coordination and Networking

### i) Commemoration of NGO Week, 2022

At the beginning of 2022, NANGO collaborated with the Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC) to commemorate World NGO Day, by dedicating a week to conducting activities aimed at recognising the work and impact of CSOs in communities. This recognition was timely as CSOs faced the threat posed by the PVO Amendment Bill. The activities included daily radio sessions from members of organisations in different sectors throughout the country in a build-up to a physical event. For the western region, the coordinator mobilised two local member organisations daily to speak live on the local radio station SkyzMetro spotlighting their areas of programming. The activity was meant to reflect on and highlight the strides made by CSOs in their diverse areas of programming thus far, whilst also boosting their visibility and community awareness of their areas of programming in the region. This resulted in 10 member organisations in the region getting the opportunity to speak on their work to the large audience held by the popular local radio station. The celebrations culminated in a physical event where NANGO was able to present some key contributions made by member organisations to their communities, as well as raise awareness among participants from the present Faith-Based Organisations (FBOs) on the PVO Amendment Bill. The event was attended by 40 organisations, and it is hoped that it increased the recognition of the work of CSOs amongst communities, other similar organisations, and the legislators, and it highlighted the need to keep the operating space for CSOs open. This commemoration is important as many countries, particularly developing countries, rely on the operations of CSOs for sustainable development;

observing World NGO Day (celebrated annually on 27 February) is crucial to boost morale and show appreciation for CSOs' continued efforts. It is recommended to include governments in recognising these efforts and commemorating this day.

Throughout the year 2022, the region was part of the CSO Coordination and Capacity Enhancement project funded by GIZ BACKUP Health. The project seeks to strengthen CSOs Coordination and Capacity Enhancement to effectively participate and positively influence global financing mechanisms on health (Global Fund, Global Financing Facility, and; Global Vaccination Program). The project engaged 14 CBOs drawn from 3 provinces of the region as implementing partners on the ground. Through the project, a standard data collection, tracking, and monitoring framework was developed for the community-based monitoring of GF-supported intervention in GF districts. The implementing CBOs were submitting data every quarter which was then consolidated to develop the State of Transparency and Accountability Barometer (STAB). Quarterly physical meetings were conducted with the implementing organisation to provide an opportunity for developing joint advocacy initiatives and provide more clarity on monitoring findings. These organisations were also trained on GF architecture, CCM composition and roles, and in-country GF processes. The platform was also used to provide CCM feedback to CSOs for information and accountability purposes. The trained CSOs are now equipped to identify gaps in the Global Fund implementation system, and access information about the Global Fund funding mechanisms, and they have developed capacities to support health systems in their districts. Beneficiary CSOs have also been able to network with other organisations and can form coalitions to better position themselves to respond to calls for funding.

In response to the reception of the PVO Amendment Bill by CSOs and communities, after it was gazetted in the previous year, NANGO facilitated engagement meetings with key stakeholders and members. NANGO coordinated and participated in awareness-raising meetings on the PVO Amendment Bill both virtually and physically. NANGO mobilised member organisations to participate and mobilise community members to take part in the public hearings of the Bill, and the organisation also developed a scenario mapping document outlining the implications of the Bill on differently registered organisations. The objective of these efforts was to build social consensus among CSOs and develop a coordinated voice and position on the Bill. In May 2022, 40 Members from the region were part of a social movement-building workshop conducted in partnership with CIASA aimed at harnessing each other's strengths and building synergies to address challenges that affect the sector as a whole such as the stated Bill. The meeting included facilitators from Crowe Auditors who equipped members with knowledge on good corporate governance and ensuring they maintain compliance with regulatory requirements such as audits. The region also took part in the (limited access) risk assessment conducted by



the FIU and advocated for the use of the risk-based approach for a more accurate representation of the financing risks posed by the nonprofit sector.

In October 2022, five member organisations from the region took part in the annual NGO Director's Summer Retreat in Nyanga under the theme "Reclaiming an Enabling CSO Operating Environment for Inclusive Sustainable Development in Zimbabwe". The retreat was attended by a total number of 132 participants including 10 members from the secretariat. Participants benefited from sessions that included information on developing and promoting operating standards for the sector, diversifying the funding portfolios of CSOs, and the role of the media in the work of CSOs. One member from the region, Hand in Hand Zimbabwe walked away with one of the NANGO NGO Awards as voted for by peers in the sector. The private sector was present at the retreat to network and identify areas of synergy with the NGO sector. Some of the opportunities identified included areas of possible collaboration in banking, regulatory compliance, strengthening staff welfare through medical/life insurance, and operational improvements such as acquiring better internet and data storage facilities. The retreat also provided NANGO members with an opportunity to engage with development partners. Development partners present at the retreat included SightSavers, GIZ, OXFAM, and East-West Management Institute. Going forward, the region hopes to use a similar approach to organise regional retreats to enable more involvement of regional organisations, spotlighting each NANGO region, whilst simultaneously elevating member beneficitation and boosting NANGO visibility in the regions.



Breakaway session at the 12th Annual NGO Directors' Summer Retreat

# CAPACITY BUILDING



## CSOs Capacity Enhancement and Institutional Strengthening

NANGO facilitated sensitisation meetings with CSOs in the Western Region on the country's third Universal Periodic Review (UPR) cycle conducted in January 2022. NANGO, alongside other CSOs, contributed to the development of a CSO Alternative Report which was submitted to the Commission for consideration during the review. Zimbabwe received 264 recommendations and supported 168, an 11% increase from the last review. 51% of the recommendations are mostly related to SDG 16 which speaks to justice and strong institutions; followed by SDG 5 on gender equality receiving 13% of the recommendations. These recommendations can form the building blocks for advocacy issues that CSOs can take up whilst preparing for the next review cycle in 2026. It is recommended to establish a coordinated UPR tracking mechanism to ensure that supported recommendations are implemented in between review cycles and for ease of compiling and coordinating information to develop alternative reports.

In March, at least 40 organisations (with support from UN Women) benefitted from a post-UPR update meeting to brief the members on the outcome of Zimbabwe's 3rd cycle UPR Review. This meeting was intended to highlight the recommendations made for the country by the Human Rights Commission (HRC) and inform possible areas of programming for CSOs in the lead-up to the next cycle.

In July 2022, 50 organisations were able to engage with the MoPSLSW and RBZ/FIU on Recommendation 8 of the FATF. The purpose of the workshop was to equip CSOs with the necessary knowledge of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) Recommendation 8 and its impact on the regulation of CSOs through the PVO Amendment Bill. The sessions covered the unpacking of the motivation behind recommendation 8 and the resultant PVO Amendment bill by the RBZ, the state of CSO regulations under the current Act as presented by the MoPSLSW, a presentation by NANGO on the impact of the Bill should it pass, and a presentation by NGO Forum on good corporate governance. Although participants appreciated the workshop as it provided a platform to engage with the parent Ministry and the unit tasked with assessing the terrorist financing risk inherent within the nonprofit sector, there was a clear need for more sessions and consultations between all the parties particularly to meet the recommendation by

the FATF for governments to apply a risk-based consultative approach before and during the implementation of any interventions related to Recommendation 8. There remains however a need for substantial funding to enable substantive consultations with CSOs, a gap that NANGO can attempt to fulfil. There also remains a capacity gap concerning fulfilling financial reporting requirements by CSOs. Bridging this capacity gap and strengthening CSO corporate governance will work towards supporting the efforts towards a self-regulated non-profit sector.

In November 2022, 30 grassroots, faith-based, and disability-based organisations from the Western region were supported by the UNDP with a two-day capacity-building workshop on engaging with the UN Treaty system. To ensure membership value, preference was given to paid-up members. This workshop was a result of the recognition that smaller organisations based out of the main provinces in the region are often left out due to financial constraints; this workshop was developed for their specific benefit. The workshop revealed that there is a huge knowledge gap amongst grassroots organisations regarding engaging not only the UN Treaty systems but with the African Union ones as well. There is an opportunity to coordinate the capacity building of CSOs on their crucial role within human rights treaty systems for increased and more effective inclusion and participation, as well as to enable them to lobby the government to act on their international obligations. With adequate funding, there is also room to facilitate the capacity building of local organisations on other local legal instruments which affect the operations of CSOs such as the Labour Act.



***Participants from the UNDP training workshop on engaging UN Treaty Systems 28-29Nov22***

To further support and build the capacities of our members in the upcoming year, and as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility as a learning institution, we have signed an MoU with Intellectus Campus to assist with the capacity building of our members in the area of Monitoring & Evaluation and Data Visualisation; and Marianhill Chartered Accountants will hold a virtual sensitisation meeting with our members free of charge on Audit processes and preparing for audits. These sessions are crucial as the sector gears up efforts to build credibility and accountability as a sector as we work towards self-governance.

# advocacy

## Policy Engagements

NANGO mobilised members to take part in policy and advocacy dialogues throughout the year. Members also came out in their numbers to take part in public hearings not only on the PVO Amendment Bill but on other pieces of legislation such as the Child Justice Bill and the 2023 Budget hearings. Members took part in a consultative workshop conducted by the Ministry of Justice Legal and Parliamentary Affairs (MoJLPA) on the proposed amendments to the Criminal Law (Codification and Reform) Act in line with the Children's Act and the passing of the Marriages Bill.

NANGO also assisted in the lobbying of the Minister of Justice Legal and Parliamentary Affairs, Honourable Ziyambi Ziyambi in enhanced efforts to ensure the voice of CSOs was represented during the second reading of the Bill to Parliament. The region was engaged by a local CSO, WOZA, to attempt to draft an alternative text to the PVO Amendment Bill to be presented to the Parliament by the MoJLPA, however, this attempt was unsuccessful due to time and financial constraints.

The regional coordinator collaborated with other CSOs and provided technical assistance through facilitation, mobilisation, and legal analysis and interpretation of Bills, policies, and statutory instruments such as the PVO Amendment Bill. This was part of the support provided to CSOs in the region such as Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights, Zimbabwe Women's Lawyers Association (ZWLA), Bulawayo Vendors and Traders Association (BVTA), and Bulawayo Progressive Residents Association (BPRA).



## Research and Knowledge Management

The association continued with its work towards research, publication, and knowledge management as a value addition to our stakeholders. In the year 2022, the organisation managed to incorporate the feedback of members in the development of the new strategic plan through the sharing of a questionnaire with members via email and WhatsApp platforms for completion. Several members from the region, including the REC were approached and interviewed by the Consultant tasked with developing the Strategic Plan for 2023-2025. The selection of members was based on their commitment and activism within the region to contribute to the development of the organisation.

The coordinator noted the gap in information regarding the programs that members are implementing and encouraged members to share their newsletters throughout the year as a way to keep the association updated on the work of the members; maintaining this information will enable the strengthening of referral systems to community groups, government agencies, and other partners. The region also conducted a partial clean-up of the regional database to ensure better membership servicing to active members.



## Communications Information And Visibility

The region kept in touch with its members through regular communication via the regional WhatsApp group, while crucial information was shared through emails. The coordinator played a vital role in developing material for the organisation's development watch digital bi-weekly newsletter. In the year under review, regional members have contributed more to the newsletter by submitting articles on their implemented programmes and activities. The new regional executive chairperson has encouraged the region to keep members informed about ongoing

activities through summarised reports in the regional WhatsApp group.

To enhance communication and engagement with members, the region has implemented various strategies. The use of WhatsApp has proven to be an effective tool for regular communication, while email remains the preferred method for sharing important information. The Development Watch digital bi-weekly newsletter has also been a valuable resource for members, providing them with updates on the organisation's activities and highlighting the achievements of the broader NANGO members.

Under the leadership of the new regional executive chairperson, the region has made a concerted effort to keep members informed about ongoing activities. Summarised reports are now provided to members after each important high-level activity, ensuring that they are kept up-to-date on the organisation's progress. This approach has been well-received by members, who appreciate the transparency and accountability demonstrated by the region.

In conclusion, the region has demonstrated a commitment to effective communication and engagement with its members. By utilising various communication channels and encouraging member participation, the region has fostered a sense of community and collaboration among its members. The efforts have been particularly noteworthy, and the region looks forward to continued progress under their leadership.



In May 2022 and December 2022, the organisation, represented by the coordinator, was published in *Newsday* and the *Chronicle* respectively after taking part in initiatives that speak out on issues affecting CSOs and communities. In one of the articles, the coordinator was calling on the government to review the systems in place in the selection of adjudicators in the informal justice system to ensure they align with the Constitution, which requires the representation of women. This call was made during celebrations of the 16 days of activism against GBV (2022) hosted by Emthonjeni Women's Forum. The call was necessitated by the realisation that more

people find the informal justice system more accessible and therefore utilise it more particularly for matters involving gender-based violence. The informal justice system is however biased against women and often is guided by archaic principles. In the other publication, the coordinator was quoted during the unpacking of findings of social research conducted by the Mass Public Opinion Institute.



In January 2022, the Coordinator had the opportunity to speak on SkyzMetro's live radio broadcast about the World NGO Day celebrations that were conducted in collaboration with ZCC. The purpose of the interview was to shed light on the crucial role of CSOs and the objectives of the celebrations.

It was an honour for the Coordinator to share their insights on such an important occasion. The World NGO Day celebrations serve as a reminder of the significant contributions made by CSOs in promoting social justice, human rights, and sustainable development in Zimbabwe and beyond.

During the interview, the Coordinator emphasised the importance of collaboration between CSOs and other stakeholders in achieving common goals. They also highlighted the need for increased support and recognition for the vital work done by these organisations.

Overall, the interview was a great opportunity to raise awareness about the critical role of CSOs and to celebrate their achievements. It is essential to continue to promote and support the work of these organisations to create a better Zimbabwe for all.



The region currently maintains a Facebook account and has recently revived its regional Twitter account, which boasts a following of 1300 individuals. However, the regional coordinator has recognised the need for improvement in terms of the organisation's visibility and real-time updates on social media. To address this issue, the coordinator intends to hire a regional assistant who will be solely dedicated to enhancing communication and visibility, particularly on our social media platforms. This move will undoubtedly bolster our online presence and ensure that our message reaches a wider audience.

## **Membership Growth Analysis And Servicing**

Region	Paid 2022	Database
Western	10	229



2022

# AGM ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

## OUTCOMES

The region held its Annual General Meeting on the 29th of November 2022 at Cillas Conference Centre with an attendance of 12 participants, 8 being fully paid-up members.

Several issues were raised in the meeting that required escalation to the national AGM. The key areas of concern were as follows; review of subscription fees; ensuring there is a mechanism in place to follow up and understand the trends and concerns around the payment of membership subscriptions; expediting the finalisation of the new NANGO strategic plan; review of NANGO governing policies such as the Constitution and Terms of Reference for sector representatives; finalisation of the sector reform matrix; actioning calls around self-regulation of CSOs; planning and follow through for regional summer schools; and most importantly indigenisation and prioritisation of regional resource mobilisation.

It is hoped that in the upcoming year, the region will continue to experience positive growth in membership and membership subscriptions, but more significantly in membership value addition.



Participants during the Western Region 2022 Annual General Meeting

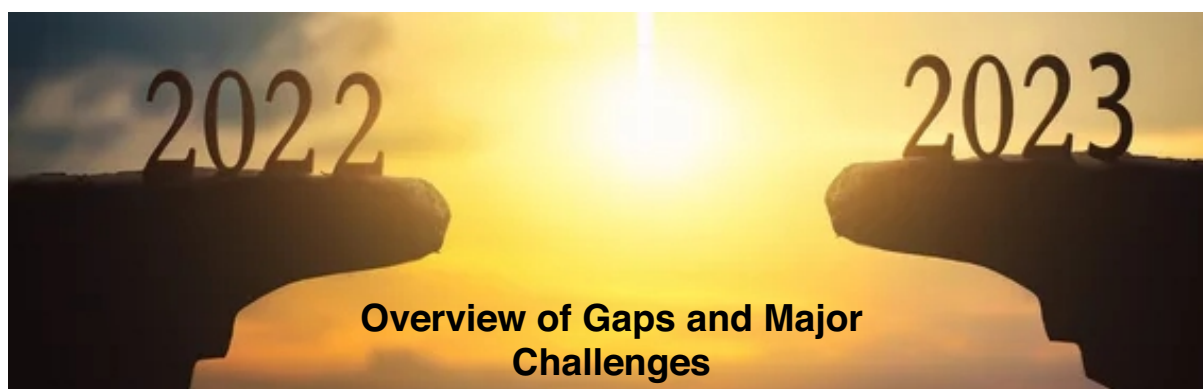
## 🔍 Civil Society Operating Environment Overview

The Constitution of Zimbabwe affords every citizen certain freedom, including the freedom of association and freedom of speech. These freedoms are fundamental to the role and work of CSOs in complementing the government's interventions and supporting democracy, human rights, and developmental issues. However, while CSOs are often recognised as important voices in society, their operational environment is often challenging and this was the case not only in Zimbabwe but the region and over in 2022. The shrinking of the operating space for CSOs internationally has most recently been prompted by FATF Recommendation 8 which is often being misused or misinterpreted to restrict the operating environment for CSOs. This was the prevailing case in the country in 2022 as the threat of the badly drafted PVO Amendment Bill loomed over the operations of CSOs. CSOs were publicly threatened by government officials and accused of being conduits for Western agendas. During public hearings for the PVO Amendment Bill, there were several reports of disturbances and threats of violence against some members in the western region for voicing opinions against the Bill. Despite several lobbying and advocacy efforts, calls from the international community including the special rapporteur on the freedom of association, lobbying of ministers and Zimbabwe's Vice President Honourable Chiwenga by the churches, the progress towards the signing of the Bill has not slowed down and this leaves the functionality of many CSOs, particularly trusts, vulnerable to halted work in the coming year. This threat to the role and work of CSOs is particularly concerning as the country is scheduled to head for elections in the second half of 2023. CSOs are relied on for their watchdog as well as informative role during volatile times such as elections.

The year has also witnessed persistent illegal requests for MoUs by the local government structures across the country with haphazard and inconsistent requirements in different provinces and sometimes across different types of organisations within the same province. The MOUs further restrict the operating environment of CSOs in Zimbabwe. Further, reports of state surveillance and continuous monitoring and interference of CSO activities persisted across the region, more so around meetings to do with the PVO Amendment Bill. Some coordinators

received calls from state agents requesting information about the directors' summer retreat. Thus, the year has seen the relationship between the state and CSOs continue to sour as the state has continuously reiterated its view of CSOs as “agents of regime change” peddling political and electoral-related activities they are not mandated to carry out. The lack of systemic engagement with the government continues to cause mistrust between CSOs and the government, whilst competition and fragmentation between CSOs also result in a negative portrayal of CSOs.

Policy and administrative instruments such as MoUs, and the proposed Private Voluntary Organisations Amendment Bill have been key tools utilised in hindering CSOs' interventions and development, and yet the sector is key to the sustainable development of the country. We anticipate further challenges based on the Patriotic Bill and the Data Protection Act. These policies and legal instruments could result in self-censorship violation of rights such as privacy rights and freedom of speech. These instruments, therefore, pose a threat to the CSO operating environment in the country. An enabling CSOs operating environment is important as it facilitates the smooth implementation of programmes across the country as we work towards Vision 2030 and the success of the National Development Strategy 1 (NSD1).



- Future planning has been hindered due to the shrinking of civic space caused by legislation such as the Patriotic Bill and uncertainty surrounding the proposed PVO Amendment Bill.;
- Funding constraints have restricted regional needs and activities such as Membership visits or acquiring incentivised regional support staff;
- The gains made around marginalised populations in the region have been reversed due to the socio-political context coupled with deteriorating economic conditions in Zimbabwe. Moreover, the relations between the government and CSOs are characterised by distrust;
- The association and its broader membership require funding for institutional strengthening. This includes building capacity to respond to calls for funding, human resource-related issues, and meeting regulatory and compliance requirements, **AND**
- Established organisations tend to work in the consortiums they have created over time, leaving "outsider" organisations without opportunities to collaborate or enhance their capacity by working with them.



## Moving Forward

In conclusion, the region is committed to addressing new challenges in 2023, particularly those triggered by the upcoming elections and the looming CSO regulatory changes. Under the astute leadership of our chairperson Mr. Ndiweni and his REC, the region will continue to work towards shifting the negative narrative around CSOs, fostering relationships and engagement between CSOs and the government, seeking new opportunities, and promoting sustainable development in the region and Zimbabwe. To achieve this, for the year 2023 and subsequent years, we as a region in partnership with all relevant stakeholders hope to:

1. Make deliberate efforts to diversify the funding portfolio by sourcing alternate, region-specific funding and promoting and providing capacity building around identifying and incorporating domestic resource mobilisation;
2. Assist in the development and implementation of a clear national and regional response strategy/plan of action should the PVO Amendment Bill become enacted into law through engaging the MoPSLSW and conducting PVO Transitions support meetings to accelerate the registration of organisations;
3. Train CSOs in strategic information, social media, and digital technologies during social movement-building meetings; this will be key as information sharing will be crucial before, during, and after elections;
4. Make efforts to spotlight the region during region-specific activities such as the ZITF and conduct a regional expo;
5. Support and participate in CSOs sensitisation on NGO standards and corporate governance to enhance legitimacy and strengthen sector accountability mechanisms towards self-regulation and development of sector-specific standards of operation;
6. Carry out CSO Due Diligence and Accreditation, as well as take part in the development of an integrated online database of CSOs;
7. Make a strategic shift to the value proposition to members; **AND**
8. Engage with local government structures and local authorities to advocate for uniformity in requirements for MoUs across the board to ensure an open working environment for CSOs and maintenance of good working relations with district gatekeepers.

# WHO WE ARE



## OVERVIEW

The Western Region is the second-largest region of all the NANGO regions covering the Bulawayo Metropolitan Province and all the Matabeleland Provinces (Matabeleland North and Matabeleland South). The region boasts of several tourist attractions such as Victoria Falls, the largest falls in the world and one of the Seven Natural Wonders of the World; Hwange National Park, the largest national park in the country and;

Matopos National Park. As of 2022, the total population of the region was 2 253 911 with the highest being the Matabeleland North Province. The region is the most culturally and politically diverse part of the country with over eight languages.



## OUR OBJECTIVES

The association exists to fulfil the following objectives:

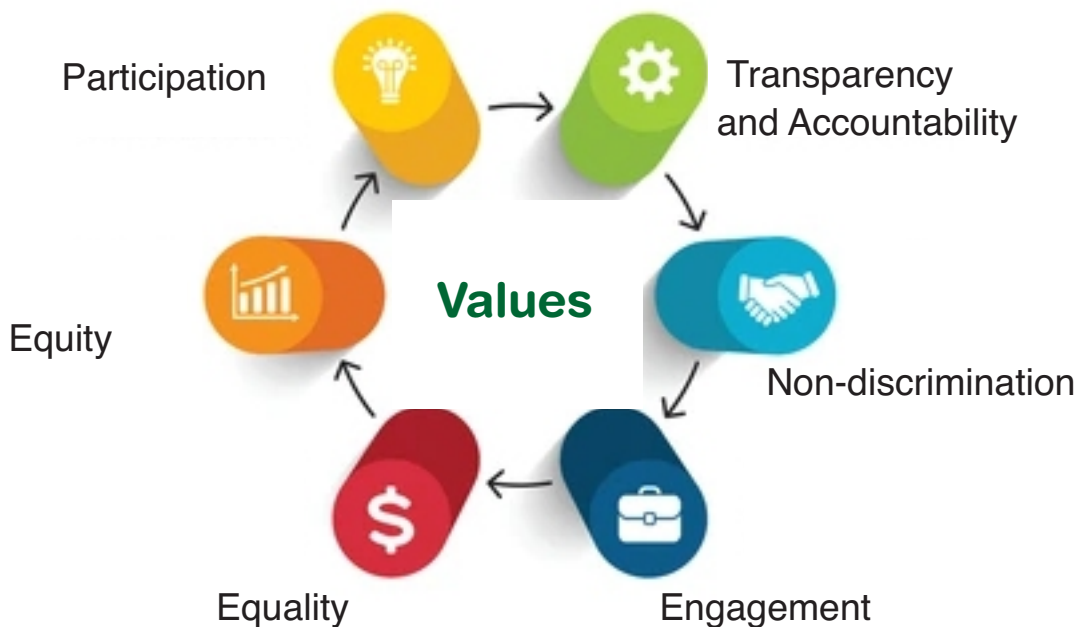
1. To promote, coordinate and organise the participation and contribution of Non-Governmental Organisations in Zimbabwe in the development discourse of Zimbabwe.
2. To promote and facilitate the collective agenda-setting, interaction, consultation, and exchange of information and experience with and among NGOs operating in Zimbabwe.
3. To create an enabling and conducive operating environment for NGOs necessary in ensuring sector independence, improved accountability, and fulfilment of institutional mandates.
4. To create and identify opportunities for NGOs to pursue their visions and missions at the same time building members' capacities, resources, and synergies.

### Mission

We, the community of NGOs, are committed to strengthening, representing, and coordinating the work of NGOs in Zimbabwe by creating space, promoting networking, dialogue and engagement to enable the fulfilment of members' visions and missions.

### Vision

A proactive community of NGOs responsive and committed to the sustainable development needs of all people in Zimbabwe and the full realisation of human rights, democracy, good governance, and poverty alleviation.







*Strengthening the voice of  
NGOs operating in  
Zimbabwe*



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