



Building a NANGO that is Fit for
Purpose

STRATEGIC PLAN 2023-2025

COORDINATE | CAPACITATE | STRENGTHEN

Strengthening the Voice of NGOs Operating in Zimbabwe

www.nangozim.org

CONTENTS

Abbreviations	05
Acknowledgements	06
Foreword	07
Who We Are	09
What Drives Our Ambition	10
Our Mission	10
Our Vision	10
Our Values	11
Our Institutional Objectives	12
The NANGO 2023-25 Strategy	13
Locating NANGO Within Zimbabwe's VUCA Environment	13
Frosty State - Civil Society Relations	16
Funding-Driven Sustainability Challenges to NGOs in Zimbabwe	16
Looking into the future and the imperative for a vibrant CSO sector in Zimbabwe	17
We are ready for a reset and Geared to respond to the Needs of our Stakeholders	19
Our Theory of Change	20
Our Strategic Focus Areas	21
Strategic Priority 1: Institutional strengthening for a higher performing NANGO	21
KRA 1.1 - Strengthening the NANGO Governance framework	21
KRA 1.2 - Being a Value-driven Organisation and Creating an Optimum Working Environment Within NANGO	22
KRA 1.3 - Improving Accountability to our Stakeholders	22
KRA 1.4 - Developing new models and platforms to enhance our work	22
KRA 1.5 - Raising Sufficient Resources to Support our Work	23
Strategic Priority 2: Improving NANGO's value proposition to its membership as a convener and coordinating organisation as well as making the NANGO brand more attractive to Zimbabwean CSOs	24
KRA 2.1 - Curation and sharing of knowledge resources	24
KRA 2.2 - Giving NANGO member organisations a fulfilling membership experience	24
KRA 2.3 - Increasing opportunities for convening and collaboration among NANGO members	25

KRA 2.4 - Strengthening coordination through an incentive-based self-regulatory framework **25**

Strategic Priority 3: Pivoting NANGO as the hub of choice for CSO capacitation, training, mentorship, knowledge curation, and operational support **25**

KRA 3.1: Commissioning a training and capacity needs assessment **26**

KRA 3.2 - Establishing strategic partnerships with key learning institutions in the country **26**

KRA 3.3 - Adding another flagship capacity development platform to the currently existing NANGO NGO Directors' Summer Retreat **27**

KRA 3.4 - Development of the NANGO CSOs Academy online learning platform **27**

Strategic priority 4: Strengthening NANGO to become a solid platform for advocacy, lobbying, and policy influencing in matters related to the CSO operating environment as well as national development issues **27**

KRA 4.1 - Safeguarding against abuse and mismanagement in the NGO sector **28**

KRA 4.2 - Engagement with the government to safeguard NGOs from over-regulation **28**

Strategic priority 5: Promoting effective CSOs action on the SDGs and other development agendas **29**

KRA 5.1: Availing ourselves as technical partners, building citizen action, and strengthening collaborations towards ensuring effective implementation of the SDGs **29**

KRA 5.2 – Deepening our work in inclusive pro-poor development advocacy and policy influencing as part of promoting the realisation of the SDGs in Zimbabwe **29**

Monitoring the Implementation of the Strategic Plan **30**

Funding our Strategy **31**

ABBREVIATIONS

AGM	Annual General Meeting
CBO	Community-Based Organisation
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
FNF	Friedrich Naumann Foundation
KRA	Key Result Area
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NANGO	National Association of Non-Governmental Organisations
NDS	National Development Strategy
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
PVOs	Private Voluntary Organisations
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SRCSS	Southern Rhodesia Council of Social Services
VfM	Value-for-Money
VOICE	Voluntary Organisations in Community Enterprise
VUCA	Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, Arbitrary

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This Strategic Plan was written by Dr Charlton C. Tsodzo.

The National Association of Non-Governmental Organisations (NANGO) expresses its sincere gratitude for the invaluable contributions made by its members, development partners, and other key stakeholders in the development of our strategic plan. We also extend our appreciation to Dr. Tsodzo for his expert guidance, which has been instrumental in shaping this document that will serve as a roadmap for our mission work from **2023 to 2025**.

We recognise that our successes are a result of the collective efforts of all those involved in this process. The dedication and commitment of our members, partners, board and staff have been crucial in ensuring that our strategic plan aligns with our mission and vision. We are also grateful for the financial support provided by **Friedrich Naumann Foundation (FnF)**, whose collaboration has been essential in achieving our goals.

Moving forward, we remain committed to our mission of promoting the growth, development, sustainability, and resilience of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in Zimbabwe. We will continue to work tirelessly to ensure that our strategic plan is implemented effectively, and that we remain at the forefront of driving positive change in our nation.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to all those who have contributed to the development of our strategic plan. Your support and dedication are greatly appreciated, and we look forward to continuing our work together towards **BUILDING A NANGO THAT IS FIT FOR PURPOSE.**

THANK YOU!

FOREWORD

Since its formation, NANGO has evolved in view to adapt to changes in the operating environment. Despite shifts in the operating environment, the coordination role of NANGO has become even more relevant and continues to guide the organisation's evolutionary and value proposition path. This new strategic plan (2023 - 2025) is largely hinged on the rich history and foundations of NANGO as the umbrella body of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) operating in Zimbabwe. This strategy encapsulates our commitment to deliver concrete results that ensure inclusiveness, proactiveness, and shared values amongst NGOs in Zimbabwe. This strategy, with full membership ownership throughout the process, is a result of extensive consultations involving a wide range of stakeholders whose input contributed to the definition of key priorities and the associated key results areas. It lays out ambitious aspirations to reset the NANGO brand hence the theme, “**Building An Association That Is Fit For Purpose**”. The process of developing this strategy took into cognisance the fluidity of the operating environment thus it provides scope for flexibility and responsiveness to issues emerging in the operating environment.

The new strategy is coming at a time when legislation regulating Civil Society


Organisations (CSOs) in Zimbabwe has become more restrictive and with the proposed amendments to the Private Voluntary Organisations (PVO) Act, the independence and autonomy of the sector is likely to be further compromised. The proposed PVO Amendment Bill clauses give the Government greater control over CSOs' activities and grant discretionary power to the government over the operations of CSOs. This strategy, therefore, attempts to draw lessons from efforts made by CSOs to influence these legislative instruments and suggest various interventions aimed at defending and enhancing the civic space. On the socio-economic side, the economy has been confronted with various challenges, which include price and exchange rate instability, low investment, high inflation, multiple exchange rates, unsustainable debt levels, ineffective control of public spending, and limited structural transformation. This equally calls for policy advocacy by NANGO in pursuit of accelerating the implementation and achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) without leaving anyone behind. Fully cognisant of the urgency to act, NANGO will use this strategy as a vehicle that drives CSOs contribution and influence for inclusive and sustainable economic growth, gender equality, youth inclusion, disability inclusion, gender equality, human rights, and climate action.

Strengthening the Voice of NGOs Operating in Zimbabwe

The identified strategic priorities dovetail well with our mission to strengthen, represent, and coordinate the work of NGOs operating in Zimbabwe by creating space, promoting networking, dialogue and engagement to enable the fulfilment of members' visions and missions. We call upon our members, stakeholders, and partners to continue with their financial, technical, and solidarity support as we aim to better our work through this ambitious strategy. We are alive to the need to strengthen civil society voices and enhance coordination, convening, and collaboration amongst CSOs, with the imperative to strengthen CSO impact and operational efficiencies. Improving NANGO's value proposition to its membership as a convener and coordinating organisation as well as making the NANGO brand more attractive to Zimbabwean CSOs, development partners, and private sector partners can never be overemphasised. With this strategy, we seek to further strengthen NANGO the institution to become a solid

platform for advocacy, lobbying, and policy influencing in matters related to the CSO operating environment as well as national development issues.

We envision an NGO sector that will increasingly converge and develop a unified voice in the quest to influence policies, laws, regulations, and funding practices that have a bearing on the CSO operating environment in the country. We aspire to better connect, convene, and coordinate diverse groups of NGOs operating in Zimbabwe through the creation of spaces and platforms for experience sharing, mutual learning, all-stakeholder engagement, linking networks, and alliances as well as strengthening civic voices. The strategy also articulates the need to keep the government accountable to its promises and commitments for political and socio-economic turnaround and reforms. This Plan is what NANGO is ready to deliver for the next three years (2023 – 2025).

 /S/

Ernest Nyimai
Executive Director, NANGO

 /S/

Dr Lamiel BK Phiri
Board Chairperson, NANGO

WHO WE ARE

NANGO is the official voluntary coordinating body of registered NGOs, in their diverse operating in Zimbabwe. NANGO is registered as a 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 lives of the people of Zimbabwe.

NANGO was founded in 1962 as a welfare organisation under the name of Southern Rhodesia Council of Social Services (SRCSS) predominantly for social welfare organisations. NANGO was formally registered in 1968 following the promulgation of the Welfare Organisations Act in 1967, later transformed into the PVO Act in 2001. Post-independence in 1980, there was a gradual increase in the number of NGOs operating in Zimbabwe, particularly in the rural areas, thus the organisation was renamed Voluntary Organisations in Community Enterprise (VOICE). The organisation was renamed, 10 years later, to the National Association of Non-Governmental Organisations (NANGO) due to geographical expansion and a wider membership base. Now with 60 years of existence and having learnt vast experience in NGO coordination, NANGO continues to be ambitious as well as to broaden its value proposition to its membership going into the future. As of December 2022, NANGO has a total membership base of **1 270** NGOs across Zimbabwe, with membership drawn from PVOs, Trusts, and Community-Based Organisations (CBOs).

NANGO's operations are guided by its constitution which is the supreme operational document that governs the conduct of the 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 (AGM). Administratively, NANGO is decentralised into five regional offices that coordinate the activities of the NGOs in all ten provinces of Zimbabwe. Cognisant of the diversity of membership, members are clustered into 10 thematic sectors in line with their programmatic focus: Media, Arts and Culture, Children, Disability, Economic, Health, Human Rights, Humanitarian, Land and Environment, Women, and Youth. 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. The NANGO Institutional Structure is as given below:

NANGO Institutional Structure

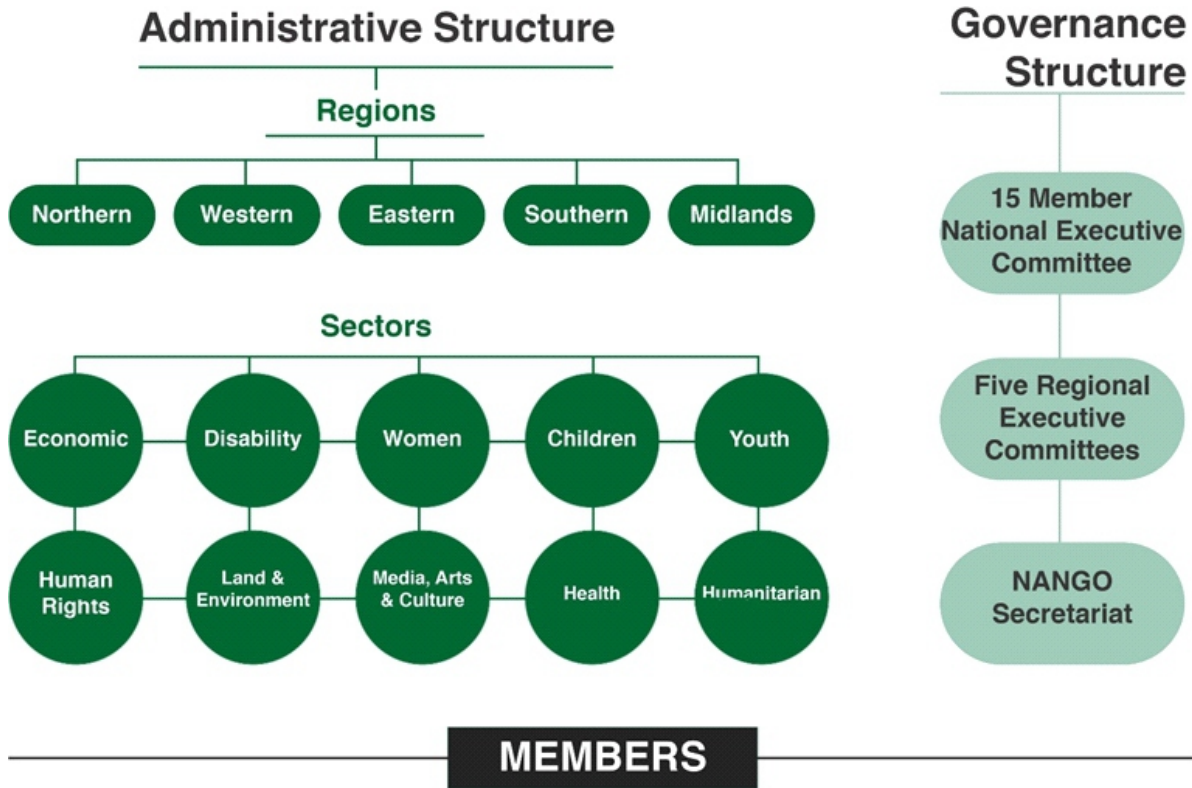


Fig 1: NANGO Institutional Structure

WHAT DRIVES OUR AMBITION

OUR 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.

OUR MISSION

To strengthen, represent, and coordinate the work of NGOs in Zimbabwe through creating space, promoting networking, dialogue and engagement to enable the fulfilment of members' visions and missions.

Our Core Values



Leadership

We practice what we preach. We model our work to empower NGOs in Zimbabwe by setting exemplary leadership and standards of organisational management and governance.



Membership-driven

Without the members, there is no NANGO, hence we value every member organisation we have and their participation as the backbone of all our programming, believing that it is through them that development reaches the communities in Zimbabwe.



Integrity

We are firm believers in integrity by abiding by the highest ethical standards of transparency, accountability, and mutual respect.



Non-discrimination

We believe in and respect the principles of equity, inclusion, and non-discrimination. We are committed to working with all persons, without discrimination, to promote an open, democratic, and developed Zimbabwean society.



Collaboration & Co-Creation

Our strategic partnership approach is one of our key assets. We value and foster partnerships, networks, and strategic mutual relationships with relevant development stakeholders, member organisations, and grassroots communities.



Engagement

We believe engagement is a critical enabler of critical conversations, policy influencing, building common ground, and finding consensus as we seek to co-create the developed Zimbabwean society we all aspire for.



Diversity

Our wide membership reflects our sustained belief in a development sector that embraces and converges the country's rich socio-cultural diversity.

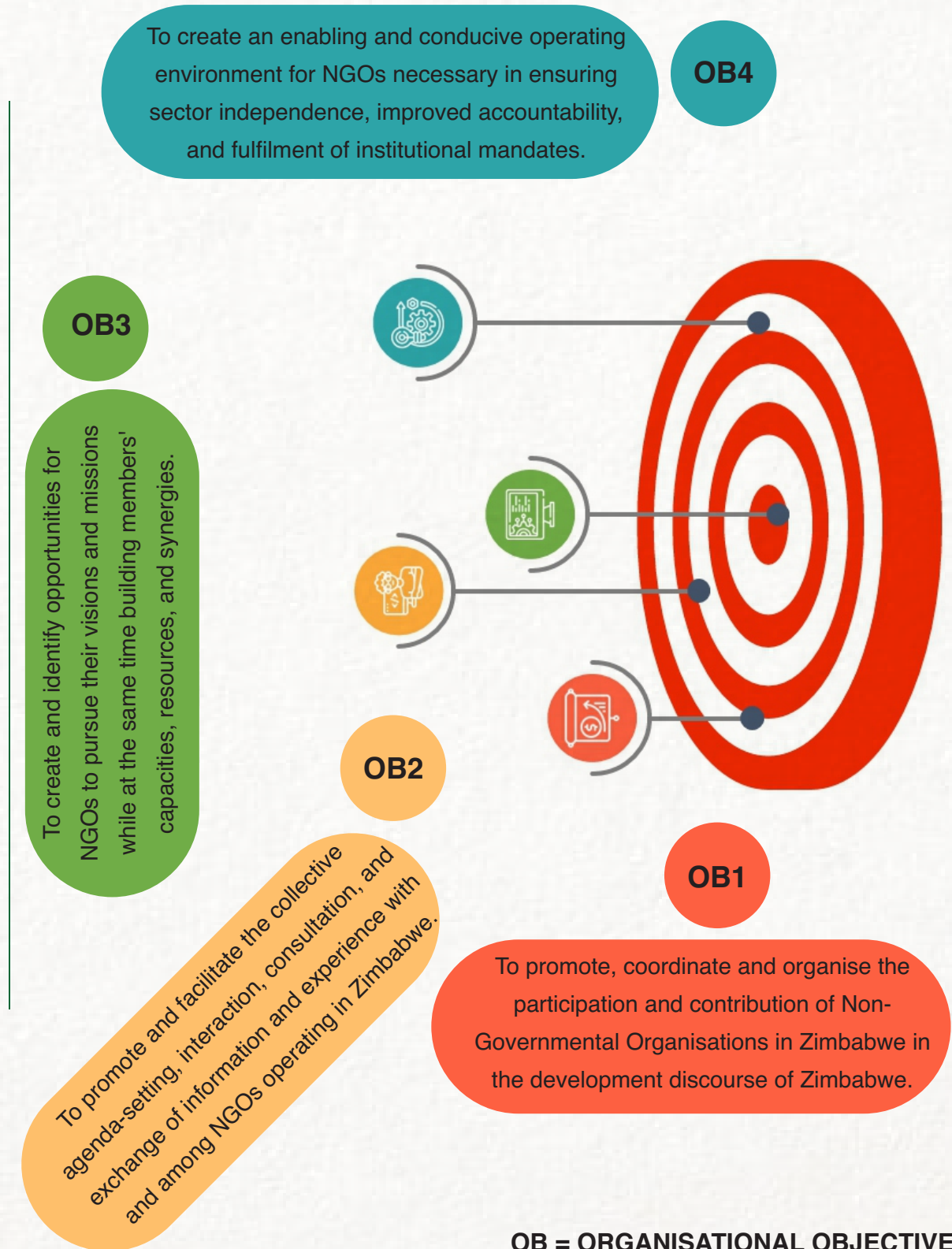


Innovation

We constantly explore creative ways to strengthen NGOs operating in Zimbabwe. We are agile and responsive to the changing needs of our stakeholders.

Our Institutional Objectives

The association exists to fulfil the following organisational objectives:



The NANGO 2023-25 Strategy

This current strategy takes over from the 2020 - 2022 strategic plan that has been guiding NANGO's operations. Despite the numerous social, political, and economic challenges faced by Zimbabwe, as NANGO we continue carrying forward a narrative of hope and belief in our country. We are convinced that ordinary Zimbabweans, acting jointly and severally as part of a robust, well-coordinated, and vibrant civil society, can play an important role in transforming the country and spearhead people-centred, pro-poor national development. Through this strategy, therefore, we intend to underscore NANGO's role as a catalyst and critical enabler in making this happen.

The strategy begins with our analysis of the current Zimbabwean context focusing on specific issues relating to civil society operating space as well as the emerging opportunities from the context. Based on the assessment of the context, we then present our theory of change, which we have premised on civil society being a critical enabler and catalyst for sustainable transformation in Zimbabwe. We then present our ambitious strategic priorities as NANGO through which we believe we can reinvigorate civil society in the country and reposition it to the place we believe it should play regarding the contemporary national discourse. The rest of the strategy is then dedicated to describing what we plan to undertake in the next three years to fulfil the ambitious agenda we have set for ourselves as an institution. We believe the value of our strategy is not found merely in its contents, but in the deliberately consultative process that led to its formulation. The process involved online and offline consultative meetings, group discussions, a survey, and feedback sessions from the broader NANGO membership, current and former funding partners, strategic and technical partners, and stakeholders as well as a strategic retreat with NANGO National Board and secretariat. This strategy, therefore, is a sum total and a reflection of collective thinking from the process.

Locating NANGO within Zimbabwe's VUCA Environment

Zimbabwe's political and socio-economic landscape continues to be Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, and Arbitrary (VUCA) in the post-Mugabe era also known as the 'Second Republic'. The country's political scene is still characterised by polarisation and tensions between the main political parties, intra-political party in-fighting, and the ever-lurking risk of political violence breakouts, especially during electoral periods.

General elections held on 30 July 2018, the first in the 'Second Republic' which were generally peaceful, but independent observer missions issued hundreds of recommendations for

electoral reform, many of which remain outstanding as the country heads for its next elections in 2023. During public protests demanding election results on 1 August 2018, security agents used excessive force resulting in the death of six people from shootings, and several injured. The recommendations of a Commission of Inquiry established to look into the violence remain unimplemented. Further, economic challenges led to protests in January 2019 to oppose a fuel-pricing policy that had ripple effects on the cost of living. Security agents, especially the army and police, responded with disproportionate force, dragnet arrests, and summary trials. In February 2020, Zimbabwe adopted lockdown measures to contain the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19). The selective partisan and violent enforcement of measures, and conditions imposed on the exercise of rights and freedoms, unduly limited the enjoyment of human rights.

Indeed, the state's often heavy-handed response to demonstrations and protests even in the 'Second Republic' remains a sobering reminder of where the country has come from and calls to question the political will to uphold constitutionally guaranteed rights to freedom of conscience, political rights, freedom to demonstrate and petition, and freedom of assembly and association. Further, state-power consolidation by the executive remains an issue of concern, with provisions in constitutional amendments such as the Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment No. 2 Act, 2021 raising questions regarding executive overreach and tempering with separation of powers among arms of government, both phenomena which dented advancement of democratic tenets in the 'First Republic'. Amendments to some of the country's laws that are being promulgated (e.g., the Criminal Law Codification and Reform Amendment Bill a.k.a the Patriotic Bill) again raise concerns regarding curtailing of constitutionally guaranteed rights and freedoms such as media freedom and freedom of expression, the right to privacy and access to information.

The year 2023 marks the mid-point in the implementation of Zimbabwe's National Development Strategy 1 (NDS1), with the country's economic development continuing to be hampered by a combination of global and local intertwining factors. Among the key challenges, the economy has been confronted with price and exchange rate instability, low investment, the misallocation of productive resources, high inflation, multiple exchange rates, unsustainable debt levels, ineffective control of public spending as well as limited structural transformation. These factors have without doubt increased the cost of production and doing business in Zimbabwe, have reduced incentives for productivity-enhancing investment, and encouraged informality. Productive sectors such as industry and mining have struggled due to reduced competitiveness, low commodity prices, and interruptions in electrical service that disrupt output.

The COVID-19 pandemic and climate change-induced droughts have further shrunk the

country's economy, with recovery likely to be protracted, more so against the backdrop of Zimbabwe's debt distress and international arrears to international lending institutions. Further, the rise in commodity prices due to the Russia-Ukraine conflict has worsened Zimbabwe's long-standing structural issues, which are characterised by rising inflation and continuous depreciation of the Zimbabwean dollar and continue to undermine economic recovery from the coronavirus pandemic and climate change-induced weather shocks. The nation continues to grapple with high poverty rates, high unemployment rates in the most economically productive age groups, high levels of food insecurity and endemic corruption, as well as declining real wages as a consequence of high inflation. Economic participation remains largely exclusionary, with the majority of Zimbabweans having to eke a living through the informal economy and the gap between the wealthy and poor ever widening. Further, frequent crackdowns on informal trading markets and workspaces in the towns and cities often worsen the plight of the poor and vulnerable, who generally do not have any savings or safety nets.


Access to basic social services such as education and health has also continued to deteriorate across the county, with the poor and the marginalised being disproportionately affected. Health service delivery, especially at government-owned facilities, continues to retrogress owing to years of under-investment, brain drain, and poor conditions of service for health workers. In many instances, public hospitals have gone on record as having run out of very basic drugs and citizens have often had to purchase medicines from outside the facilities (at a very expensive cost) or else go without.

Meanwhile, access to clean, safe, and portable water remains a major challenge in many urban areas, with supply being way below the daily average demand. Local authorities continue to struggle to provide clean, affordable potable water to urban communities and the country has continued experiencing seasonal outbreaks of waterborne diseases such as cholera, dysentery, and typhoid among others. Reports have also been made of women being abused in queues at water points such as boreholes, including sexual abuse and risks of getting raped as women and girls wake up before dark to make the long queues at the boreholes. Further, access to affordable forms of energy remains a challenge, as high costs of cooking gas and electricity tariffs continue to go up against the backdrop of a rise in inflation and the dollarisation of the economy.



Frosty State – Civil Society Relations


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.**' Beyond that, the state also acknowledges the important role that NGOs have played over the years in complementing government with regard to the implementation of social policy, improving access to essential socio-economic services as well as food and other humanitarian assistance in times of disasters and need in the country. However, the current legal, administrative, and policy pronouncements by the government are inhibitive in forwarding the interests of CSOs operating in Zimbabwe. Pieces of legislation 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 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. It is further feared that the proposed Patriotic Bill will also affect many NGOs and their programmes as they engage and interface with governments, diplomatic missions, multi-laterals, and other international NGOs from around the world. Frosty state-CSO relations persist in Zimbabwe, with the former accusing the latter of being appendages of Western governments in attempts to effect regime change in Zimbabwe. The quest to build a sustained mutually beneficial relationship between the state and CSOs predominantly remains aspirational.



Funding-driven Sustainability Challenges to NGOs in Zimbabwe

The global context characterised by nationalistic sentiment, pockets of conflict bearing global significance (e.g. Russia-Ukraine war), the deepening global climate crisis as well as the socioeconomic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic across the world among others have seen the reduction of development cooperation financing into developing countries. Zimbabwe is no

exception to these developments, as the traditional donor countries now have to contend and grapple with their emerging socio-economic challenges as well as the imperative to redirect resources to contexts deemed more in need. In addition, donor fatigue in contexts such as Zimbabwe has severely diminished resources available to CSOs and many organisations have virtually disintegrated or are barely operational. Due to the subsequent steep competition for resources and a general sense of survivalism, CSOs have scattered and many have formed smaller resource mobilisation-oriented thematic consortia and clusters. These, while helpful in enhancing group fundraising, have also, unfortunately, led to fragmentation of efforts, protection of turf and gatekeeping (as a means of safeguarding funding), and polarisation along funding lines. Inevitably, this has resulted in the difficulties currently observed in the consolidation of CSO voices at the national level, especially at a time when the important role of CSOs in standing in the accountability gap between the state and the market is most required in the post-COVID-19 era where a national developmental reset is imperative.



Looking into the future and the imperative for a vibrant CSO sector in Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe is at a critical juncture as a nation and the prevailing socio-economic and political challenges present a real test of character and sincerity for the 'Second Republic'. Critical recommendations on matters related to rule of law and pro-democratic reforms have been given through important national processes such as the Monthlante Commission of Enquiry set up in the aftermath of the post-electoral violence of 2018. President Emmerson D. Mnangagwa has in several policy pronouncements asserted the commitment of the Zimbabwean government towards socio-economic recovery and growth as well as driving the country to become an upper-middle income country by the year 2030. Needless to say, this is an ambitious target requiring the country to achieve economic growth rates of 8-9% per year up to 2029, and achieving such unprecedented rates will without doubt require dramatic improvement in the

policy environment to address the binding constraints to productivity growth. Commitments have been made towards ensuring reforms to the country's laws and institutions to ensure they not only align to constitutional dictates but that they are primed to respond to ordinary's socio-economic conditions and contribute towards the realisation of a Zimbabwe developmental state in which people from all spheres of life across all provinces prosper and contribute towards developing their country.

On a related note, progress on most of the country's commitments towards the realisation of the SDGs remains very low, making it very difficult for the country to achieve the set targets for Agenda 2030. While the country has done well in terms of putting the policy and legal framework in place for most of the goals and committing to most international agreements related to the SDGs, implementation of the policies and programmes is disappointingly very low. There is certainly a need for improvement in the implementation of the policies and programmes put in place by the government. Greater participation by stakeholders including, Parliament, CSOs, the private sector, and citizens is required in the formulation, implementation, and monitoring of the SDGs. Linking the monitoring framework in the NDS1 with SDGs monitoring and the Results-Based Programme adapted by the Government is critical as is the inclusion of all stakeholders and regular feedback on progress.

At the centre of the realisation of all developmental ambitions and aspirations for Zimbabwe is imperative to move from rhetoric and well-written policy blueprints to the implementation of requisite programmes on the ground. This is also linked to the making of appropriate budgetary allocations, ensuring prudence and accountability in the use of national resources, managing unsustainable debt as well as prevention of leakages through corruption and general economic mismanagement. This is also linked to ensuring that markets are efficient, productive, and not ultra-profit oriented at the expense of social development. A strong mutual accountability mechanism between the government, markets, and citizens will therefore be pivotal to ensure the realisation of the country's developmental aspirations and spurring Zimbabwe to become an upper-middle income country by the year 2030. The watchdog role of civil society as an accountability partner to both the state and markets in matters of inclusive pro-poor development can thus never be over-emphasised.

The above issues, therefore, require that the NGO sector in Zimbabwe be vibrant and proactive. To that end, the critical role of a rejuvenated NANGO as a convenor, coordinator, and capacity-builder of Zimbabwean NGOs becomes more prominent. As noted earlier, the need to press for a more conducive operating environment for CSOs in Zimbabwe has never been so urgent, and so has been the need to convene the sector, serve its needs as well as advocate on behalf of the many organisations on issues of sector-wide interest.

We Are Ready for a Reset and Geared to Respond to the Needs of our Stakeholders

NANGO at its peak has, in the past, been the vehicle for a constructive and coordinated voice for NGOs operating in Zimbabwe and we wish to reclaim that space again. The association has traditionally played the role of interlocutor between the Government of Zimbabwe and civil society, with a clear vantage position in matters of policy influencing, through carrying the voices of its over 1000-odd members. A time has come for NANGO to reboot, reset, and reposition itself to regain its position and legitimacy as the convener, coordinator, and umbrella association of NGOs in Zimbabwe.

There are many expectations from our members and stakeholders that we are determined to go all the way to fulfil. Our members expected the revitalisation of NANGO and for the umbrella body to reclaim its space as the leading voice of NGOs operating in the country, representing them at strategic engagements with the government, defending their interests, and advancing their cause nationally, regionally, and internationally. Our funding and technical partners expect that we effectively convene, network, offer technical support, promote unified agenda-setting and co-creation of policy positions; and facilitate meaningful collaborations among CSOs so that they become more effective, transparent, accountable, and impactful in their work. The Government expects us to effectively coordinate NGOs in the country as the sector focal point, proffer structured representation and presentation of CSO issues as well as a mutually beneficial relationship in implementing national development. The private sector expects us to articulate a business case for supporting civil society work and to co-create relevant and appropriate pathways for private sector-CSO collaboration in developmental initiatives as well as helping them in fulfilling Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) obligations. Further, research and academic institutions expect us to continue collaborating in research on national development and policy to ensure that the country's development strategy and agenda remain supported by sound empirical evidence and experiences of realities on the ground.

We believe the time is right for us to respond to all these needs and take back the place NANGO rightly belongs as the apex umbrella body of NGOs in Zimbabwe. We are alive of the challenges obtaining on the ground such as the funding challenges, the operating environment issues, and the socio-economic and political situation in the country as well as the difficulties with global post-COVID-19 pandemic economic recovery, among many others. Yet we embrace hope and seek to leverage our experience and strengths as an umbrella body, convener, and voice of NGOs operating in Zimbabwe to the many challenges while embracing the opportunities that come our way. We are convinced this strategy offers the much-needed pathway and that our Theory of Change provides the point of departure towards the realisation of our aspirations.

Theory of Change [2023 - 2025]

The actualisation of 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.

Impact

NANGO will be able to better connect, convene & coordinate diverse groups of NGOs in Zimbabwe through the creation of spaces & platforms for experience sharing, mutual learning, multistakeholder engagement, linking networks & alliances as well as strengthening civic voices

Zimbabwean NGOs will, through the facilitation of NANGO, become more effective and organised, garner stronger legitimacy through their programming, work more transparently with greater accountability as well as become more resilient in the face of a VUCA operating environment

The NGO sector will increasingly converge and develop a unified voice in the quest to influence policies, laws, regulations, and funding practices that have a bearing on the civil society operating environment in the country

There will be increased legitimacy and consolidation of NANGO as a catalyst and critical enabler of growth and maturity of the CSO sector in Zimbabwe

Intermediate Outcomes

Enhancement of NANGO operational framework through leadership & governance reforms, & institutional strengthening

Improving NANGO's value proposition to its membership as a convener & coordinating organisation as well as making the NANGO brand more attractive to Zimbabwean CSOs

Pivoting NANGO as the hub of choice for CSO capacitation, training, mentorship, knowledge curation, and operational support

Strengthening NANGO to become a solid platform for advocacy, lobbying, & policy influencing in matters related to the CSO operating environment as well as national development issues

If We Ensure

The VUCA political and socio-economic environment in the country

The imperative to keep the government accountable to its promises & commitments for political & socio-economic turnaround and reforms

The need to strengthen civil society voices and enhance coordination, convening, and collaboration

The imperative to enhance the effectiveness & efficiency of CSOs while also creating a more conducive operating environment for them.

Given

1. CSOs will be receptive to the NANGO initiatives and willing to implement them downstream in their respective constituencies.
2. NANGO will continue to use its convening power to facilitate key stakeholders' engagement, especially state actors.
3. Board and management willingness to support the successful implementation of institutional structures.
4. The organisation has both financial and human capital to respond to changing needs and contexts and; implement initiatives effectively.



Assumptions

Our Strategic Priority Areas



Strategic Priority 1: Institutional strengthening for a higher-performing NANGO

We believe the stronger NANGO is as an institution the more effective it will be in coordination and servicing of the NGO sector in Zimbabwe. This, for us, entails strengthening our governance framework, updating our policies and procedures to suit the current context, being true to our values and being guided by them in every aspect, optimising the working environment within the organisation, continually innovating to become a better fit for the future, improving accountability and communication with our stakeholders and raising sufficient resources to support our work. This will be important for us to guarantee quick and effective decision-making, high-performing systems and processes, and a culture of engagement and inclusiveness that puts NANGO members at the core of the work we do as an organisation. A description of each of the Key Result Areas (KRAs) is given below:

KRA 1.1 - Strengthening the NANGO Governance framework

We believe that as an umbrella association for NGOs operating in the country, our governance plays a critical role in safeguarding the vision and mandate we have as an association, giving us direction and ensuring that we stay true to our calling in the work that we do. Further, our governance structure should resemble good corporate governance and should be used as a

true benchmark by our members. To that end, the implementation of key reforms and continued capacity strengthening in the oversight role of our National and Regional Executive Committees (RECs) becomes pivotal to ensure these governance structures consistently evolve, remain relevant and continue to drive the association's priorities as well as increase agility and transparency in decision-making, risk management and focus on key strategic issues. In 2023 – 2025 we will implement a stronger governance model and Organisational Development framework (including strengthening our systems and procedures) to ensure the improvement of our performance and accountability as NANGO.

KRA 1.2 - Being a Value-driven Organisation and Creating an Optimum Working Environment Within NANGO

Between 2023 – 2025, we want NANGO, as an institution, to stay true to its values and demonstrate institutional behaviours that reflect those values daily. We will, therefore, work towards building a stronger organisational culture with greater staff engagement, and a more conducive and inclusive work environment that values, recognises, acknowledges, and amplifies talent and skills among our team members while promoting diversity, teamwork, trust, retention as well as rewarding behaviours that are consistent with our values. We will provide a conducive working environment for our team members in the secretariat, with cost-effective operational systems and procedures being critical enablers to effective and efficient delivery by NANGO staff. The wellness of our team members will remain a critical aspect of our operations because we believe NANGO will not effectively deliver on its mandate to the NGO sector in Zimbabwe without a well-incentivised, well-remunerated, motivated, and driven secretariat. We commit ourselves to living our values and creating an optimum working environment for all team members within NANGO iteratively and incrementally.

KRA 1.3 - Improving Accountability to our Stakeholders

As an umbrella body, we do not take for granted the huge responsibility we have towards NGOs in Zimbabwe, our funders, friends, partners, and supporters outside our borders and globally. The mandate is enormous, the expectations are high. We, therefore, commit ourselves in this current strategic period to holding ourselves accountable by increasing transparency, reporting, and communication to demonstrate the high standards our stakeholders rightly demand from us. We will safeguard our staff, diligently to advance the causes and interests of the established and not-so-established organisations we work with as well as strengthen accountability measures as part of our programme design and implementation, over and above adopting consistent and transparent reporting on our activities and results. Our media and communication approach will be a key factor in achieving this aspiration.

KRA 1.4 - Developing new models and platforms to enhance our work

One of the key drivers of the renewed NANGO strategic thrust is innovation and creative approaches to convening and coordinating CSOs in the country. We believe innovation and reinventing our approaches, are some of the most effective methods to sustain the momentum and voice of CSOs in the country. To that effect, we will, in this strategic period test new partnerships that can work and effectively reach CSOs in different settings across the country. We will explore innovative operational models and ways of partnering with others, including leveraging social and other online platforms that have significantly brought down barriers to communication and organising, to connect with the Zimbabwean diaspora, social movements, FBOs, CSOs, students' movements, funding, and technical partners to enhance the work we have been undertaking with our members to put our Theory of Change into action. Alternative, non-traditional operational models will drive transformative and cost-effective programmes that bring new partners to our work and find new solutions to the challenges we are facing in our watchdog role as CSOs in the country. We will also secure and test new partnerships that demonstrate potential for sustainable impact in our work in the country. From this strategic period going forward, we intend to reposition NANGO into an umbrella institution whose brand remains true to the fundamental role that a CSO coordinating body should play, and one that CSOs in Zimbabwe will want to be associated with.

KRA 1.5 - Raising Sufficient Resources to Support our Work

Ultimately, our capacity to deliver on our important mandate to CSOs right across Zimbabwe will largely be dependent on us having adequate, flexible funds to innovate, move quickly and invest in what we know works and in newly emerging areas of work that we will have proof of concept for. In continuing to grow our free/unrestricted funding, we will reduce our dependence on institutional donor funding. We will increase the consistency and predictability of funding for our work so that we can make strategic choices in the quest for greater levels of impact. We will focus on increasing our number of regular funding partners and encourage ongoing support through cohesive, integrated fundraising. We will use proven fundraising tools and also prioritise new, non-traditional resource mobilisation channels, products, and approaches that demonstrate greater Value-For-Money (VfM) to our partners and supporters. As part of our resource mobilisation strategy, we also believe that members, alumni, and friends of NANGO will be critical factors as we leverage subscriptions and the huge network existing around the organisation.

Strategic Priority 2: Improving NANGO's value proposition to its membership as a convener and coordinating organisation as well as making the NANGO brand more attractive to Zimbabwean CSOs

NANGO cannot exist without its membership. The organisation's primary purpose, therefore, is to ensure that it fully services its members through convening, coordinating, and building collaborative networks among members. The organisation will ensure that it effectively plays these roles to remain relevant and attract new members. Under the new strategy, we intend to revisit our value proposition to members, listen more to them and be more responsive to their needs and expectations of us as an umbrella body. This strategic priority has the below key result areas.

KRA 2.1 - Curation and sharing of knowledge resources

NANGO, under this strategic period, will invest in the digitisation of its library which contains historic, technical, and contemporary content on civil society and the development sector in Zimbabwe as well as knowledge and practice of Zimbabwean civil society captured through documentation. This will create an important learning resource and repository for members, scholars, and other interested stakeholders, accessible at the click of a button. Added to this, NANGO will create a knowledge management platform that will facilitate peer exchange of best practices, resources, and information among members. As an organisation, we will invest in strengthening the capacity of our members to document their best practices, enhance impact storytelling from their work as well as package their programming experiences into knowledge resources that can be shared via the platforms as well. NANGO will also ensure prioritised membership-based access to particular resources on the online repository, with similar access being monetised for non-members.

KRA 2.2 - Giving NANGO member organisations a fulfilling membership experience

We are determined to ensure that NANGO members fully experience the benefits of being part of the umbrella body as we commit ourselves to increasingly profile the various organisations' work on our social and other online media platforms, give them opportunities to exhibit and showcase their work at NANGO flagship events such as the NGO expo among others. As we embrace a more tech-driven trajectory in our work, our website, social media platforms and other online forums that we run will dedicate a significant amount of coverage to our members, telling their impact stories and celebrating the life-changing work they are undertaking for the people of Zimbabwe. Under the current strategic period, we will also prioritise NANGO members for project collaboration or representation opportunities, so that we tap into our members' expertise and experience as they represent the umbrella body, locally, regionally, and internationally. NANGO membership will, from the current strategic period, hold a further advantage for CSOs with respect to accessing capacity-building opportunities, access to

knowledge resources, and other incentives we believe will give a wholesome experience to current NANGO members and attract new prospective members.

KRA 2.3 - Increasing opportunities for convening and collaboration among NANGO members

Through the thematic cluster-based mechanism successfully employed by NANGO over the years, we anticipate enhancing the coordination of NANGO membership, ensuring that we have critical convergence platforms that address intra and inter-sectoral interests as well as enable member networking and best practices exchange. In this current strategic period, we will be strengthening member collaborations in programme design, advocacy, and influencing opportunities. We commit ourselves to promoting consortiums where members combine their strengths during proposal writing and the development of new programmes. This is in line with our thrust towards encouraging CSOs to co-create ideas and work more collaboratively and systematically, thereby eliminating unnecessary competition among our members. We further commit ourselves to keep an up-to-date membership database organised by sector, to improve communication with members regarding activities or any processes occurring within the NANGO network, as well as giving regular feedback and keeping in touch with members via both offline and our online platforms, emailing lists and our newsletter.

KRA 2.4 - Strengthening coordination through an incentive-based self-regulatory framework

NANGO recognises the importance of CSO sector-level self-regulatory initiatives and the development of common norms and standards. These are key means of building public trust, protecting the political space for CSOs to operate, and sharing good practises and learning among CSOs in the country. In this strategic period therefore, NANGO will develop several interventions that support self-regulation, including, benchmarking of NGOs work to international standards and best practises, the development of sector code of conduct or governance manual and ethics as well as incentive-based accreditation, certification, and award schemes.

Strategic Priority 3: Pivoting NANGO as the hub of choice for CSO capacitation, training, mentorship, knowledge curation, and operational support

At a time of greater scrutiny on NGOs in terms of operational efficacy, sustainability, and VFM, the imperative need for institutionalised capacity development, training and mentorship of these organisations has never been more pressing. As an umbrella body, we intend to leverage our alumni, networks, as well as our wide access to expertise and training resources within our networks to consolidate and package various kinds of training programmes aimed at improving the way NGOs are led and operate in Zimbabwe. With the capacity needs of NGOs

wide-ranging from transformative leadership, and organisational development to governance, to project cycle management right through to reporting, we consider it essential that we standardise the capacity building, training, and mentorship, ensuring that it is not ad hoc, but comprehensive and responsive to actual needs on the ground, at the same time being recognised for credibility among key stakeholders in the development space.

We are convinced this will enhance our members' achievement of operational efficiency, realisation of impact at the grassroots level, enable them to demonstrate VFM, and equip them to be sustainable going into the future. We believe the NGO sector is a critical player in advancing socio-economic development in Zimbabwe and to that effect, must be technically supported to be fully effective. We intend to achieve this through the establishment of a CSO Academy to service the sector in Zimbabwe. The CSO Academy will strike a balance between courses that focus on theory and practice, packaged in the form of short courses and masterclasses (in the preliminary phases) to ensure a fast route to gaining accredited and practical skills that can easily be applied to daily programming. Under this strategy, we will realise this through the following key result areas.

KRA 3.1: Commissioning a training and capacity needs assessment

Against the backdrop of many pieces of training and capacity-building programmes targeting the NGO sector in Zimbabwe, as NANGO we intend to tailor-make our capacity-building programmes and deliver them in a unique way that only addresses gaps in current programmes on offer, but will offer a unique value proposition, contemporary teaching approaches and blended learning methodologies incorporating virtual and physical learning as well as practical experiential learning. Our approach will be short-course and masterclass-based, as we seek to deliver programmes that are market-facing, relevant, contemporary, and immediately applicable in the workplace. To that end, NANGO, under the current strategy will invest in training and capacity needs analysis to fully understand where the gaps are and thereafter draw up a plan to design the courses based on identified needs. The needs and capacity assessment will then be undertaken regularly thereafter (once in 2 years) to ensure that NANGO remains relevant in the capacity development programmes it would be running for members as well as mapping where gaps are emerging to design appropriate interventions.

KRA 3.2 - Establishing strategic partnerships with key learning institutions in the country

For purposes of accreditation and credibility, NANGO will strategically partner via Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with academic institutions that have Institutes of Development Studies and collaborate in developing as well as delivery of course content. To blend theory and praxis, programmes will be delivered through joint teaching between lecturers and practitioners, with practical and fieldwork sessions being part of the curricula. NANGO will also undertake

fundraising to ensure that the development of the short courses and masterclasses is carried out by experts, and is peer-reviewed and quality controlled before being rolled out. In the strategic period, NANGO will target the main universities in the main cities in Zimbabwe (Harare, Bulawayo, Gweru, Masvingo, Mutare), with the anticipation of further rollouts as demand grows.

KRA 3.3 - Adding another flagship capacity development platform to the currently existing NANGO NGO Directors' Summer Retreat

NANGO has had the NGO Directors' Summer Retreat as a flagship programme for years, and the platform continues to be relevant for the high-level engagement and capacity development of NGO Directors in the country. Building on the success of the NGO Directors' Summer Retreat, NANGO will under the new strategy seek to expand and develop another flagship, in the form of a Winter School for Programme Managers and Implementers, in between the other planned capacity development training and activities. This will be implemented at a regional level to maximise the number of participants, enhance proximity to members, and tailor-made sessions to the development interest of CSOs in each region.

KRA 3.4 - Development of the NANGO CSOs Academy online learning platform

While the NANGO CSOs Academy is being developed, a parallel process to develop a digital platform that offers similar programmes online will also be undertaken. This is in recognition of current learning trends where virtual options provide an opportunity for flexible learning that enables work, learning, and life balance. As an organisation, we will, therefore, invest in developing a fully-fledged online learning centre for the CSOs Academy, with adequate resources and on-demand training, prized more affordably and flexibly compared to physical sessions.

Strategic Priority 4: Strengthening NANGO to become a solid platform for advocacy, lobbying, and policy influencing in matters related to the CSO operating environment as well as national development issues

For CSOs to operate effectively and achieve the desired impact in Zimbabwe, there should be an enabling operating environment in which laws, policies, practices, and institutions regulating the CSO space achieve the desired oversight function while not causing undue bureaucracy, burdensome overreach and constraining to the work of the developmental organisations. We believe that the regulatory function should not choke operational efficiencies, and that accountability should be mutual and not burdensome. Given current developments in the CSO regulatory arena, with an anticipated tightening of the operating environment throughout this strategic period, we commit ourselves to continue engaging and defending the CSO operating


environment to enable ease of doing work among our members. Under the same token, we will also play our part to ensure that we protect our member organisations from abuse and mismanagement, which present the risk of regulatory overreach as a consequence. As NANGO, we will also galvanise our members towards a unified policy influencing agenda (beyond just the sector-specific issues) to broader matters related to socio-economic and political developments in the country. We have the below as our key result areas.

KRA 4.1 - Safeguarding against abuse and mismanagement in the NGO sector

In this strategic period, we will work with the regulatory authorities to develop a regulatory performance framework to reduce unnecessary or inefficient regulation imposed on our membership and the broader CSO sector in general. As an umbrella body, we will also collaborate with the regulatory authorities in taking a more proactive stance against mismanagement and abuse of funds in the NGO sector. As an umbrella body, we will also engage with the CSOs in the country on issues of regulatory compliance and ensuring organisations are not used as conduits for criminal activities. NANGO will also continue, in this strategic period, engaging with the banking sector to make sure banking practices and business transactions remain compliant with NGO regulatory requirements, including safeguarding against abuse and mismanagement. These initiatives will form part of our mitigation measures against Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism (ML/FT).

KRA 4.2 - Engagement with the government to safeguard NGOs from over-regulation

With the ushering in of a new regulatory framework in Zimbabwe, as NANGO we will broaden our engagement with Parliament and the government regulators to ensure that the NGO sector is safeguarded from over-regulation that will compromise CSO operations. We will continue advancing the conversations related to regulatory reforms with Parliament and the government to enable and maintain a conducive operating environment for CSOs in the country. NANGO will, during this current strategic period, invest in research-driven engagements that enable us to work across our membership to document lessons, challenges, and changes that will be occurring over time on regulatory compliance issues as the new regulatory framework takes effect. As an umbrella organisation, we will also support CSOs with onboarding onto the new regulatory framework, including providing technical backstopping and compliance support. NANGO will also advance, document, and disseminate research studies demonstrating the socio-economic impact of NGOs in Zimbabwe, as a means of substantiating our advocacy for a more enabling environment for CSO operations so that they could continue being a partner complementing the government in the delivery of national development programmes in the country.



Strategic Priority 5: Promoting effective action on the SDGs

As NANGO we believe that NGOs are already playing a critical role in advancing the implementation and achievement of the SDGs through local-level programmes, complementing government developmental programmes, and through national engagements. We are convinced, therefore, that deepening CSO participation in the SDGs processes, including convening the organisation and coordinating actions aimed at building strategic collaborations with the government and private sector as well as keeping mutual accountability will be an important contribution by NANGO and its members in advancing the SDGs in the country. Our approach to promoting and supporting the realisation of the SDGs in Zimbabwe will anchor on the following key result area:

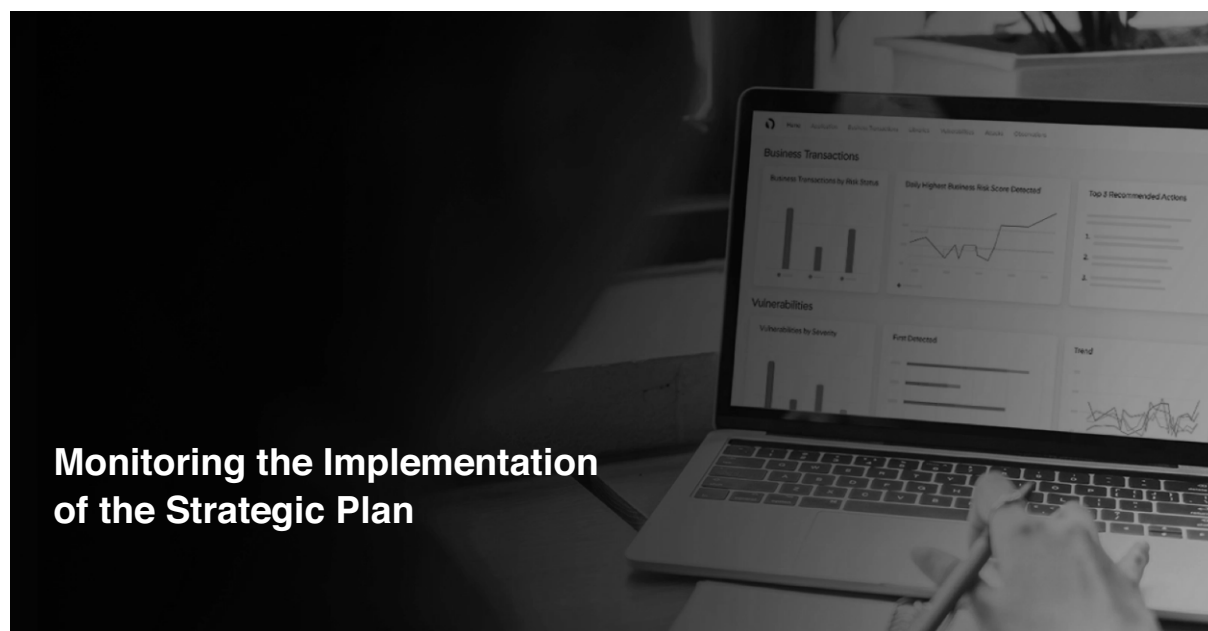
KRA 5.1: Availing ourselves as technical partners, building citizen action, and strengthening collaborations towards ensuring effective implementation of the SDGs

Based on our past experiences with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) process, NANGO will avail itself and where we are called upon, provide technical support to the government and private sector on prioritising, integrating, implementing, and scaling up initiatives and programmes aimed at achieving the SDGs through supporting the drafting, review, alignment, and monitoring of national policies aimed at attaining the SDGs. This will be through the vast array of expertise within our members under the umbrella body. Again, as NANGO we will leverage our critical mass as an umbrella body of NGOs in the country and our past experiences with the MDGs process to run citizens and grassroots-based advocacy and campaigns on the attainment of the SDGs, to ensure no ordinary citizens or local communities are left behind. NANGO will also reinforce its participation, and broaden collaborations and partnerships in national, regional, and global coalitions and networks driving dialogue, stakeholder engagement, solidarity, advocacy, and policy influencing on the attainment of the SDGs.

KRA 5.2 – Deepening our work in inclusive pro-poor development advocacy and policy influencing as part of promoting the realisation of the SDGs in Zimbabwe

During this current strategic period, NANGO will strengthen its watchdog role and deepen its work on advocacy and policy influencing, to ensure the state and the markets remain responsive to ordinary citizens' aspirations for pro-people and pro-people development, as envisaged by the SDGs Agenda.

We will leverage our policy-influencing track record, being backed by our membership as well as legitimately representing the ordinary citizens' that organise through the various CSOs that NANGO coordinates. We will play a stronger role in engaging with the government and advocating for policy reforms not just for the NGO sector but on broader issues of socio-economic development in the country. NANGO will, in this strategic period, pursue an advocacy and policy-influencing agenda premised on keeping the government accountable to its commitments made towards meeting national development milestones articulated in the National Development Strategy (NDS) 1, as part of incremental efforts towards the progressive realisation of the SDGs in Zimbabwe.



This strategic plan will be the key reference document for NANGO in the period 2023 – 2025 and it will be accessible to our existing and new staff as well as regional and national Board members, key stakeholders, funding, and technical partners. NANGO's operational plans for the years 2023 – 2025 will be guided by this strategy and so will annual operational plans. Institutional progress reports will be benchmarked on this strategic plan. Accordingly, annual reports to the Board and other key stakeholders shall include sections that analyse progress against the strategic plan's objectives. Based on our Theory of Change, strategic priorities, and specific key result areas (KRAs), a Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) framework will be developed and used to assess progress towards the realisation of goals set in the organisation's strategic plan. The organisation recognises that with all VUCA environments, the context and operating environment is ever changing and that these changes will challenge some of the assumptions underpinning this strategic plan. Given this, NANGO will regularly review the plan during retreats for staff, the board, NANGO organisational members, and representatives of stakeholders to take stock of progress against the plan and to also review changes in the environment that may warrant strategic plan adjustments. Any adjustments to the plan, as a

result of the reviews, will be presented to the Board for consideration and approval by resolution and the plan will be amended accordingly.

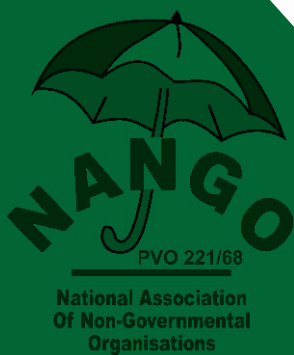


OUR STRATEGY

In the next three years, we will seek sustainable and diverse revenue streams to fund planned programmes and institutional strengthening of NANGO. Given the ambition of our programme, we will aim to increase our revenues and ensure that they are flexible enough to fund our key priorities as well as create reserves for the institution. The sustainability of NANGO will be contingent on us growing our internally generated revenue (through research, capacity development, commissioned work, member support services, etc), tapping into non-traditional sources of funding, and gradually decreasing our dependence on traditional donor funding. During the strategy period, therefore, significant attention will be given to developing these alternative sources of income for the institution.

Our expenditure during the strategy period will reflect our programme priorities and where we hope to achieve the maximum impact. Out of our total expenditure on programmes: **40% will go to member capacity development** as a reflection of the main approach by which we strengthen NGOs in Zimbabwe. This will be followed by **30% for research, documentation, and knowledge management**, followed by **20% for sector coordination, convening, and connecting**, and then followed by **10% for policy influencing and advocacy**.

During the strategy period, we will ensure that our percentage of programme to support expenditure does not go beyond 85% as we find innovative ways to minimise our operating costs. All our expenditures will be governed by a commitment to achieving VFM where we maximise the impact of each dollar spent. In addition, we will continue to comply with established practices for effective financial management at all times employing the highest standards of transparency and accountability.



NANGO Head Office
Number 2 McGowan Rd, Milton Park
Harare, Zimbabwe

www.nangozim.org

NANGO Publications