



National Association  
Of Non-Governmental  
Organisations



# 13th Annual NGO Directors Summer Retreat

22 - 24 November 2023

“Reimagining the Future of the Civil Society  
in Zimbabwe: From Analysis to Action”

**Consolidated Report**



DIPLOMA IN SUSTAINABLE

THEME:  
Reimagining the  
Future Civil Society  
in Africa From





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National Association of Non-Governmental Organisations (NANGO)  
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# Table of Acronyms

APECS	Action to Enhance and Protect Civic Space in Zimbabwe
AML/CFT	Anti-Money Laundering and Countering Financing of Terrorism
BPIA	Best Practices and Innovation Award
BVTA	Bulawayo Vendors and Traders Association
CBOs	Community Based Organisations
CEAA	Citizen Engagement and Accountability Activity
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CHA	Centre for Humanitarian Analytics
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
DPI	Defenders Protection Initiative
EU	European Union
FATF	Financial Action Task Force
ICAZ	Institute of Chartered Accountants
LRF	Legal Resource Foundation
MoPSLSW	Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare
MOPA	Maintenance of Peace and Order Act
NANGO	National Association of Non-Governmental Organisations
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
NPOs	Non-Profit Organisations
PVOs	Private Voluntary Organisations
PWDs	Persons With Disabilities
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
TIZ	Transparency International Zimbabwe
ZAN	Zimbabwe AIDS Network
ZCC	Zimbabwe Council of Churches
ZDI	Zimbabwe Democracy Institute
ZimRights	Zimbabwe Human Rights Association



## **Letter From the Executive Director Editorial Letter to the Participants**

On behalf of the National Association of Non-Governmental Organisations ([NANGO](#)), I am writing to express our sincere gratitude for your attendance and participation in the recently concluded 13th NGO Directors Summer Retreat.

This year's summer retreat marked a significant departure from previous editions, embracing a highly collaborative and inclusive approach. We actively engaged members, stakeholders and partners throughout the planning process, from co-creating the event programme and defining content to participating as discussants and panellists during the various sessions. This collaborative spirit contributed immensely to the vibrant discussions and rich learning experiences that unfolded over the three days.

This consolidated report encapsulates the diverse perspectives and insightful discussions that took place during the event. It serves as a testament to the power of open dialogue in strengthening our connections as NANGO members and NGO leaders forging valuable partnerships with the private sector, and

fostering constructive engagement with key stakeholders in the public sector. Sharing our experiences and learnings not only enriched our understanding of the current landscape but also served as a potent force for collective growth and development.

We believe that the 13<sup>th</sup> NGO Directors Summer Retreat provided a valuable platform for rethinking, reconnecting, sharing, learning, and celebrating the diversity of voices within the CSO fraternity in Zimbabwe and beyond. We are confident that the ideas and connections forged during the retreat will continue to inspire and guide our collective efforts in the months to come.

As we plan for a more impactful 2024, we look forward to your continued participation and support. Together, we can build a stronger and more vibrant civil society that contributes meaningfully to the push for democracy, good governance and social justice for all.

**Ernest Nyimai (Mr),  
Executive Director, NANGO.**



## Executive Summary

Orchestrated by [NANGO](#) in collaboration with members, partners, and stakeholders, the 13<sup>th</sup> edition of the NGOs Directors Summer Retreat welcomed 138 participants from across Zimbabwe, presenting an intricate web of NANGO's membership and network. Several pivotal events added solemnity to this conference. We kicked off with an enlightening conference foresight session which looked at the journey travelled from the 12<sup>th</sup> edition to the 13<sup>th</sup> edition and the vision for the future. The first day of the conference delved into various aspects, reflecting on the state of the operating environment, future scenarios, pathways mapping, and sharing ideas for collective action in Zimbabwe. The sessions covered various dimensions of assessing the state of CSOs' operating environment and facilitating candid dialogue while fostering greater collaboration in the future reimagination thrust.

The second day of the conference was centred on building the capacity of CSOs for anticipatory action and fore sighting. This perspective advocated for the recalibration of sector-wide systems and infrastructure with a focus on collective action for an enabling environment. Emphasis was made on the significance of strengthening communities and tapping into their inherent knowledge and resilience. As part of the headline takeaways from the discussion, heed was made for CSOs to shift from reaction to pro-action in recognition of their potential to strengthen, influence, and people power. Of particular interest was the discussion on gender equality and women empowerment focusing on how to empower women in leadership and politics as a vital step towards a more equitable and thriving society. What stood out was the

need to harness the diverse perspectives, talents, and experiences that women bring to the table, ensuring their voices are heard and their needs represented. Co-Creation was propagated as a critical technique for generating solutions that are responsive to local circumstances and enhancing sustainability. Notwithstanding, the inaugural CSO Best Practice and Innovation event hosted under the Citizen Engagement for Accountability Activity (CEAA) in Zimbabwe was a significant milestone. The event provided an opportunity for local, national, and international organisations to showcase their innovations, collaborations, and learn from each other.

The third day of the conference focused on shaping the future through agenda and priority setting for the year 2024 and beyond. The speakers reiterated the importance of systems transformation, transitioning from time-tested methods to pioneering strategies that address the country's core challenges. Participants were implored to amplify collective action as they fostered collaborative networks and alliances that bring together diverse contributors to tackle community challenges head-on. NGO leaders recognised the need to cultivate a vibrant ecosystem with a focus on transparency, good corporate governance, transformative leadership, and stronger partnerships. Participants highlighted the importance of sharing best practices, creating an environment that encourages knowledge and information sharing, and collaborative efforts. Action-led innovations were emphasized by stakeholders, with a focus on solutions that bring about meaningful change while building CSOs' legitimacy and value addition considering the current mistrust and hostile behaviour by regulators and legislators. The conference highlighted inclusivity, outcome-driven approaches, active stakeholder engagement in comprehensive discussions, and the value of networking.

The conference concluded with the NANGO Annual Awards ceremony, a night dedicated to recognising outstanding achievements and celebrating institutions and individuals who worked outstandingly in the year 2023. At the heart of this concluding ceremony were the awards presentations, which unfolded with each category taking up the stage. A total of nine awards were presented. Anticipation crackled in the air as nominees were announced, and applause erupted as winners received their trophies and certificates. In summary, the 13<sup>th</sup> edition of the NANGO NGO Directors Summer Retreat was not merely an event; it was an eye-opening experience. With its core tenets of innovation, inclusivity, and actionable insights, fortified by a series of specialised events and its comprehensive recommendations, the conference crafted a vibrant blueprint for the future of CSOs in Zimbabwe. The torch now rests with NGO leaders, stakeholders, and partners, beckoning them to translate these insights into tangible actions, forging a transformative epoch in the NGO sector in Zimbabwe. The full program for the summer retreat can be accessed here:

<https://www.nangozim.org/publications/13th-ngo-directors-summer-retreat-program/>



## Top Headline Messages from the Retreat

### **Identifying and Addressing Drivers of Shrinking Civic Space:**

By understanding the root causes that constrict the fundamental freedoms of expression, association, and assembly, we can develop effective strategies to counter repression and nurture a vibrant and inclusive democracy. The essence of addressing shrinking civic space is not just about restoring the status quo, but about building a more just and inclusive society where everyone's voice can be heard.

### **The need for Anticipatory Action:**

CSOs need to improve their anticipatory capacity to engage with and influence key trends, thereby strengthening, expanding, and reimagining civic space. In an era of accelerating change and unforeseen challenges, adaptability is no longer enough. For CSOs to remain impactful and relevant, they must proactively prepare for future scenarios and proactively shape solutions.

### **Inculcate a Culture of Talking to Regulators:**

This is a powerful tool that can be used strategically to push back against undue restrictions, promote dialogue and understanding, and ultimately defend the space in a quest for an enabling environment. By providing data and evidence on the negative impacts of restrictive regulations on civic space, CSOs can encourage regulators to consider alternative approaches that achieve their objectives without impeding civil liberties.

### **Invest in Transformative Leadership Programs:**

The future of the NGO sector in Zimbabwe hinges on the engagement and participation of the young generation. By fostering interest in the sector among young people, local CSOs can secure a pipeline of talented and passionate individuals to carry forward their mission.

### **Succession Planning is a key component of Organisational Sustainability:**

Guaranteeing that probable successors are sufficiently equipped for their future roles is critical. This necessitates capitalizing on their growth through training, mentoring, and providing development prospects. The nurturing in this context includes 'equipping' the human resources with the necessary skills and capacities to take on these key responsibilities as and when the time comes up.

### **The FATF Rec. 8 has offered a Green Card to Governments to Close Civic Space:**

Their plausible agenda of countering terrorism is abused by some governments targeting the NPOs sector, often perceived as foreign interests' appendages. Therefore, the FATF standards are deniably making a significant contribution to a wider global trend toward the restriction and closure of the 'political space' in which NPOs operate.

## Introduction & Background

The Annual NGO Directors Summer Retreat is a signature event in Zimbabwe, led and driven by CSOs. Hosted by [NANGO](#) every year, the summer retreat's primary aim is to amplify the voice and impact of NGOs operating in Zimbabwe. Every year, the conference convenes over 120 participants from CSOs, development partners, state and non-state actors, and the private sector. It fosters a platform for sharing experiences, collective reflection, and developing innovative strategies to build a vibrant civil society for inclusive development in Zimbabwe.

The 13<sup>th</sup> edition of the Summer Retreat, held successfully from November 22-24, 2023, at the Elephant Hills Hotel in Victoria Falls, explored the theme "**Reimagining the Future of Civil Society in Zimbabwe: From Analysis to Action.**" Participants included NGO leaders from Zimbabwe and beyond, development partners, government representatives, private sector stakeholders, and other non-state actors.

Broadly, the sessions focused on strengthening the anticipatory capacities and future readiness of civil society considering emerging issues and the evolving operating environment. The action plan deduced from this Summer Retreat outcome report will serve as a roadmap for future activities, identifying areas requiring collective sector commitment. The conference has equipped CSOs with the agility to respond to sudden crises, shift focus and tactics, make short-term adjustments, and reset goals while promoting coordination and collaboration.

## Rationale

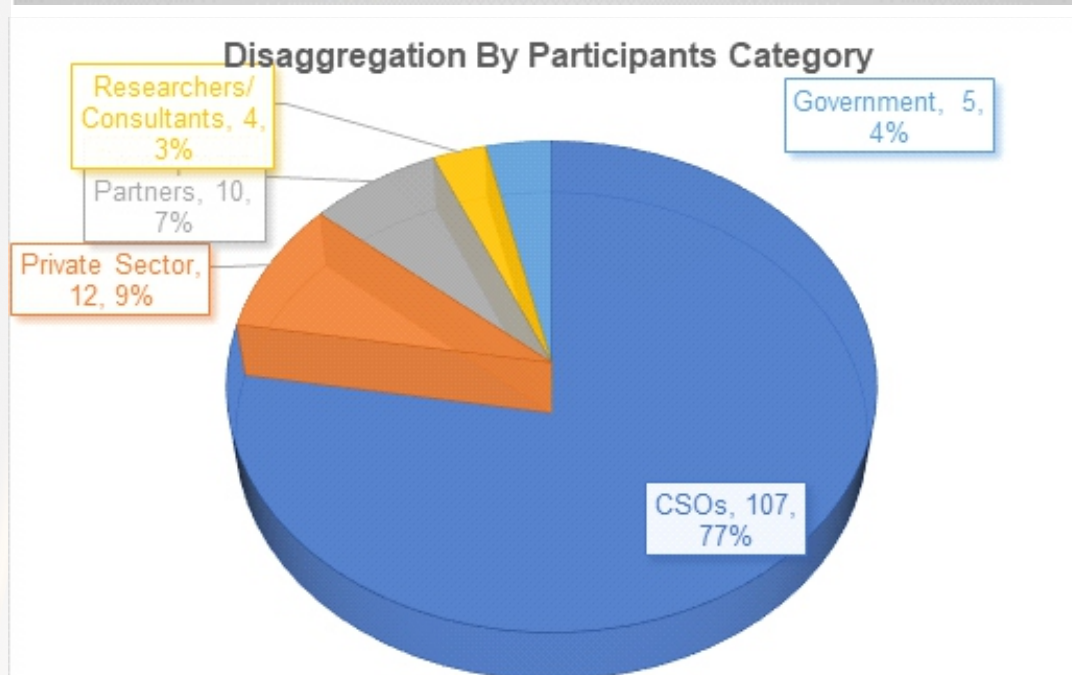
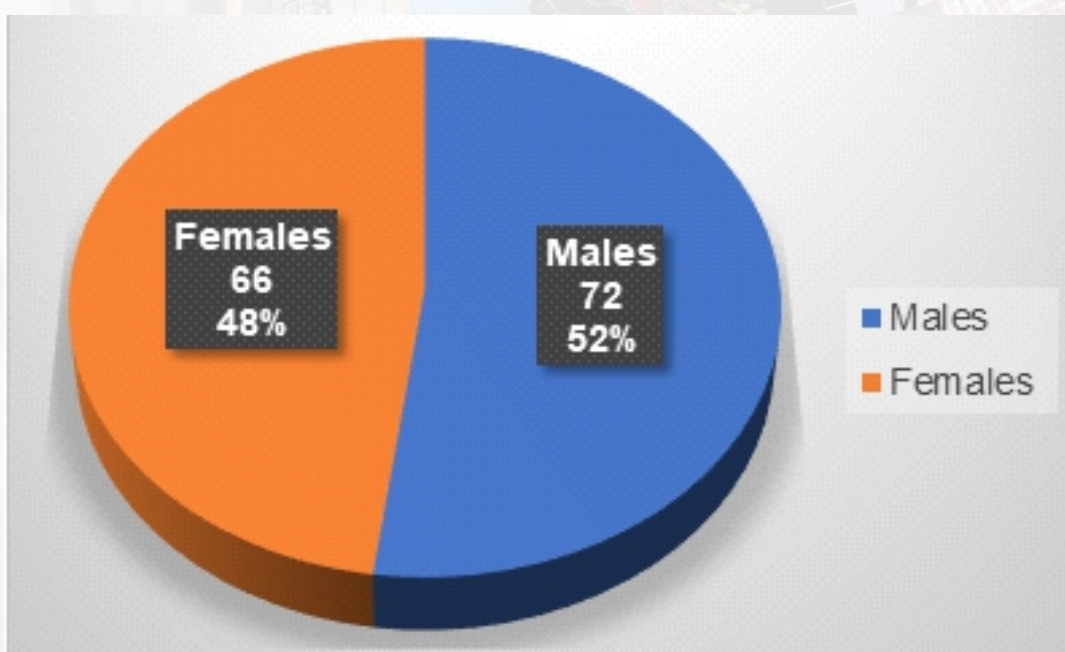
From the previous edition of the Summer Retreat held in 2022, NANGO's work has revolved around developing the skills and capacity of CSOs to articulate and advocate for alternative solutions through strategic narrative changes. This edition emphasized crafting and shaping new narratives that reaffirm the vital role of civil society in addressing people's needs and concerns. It also explored strategies for countering narratives that aim to discredit CSOs, demonise their communities, and restrict civic space.

The sessions covered various strategies for reimagining an ideal future, focusing on rebuilding systems that support collective foresight, collaborative scenario planning, and deliberative spaces for envisioning and working towards a stronger civic space. This included creating resource hubs to support CSOs in key competence areas and foster collaboration, along with investing in strengthening local civil society to enhance resilience and build solidarity.

In essence, the Summer Retreat focused on how CSOs can improve their anticipatory capacity to engage with and influence key trends, thereby strengthening, expanding, and reimagining civic space. A vibrant civil society geared towards shaping narratives for pro-people development is crucial amidst Zimbabwe's current economic downturn.

## Reach Analysis & Demographic Profiling of Participants

Description of Indicator	Males	Females	Total	% of Total Reach
Number of CSOs representatives	53	54	107	78%
Number of Private Sector Representatives	6	6	12	9%
Number of Development Partner Representatives	4	6	10	7%
Other Stakeholders (Researchers and Consultants)	4	0	4	3%
Number of Government Representatives	5	0	5	3%
Total Number of Participants	72 (52%)	66 (48%)	138	100%



## Conference Sessions Overview

### Session One: Opening Session & Conference Foresight



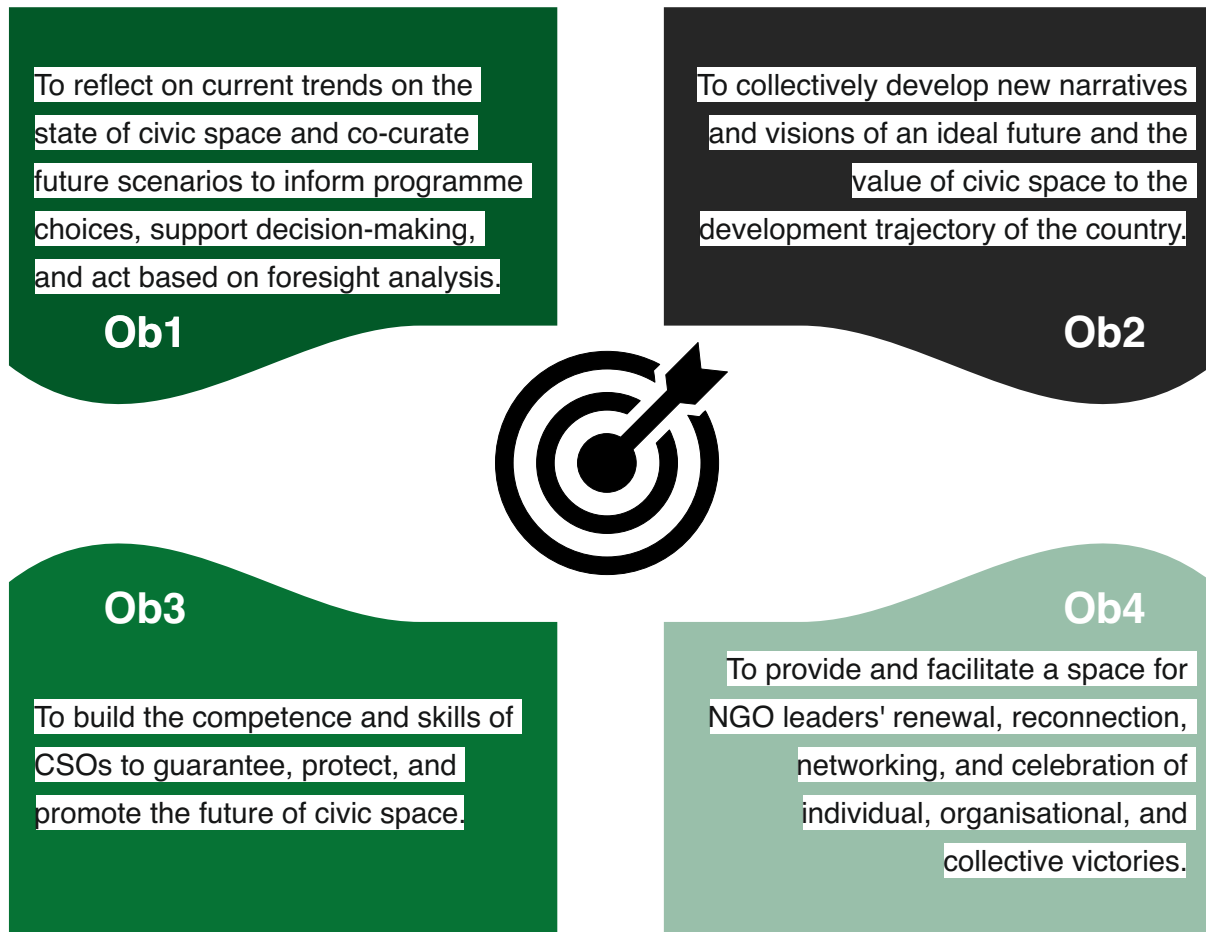
The session sought to welcome participants to the 13th NGO Directors Summer Retreat as well as sighting the programme objectives and expected outcomes. The 13th NGO Directors Summer Retreat commenced with a conference official opening that was led by the President of the Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC), Secretary General, Bishop Ignatius Makumbe; the NANGO National Board Chairperson, Dr. Lamiel Phiri, the NANGO Executive Director, Mr Ernest Nyimai, and His Worship Mr. Prince Thuso Moyo, Mayor, Victoria Falls Town Council who gave the official welcome address. The conference started with an energetic atmosphere filled with enthusiasm as CSOs leaders were in anticipation of the much-awaited 13th NGO Directors Summer Retreat.



Bishop Ignatius Makumbe, Secretary General of ZCC: His opening devotions, titled "**A Time of Deep Reflection and Contribution,**" emphasized the need for concrete solutions and teamwork among CSOs and stakeholders. He acknowledged threats but challenged participants to focus on finding solutions, describing fear as a barrier to progress and urging for a victor's mindset. He highlighted the struggling economy and the critical role of CSOs as the voice for human rights in Zimbabwe. He concluded by emphasizing the importance of truthfulness, transparency, accountability, and protecting the constitution, suggesting the Summer Retreat would contribute solutions to current challenges.

Dr. Lamiel Phiri, NANGO National Board Chairperson: His presentation, "**From Nyanga to Victoria Falls – 12th Edition in Retrospect,**" traced the origins of the 13th NGO Directors Summer Retreat and its theme, "**Reimagining the Future of Civil Society: From Analysis to Action.**" He highlighted key developments since the 12th edition, including the extended three-day format and accommodating venue. He proposed an "**Elephant Hills Action Agenda Document**" document with recommendations and a work plan for 2024 to guide CSOs' transition from analysis to action.

Setting the stage for the conference, NANGO Executive Director Mr. Ernest Nyimai presented the conference's foresight, objectives, and expected outcomes for the three days. This acted as an icebreaker and starting point for unpacking the entire programme. The outlined objectives were:



The foresight emphasized the need for true engagement to emerge fortified, fostering an environment of growth and solidarity. The director highlighted that NANGO is pivoting away from insular dialogues and gravitates towards a more holistic tripartite approach of integrating government, private sector, and civil society. He pointed out the unique composition of attendees at the conference as a testament to this inclusive perspective. Participants were challenged to depart Victoria Falls with renewed conviction to embrace risk-taking, support governance with a catalytic spirit, operate with enhanced collaboration, and champion a unified vision. Mr. Nyimai emphasized that NANGO would produce the "[Elephant Hills Action Agenda Document](#)" capturing the actions discussed during the summer retreat.

His Worship, Mr. Prince Thuso Moyo, Mayor of Victoria Falls Town Council, officially welcomed the conference participants. He expressed profound gratitude towards NANGO for hosting the summer retreat in Victoria Falls and to the participants for their attendance. He emphasized the

importance of collaboration between CSOs and the government to complement government efforts in advancing community development. The Mayor recognised the invaluable contributions of CSOs in transforming lives and communities across Zimbabwe.

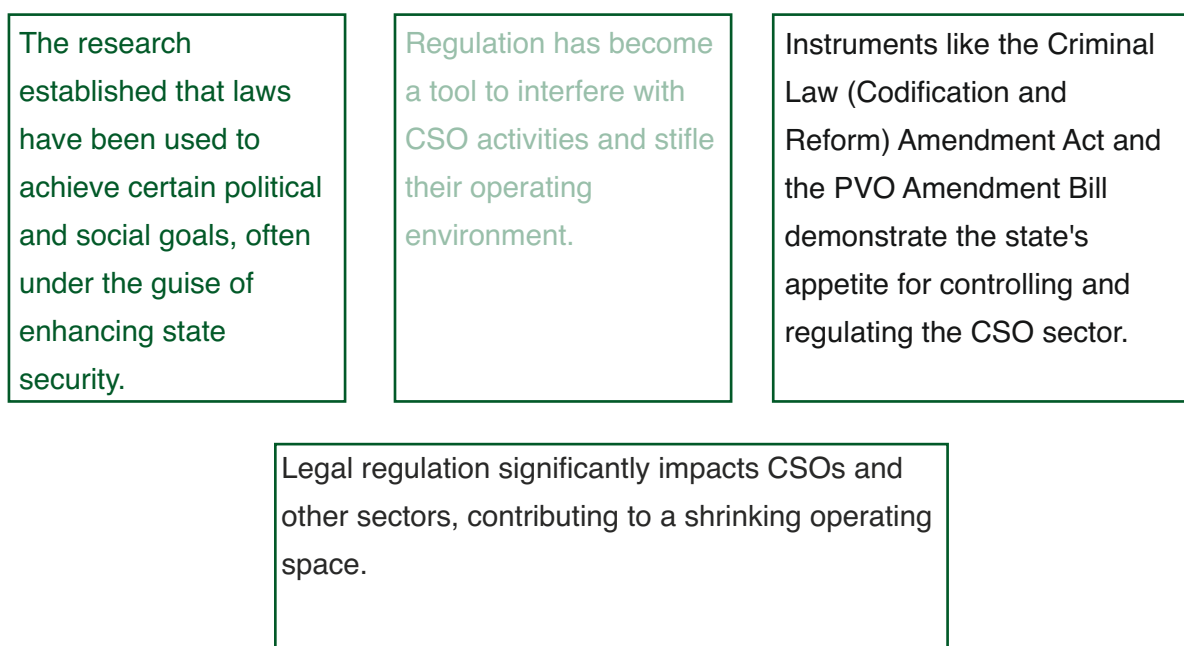
## Session Two: Understanding the Drivers of the Shrinking Civic Space & Future Scenario Mapping

The shrinking civic space manifests in diverse ways, sparking heated debates. In Zimbabwe, it translates to severe threats against civil liberties and political rights through restrictions on foreign funding, registration barriers, arbitrary detentions, and smear campaigns against CSOs. Understanding this phenomenon and the current context is crucial, especially when envisioning future scenarios.

With this in mind, the session aimed to reflect on the current CSO operating environment and its implications for Zimbabwe's civil society future reimagination. The first segment, led by Dr. James Tsabora, a Legal Consultant, focused on **"CSO Regulation and State of CSOs Operating in Zimbabwe – Summary of the State of CSOs Operating Environment Watch Report."** This presentation unveiled research findings from a study examining the state of CSOs Operating Environment in Zimbabwe.

Dr. Tsabora highlighted several regulatory approaches that impact CSO operations and activities, effectively shrinking their space. The research focused on four key dimensions: legal regulation, social norms, natural architecture, and the economic context.

Legal Regulation:



## Social Norms:

The discussion explored the existence of international and regional norms impacting CSOs and any potential for improvement in democratic governance within the sector.

“Geo-political Environment (Natural Architecture): The recent 2023 General Elections were seen to have closed civic spaces, with minimal involvement from the civil society sector and minimal government effort to partner with them. This attitude remains unchanged.”

The second presentation titled, “**Reflection on the Zimbabwe Context for the Country's Future Reimagination: Findings from Scenario Mapping by the Church**”, led by Admire Mutizwa, Director of the Zimbabwe Council of Churches, highlighted the following key findings:

- Massive contraction of democratic space: This includes limitations on free speech, assembly, and association.
- Lawfare: The strategic use of legal processes to harass, intimidate, and silence opposition.
- Declining donor resources: This puts a strain on CSOs' ability to operate effectively.
- Massive wealth accumulation by the elite: This fuels social injustice and widens income inequalities.
- Rising authoritarianism: Motivated by a desire to retain political power and accumulate wealth.
- Disconnect between CSO agendas and beneficiary needs: This leads to mistrust and a lack of critical awareness in communities.

The third segment, led by Yona Wanjala, Team Leader of the Defenders Protection Initiative – DPI (Uganda), focused on practical ways to push back against shrinking civic space:

### Collaboration

Avoiding unhealthy competition and working as a team is crucial for effective push-back.

### Collective Power

CSOs should build alliances and work together to push back against repressive laws.

### Accountability

CSOs need to be accountable not just to donors, but also to the people they serve.

### Internal Review of the Sector

This includes ensuring compliance with regulations and practicing good governance.

### Bridging the Knowledge Gap

Research and publications should be accessible and understandable to all key stakeholders.

The session concluded by encouraging CSOs to learn from other countries like Tunisia, Mauritius, Botswana, South Africa, Kenya, and Ghana in their efforts to counter shrinking civic space.

### **Key Messages From the Session**

- CSOs should develop a robust constitutional and legislative agenda for the 10th parliament. This agenda should be informed by the needs and aspirations of organised society and non-state actors and aim to contribute to an ideal future.
- CSOs need to organise and push back against restrictive legislation that limits their operations. They should do this from a position of strength, leveraging the power of collective action and social movements.
- CSOs should establish and maintain independent dialogue spaces with regulators. These spaces should be strategically and tactically deployed, engaging regulators regularly and providing feedback. Some technical personnel within regulatory bodies are open to engagement and feedback, and fostering such collaborations can be beneficial.
- CSOs need to invest in reshaping the narrative that portrays them as friends of the government's enemies or as having no impact. They should conduct an impact audit, highlighting their contributions to employment, development, and their role in complementing government efforts. This will provide evidence-based counter-narratives and demonstrate their value to society.
- CSOs should actively participate in policy discussions and mark areas of potential conflict with the government's agenda. They should also effectively engage in the FATF processes, including conducting risk assessments and shaping legislation in parliament.
- To influence the mainstream and legislative agenda, CSOs need to identify key priorities within national policy documents, such as the NDS1 agenda, and work collaboratively with other key stakeholders to achieve shared goals.

*Combine wisdom with caution. Integrate security, safety, and protection into your plans. Stay vigilant, read the environment, and strike decisively when the opportunity arises.*



### Session Three: Strategic Options for Creating an Enabling Environment

Developing strategic networks from a regional perspective was the focus of this session, aiming to build movements and foster cross-network collaboration for a conducive operating environment for CSOs. It also delved into challenges faced by Human Rights Defenders (HRDs) and potential solutions.



Momametsi Sokwe, Executive Director of the Southern Africa Council of NGOs (SAf-CNGO), opened the session with a presentation titled "**Building Strategic Non-State Actors Alliances and Networks for Movement Building - A Regional Perspective.**" He emphasized the importance of acknowledging differences in strengths and connections among CSOs, highlighting how collaboration can build upon each other's achievements.

The presenter stressed the need for movements that examine policy alongside NGOs that empower communities. He further cautioned against losing sight of being people and community-centred in all CSO efforts. Remaining present in movement building is crucial while acknowledging that politicians might avoid us due to the perception of lacking a strong constituency. The focus, instead, should be on fighting for the people, the primary target of many interventions.

Sokwe encouraged NANGO to champion the retreat conference as a regional effort, bringing together regional CSOs for stronger advocacy and solidarity in movement building. Leveraging existing successes was also highlighted, citing ActionAid's facilitation of an action to be discussed at the SADC Summit. Movement building, he emphasized, allows us to define our agenda and foster solidarity. The SAf-CNGO itself serves as an example, where an apex alliance leverages collective strengths for advocacy and engagement, for instance, on the African Continental Free Trade Area (ACFTA).

Decrying the internal conflicts that sometimes plague the NGO sector, Sokwe urged CSOs to build movements focused on policy issues and working directly with communities instead of solely relying on politicians who might dismiss them due to the perceived lack of a constituency.

The second presentation, titled "**Supporting and Protecting Human Rights Defenders in Challenging Contexts,**" by Fortune Kuhudzehwe from the Zimbabwe Human Rights Association, focused on strategies for protecting and assisting human rights defenders in difficult situations.

Fortune Kuhudzehwe in his presentation titled, “**Supporting and Protecting Human Rights Defenders In Challenging Contexts**” highlighted the often-ignored issues related to the well-being of HRDs, who typically prioritise advocacy and institutional matters over self-care. One major challenge identified is the persistent, pre-independence perception of CSOs as agents of regime change, fuelled by misunderstandings from both communities and the government. To counter this, influencing and rallying those we claim to serve becomes crucial, as it shapes how both the government and the community view our work.



Changing funding patterns leading to resource scarcity emerged as another major challenge. Prioritisation of donor-driven programming over program-based or institutional support makes it difficult for CSOs to negotiate for employee welfare. This scarcity of resources, often directed towards specific initiatives, impacts CSOs' ability to achieve meaningful ground-level impact.

Kuhudzehwe concluded by outlining some of the specific challenges faced by HRDs in Zimbabwe, including post-election abductions and violence (24 recorded cases so far), hate speech from fellow citizens, police torture and intimidation, the politicisation of NGO work, lawfare, premature implementation of sections of the PVO Amendment Bill, and the lack of a moral framework for protection.

**Key Messages from the Session:**

- Local CSOs should build diverse funding sources, including member contributions and social enterprises, to mitigate vulnerability and maintain independence.
- Ensure quick support for human rights defenders through dedicated funds and emergency protocols.
- Advocate for strong institutions and the rule of law, making it increasingly difficult and costly for governments to violate human rights and democratic principles.
- Collaborate with other stakeholders to advocate for open democratic spaces, freedom of expression, and assembly.

## Session Four: Examining the Current Efforts and Exploring Future Efforts to Protect and Expand Civic Space in Zimbabwe.

Breakaway Session A: Reflection on Civic Engagement and Participation in the Legislative Agenda of the 10<sup>th</sup> Parliament.



The session focused on the critical issue of safeguarding and expanding civic space in Zimbabwe. Specifically, the discussions centred on assessing current initiatives and considering future actions. Emphasis was placed on reflecting on civic engagement and participation in the legislative agenda of the 10th Parliament of Zimbabwe as essential elements in protecting civic space and encouraging citizen involvement.

The President of Zimbabwe officially opened the 10th Parliament in accordance with section 145 (1) of the Constitution of Zimbabwe after the August 2023 Harmonised general elections. The Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC) moderated a breakaway discussion, with Tafadzwa Chikumbu, Executive Director of Transparency International Zimbabwe (TIZ) and Onias Munamati from ZCC providing insights on Bills and frameworks that CSOs aimed to push for review in the 10th parliament.

The side event drew 46 participants from various sectors, examining outstanding Bills, opportunities for engagement, and effective citizen participation. Factors hindering effective CSO and citizen engagement in the legislative agenda were identified, including the need for an enabling operating environment and financial resources to support engagement processes. Additionally, media and digital rights, civic freedoms, and whistle-blower protection were highlighted as essential for citizens to freely express their views.

The misconception that CSOs only represent organized groups was addressed, emphasizing that citizens, too, can organize and effectively engage in questioning government activities. The text stressed the importance of citizen engagement in shaping Zimbabwe's legislative agenda, particularly through public consultations during the development of national budgets and Bills.

Several challenges were acknowledged, such as the misconception of CSOs roles and impact, the importance of media and digital rights, and the need for an enabling operating environment. The role of citizens in law and policy formulation processes was highlighted, promoting transparency, accountability, and the consolidation of diverse perspectives. Outstanding Bills, including the PVO Amendment Bill, Mines and Minerals Bill, National Budget, Medical Service Bill, and Ensure Bill, were noted for future parliamentary debate.

After presentations, participants identified opportunities for CSOs to engage with the 10th Parliament. Despite challenges, it was emphasized that citizens hold power in influencing legislative processes. The busy agenda of the 10th Parliament was acknowledged, and there was a consensus that citizens and CSOs should utilise available spaces for engagement, such as interacting with parliamentarians at the constituency level. Participants stressed the need to educate parliamentarians on effective representation and deliberation on issues. The constitution was highlighted as a key tool for citizens to defend their rights, while CSOs were encouraged to play a watchdog role in identifying sections of the constitution that do not serve citizens' interests and advocating for alignment.

### **Key Messages from the Session**

- Regardless of the current process's effectiveness, CSOs and citizens should proactively seek and utilise all engagement opportunities offered by the government regarding legislative and policy matters.
- All sector-leading organisations should conduct SWOT analyses to identify legislative and policy hurdles hindering their operations and develop targeted strategies to overcome them.
- CSOs should actively engage with parliamentarians at the constituency level, building relationships and fostering their understanding of local concerns.
- There is a need for capacity-building initiatives for parliamentarians, empowering them to effectively represent their constituencies and advocate for their needs.
- Push for a comprehensive review of the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission's (NPRC) mandate and its expiry term. Consider its continued relevance and effectiveness and explore potential reform or restructuring options.
- Prioritise constitutional realignment to address inconsistencies and ambiguities, rather than resorting to frequent amendments. Emphasize the importance of upholding the Constitution's sanctity, and only consider amendments as a last resort after exhausting all other options.
- CSOs should equip communities with knowledge and skills to effectively participate in and contribute to government policy consultations, ensuring their voices are heard and concerns addressed.

## Breakaway Session B: Developing New Narratives: Projecting Visions of Ideal Futures and the Value of Civic Space.

The session aimed to ignite a powerful exploration of possibility and purpose. It sought to challenge participants to move beyond the constraints of current realities and imagine brighter, more ideal futures. Through this act of collective visioning, the session hoped to unlock the transformative potential of storytelling and its ability to shape the path towards a more desirable tomorrow.



By weaving narratives of ideal futures, participants could identify the values and principles that should guide CSOs' journey towards those dreams. This exploration of civic space within these narratives would be key, as it would examine the crucial role of open and vibrant communities in realising those visions. The session aimed to provide tools and inspiration for participants to craft compelling narratives that not only inspire individual action but also empower collective movements for sustainable change. Ultimately, the session sought to equip participants with the power of stories to advocate for a future where civic space flourishes and acts as the fertile ground for building a more conducive operating environment for CSOs.

The session was chaired by Wonder Mufunda, CEO of CHA, with Mcdonald Munyoro, Thubelihle Ncube, and Dzikamai Bere as the discussants. Thubelihle highlighted the need for developing Interest in the Young Generation through Mentorship. She noted that the future of the NGO sector in Zimbabwe hinges on the engagement and participation of the young generation. By fostering interest in the sector among young people, local CSOs can secure a pipeline of talented and passionate individuals to carry forward their mission.

Mentorship programmes offer a valuable tool for attracting and developing young talent. These programmes provide opportunities for young people to learn from experienced NGO professionals, gain practical experience, and develop their skills in various aspects of NGO work.

The discussants also highlighted the need for CSOs to be accountable to beneficiaries as a cornerstone of NGO legitimacy and effectiveness ultimately enhancing the narrative around their work and impact in communities. By CSOs holding themselves accountable to the communities they serve, NGOs can foster trust, strengthen their impact, and ensure that their

work aligns with the needs and priorities of beneficiaries.

Some of the mechanisms for beneficiary accountability can include participatory approaches to programme design and implementation, regular feedback loops, and transparent communication channels. NGOs should also empower beneficiaries to participate in decision-making processes and provide mechanisms for redress when grievances arise.

### **Key Messages from the Session**

- CSOs should conduct a comprehensive sector assessment, and then establish the sector as a hub for innovation, knowledge generation, and sustainable practices.
- CSOs should forge stronger relationships with stakeholders, and within NANGO, develop innovative coordination mechanisms for resource mobilisation and knowledge sharing among CSOs.
- CSOs to invest in robust Monitoring & Evaluation frameworks to assess programme effectiveness and inform success/impact storytelling.
- CSOs need to improve prioritising people-centric initiatives that empower communities to take ownership of their development.
- CSOs to foster a narrative that emphasizes the sector's impact and contributions to sustainable development.
- CSOs must invest in human resources through capacity building and training of CSO staff to attract more resources and improve documentation.



## Breakaway Session C: The Localisation and Shifting Power Debate – How to Move from Discourse to Tangible Results?



Building on the momentum generated by the 12<sup>th</sup> edition of the Summer Retreat, this session focused on translating the discourse on localisation into tangible results for local CSOs operating in Zimbabwe. The discussion revolved around actionable strategies, perspectives, and recommendations for moving beyond talk and achieving concrete progress.

Moderated by Mr. Micheal Ndiweni, Executive Director of the Bulawayo Vendors and Traders Association (BVTA), the session provided a platform for participants to share their understanding of localisation, identify hindering factors, and propose recommendations for tangible outcomes.

Broadly defined, localisation empowers local actors by strengthening their capacity and leveraging resources to address challenges, seize opportunities, and promote long-term sustainability. Participants explored the nexus between localisation and the Grand Bargain framework and commitments, using the Charter4Change declarations as a springboard for driving the discourse in-country. The importance of meaningful engagement with International NGOs was highlighted as a key solution for bridging the gap. Funding models emerged as a central concern, with participants emphasizing the need for models that empower local actors and implementing entities for greater ownership and sustainability.

Several factors were identified as hindering localisation efforts, including:

- Limited capacity of some local organisations to engage in community philanthropy and build people's power.
- High administrative and operational costs imposed by regulators.
- Lack of regular systemic platforms for engagement with International NGOs.
- Absence of clear accountability mechanisms for Grant Bargain and Charter4Change commitments.
- Institutional capacity gaps within local CSOs, particularly in financial management and grant compliance.

A common consensus emerged: **partners and donors should increase investments in capacity**

building for local CSOs to advance the localisation agenda.

The session explored strategies for turning the tide from discourse to tangible results. Self-regulation of the NGO sector was identified as a crucial building block for greater independence and autonomy, essential for achieving localisation aspirations. Local CSOs were urged to collectively build on their strengths, maximize opportunities, share aspirations, and demonstrate results to remain relevant, especially in challenging environments with shrinking civic space.

The discussions also prompted NANGO and like-minded institutions to systematically facilitate regular conversations focused on:

- Building muscle and fostering collaboration in development work.
- Emphasizing the emerging role of associations in shaping standards and frameworks for a conducive environment for localisation.

### **Key Messages from the Session**

- Local CSOs to develop a clear and compelling narrative on localisation that emphasizes sustainability, responsiveness, and local ownership. This narrative should resonate with diverse stakeholders and guide action.
- Partners and INGOs must prioritise understanding local communities and CSOs. Earning trust and fostering genuine collaboration is essential, shifting away from controlling approaches that perpetuate power imbalances. Local actors deserve recognition, their voices need to be heard, and they must have a seat at the decision-making table.
- Local NGOs to effectively communicate the benefits and importance of localisation through targeted messaging tailored to different audiences. This will help transform mindsets, shift focus, and accelerate progress.
- NANGO should continue to build strong partnerships and collaborative agendas between CSOs and other key stakeholders, leveraging collective strengths to advance the localisation agenda.
- Recognise and actively engage existing local structures when implementing localisation initiatives. This ensures initiatives are context-specific and address the needs and priorities of the communities they serve.
- Provide targeted capacity-building programmes for local CSOs to enhance their financial management skills, grant compliance, and organisational effectiveness. This empowers them to handle larger funding and manage resources efficiently.
- Local NGOs should commit to a culture of continuous learning and adaptation. Being open to change and adjusting strategies based on evidence and feedback is crucial for long-term success and sustainability.



## Session Five: Strengthening Sector-Wide Systems and Infrastructure for Anticipatory Action.

This session focused on strategies to strengthen governance systems within the NGO sector, guided by international standards and best practices. It explored the relationship between good corporate governance and the development of effective self-regulation mechanisms.

### Good Corporate Governance and Self-Regulation:

William Mandisodza, CEO of the Institute of Chartered Accountants (ICAZ), led the discussion by defining good corporate governance as "a set of principles, practices, and processes employed by an organisation to direct and control its operations to achieve its objectives." He emphasized the importance of good reporting standards, staff retention, and compliance with legal frameworks when developing a self-regulation framework.



Mandisodza highlighted the benefits of effective corporate governance, which include maintaining stakeholder trust, ensuring accountability, promoting sustainable practices, mitigating risk, boosting reputation, improving decision-making, enhancing reporting, increasing staff retention, improving capital flow, limiting disruptive behaviour, and aligning interests.

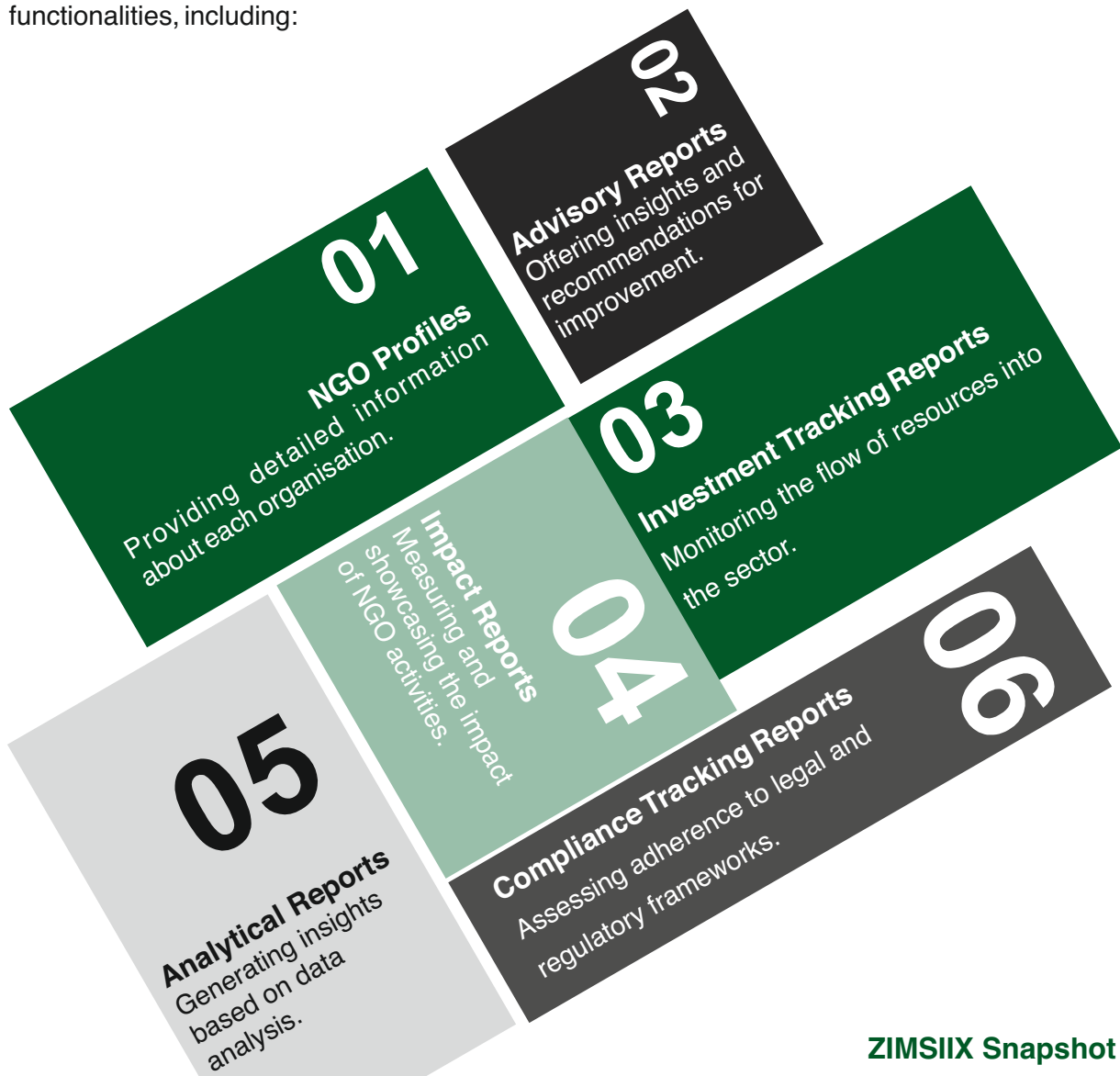
### Unveiling the Zimbabwe Social Investment Exchange Platform (ZIMSII):



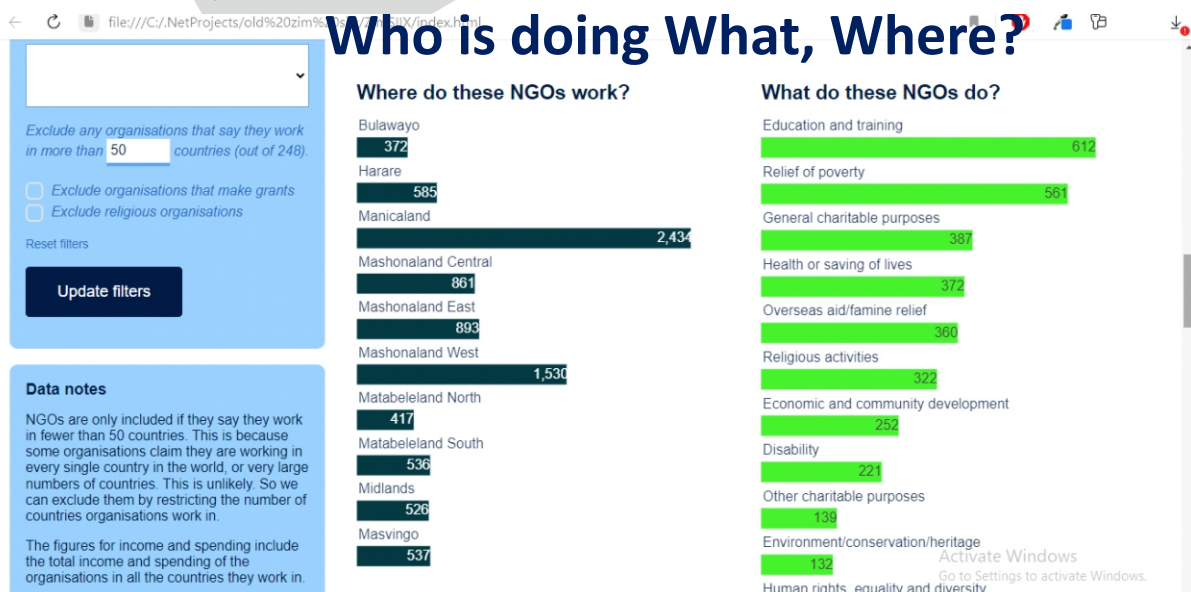
Wonder Mufunda, CEO of the Centre for Humanitarian Analytics (CHA), presented the ZimSIIX platform, an initiative supported by the Action to Enhance and Protect Civic Space in Zimbabwe (APECS) initiative. This platform aims to leverage data and technology to improve decision-making for various stakeholders.

Currently under development, ZimSIIX will be a web-based portal profiling CSOs, performing analytics, and generating reports. Participants were invited to interact with the prototype and provide feedback on its interface, information collection, privacy, purpose, and reporting functionalities.

The platform will serve as a valuable tool for social investment management, coordination, and decision-making by private, non-private, and academic stakeholders. It will offer a range of functionalities, including:



### ZIMSIIX Snapshot



The features of ZimSIIX go beyond a simple database, making it a unique and advanced tool that will assist NANGO in fulfilling its coordination mandate. The platform will also serve as an information hub for NGOs, facilitating communication and collaboration.

**Data Protection and Platform Security:** Data protection mechanisms were a key concern regarding platform safety and security. The presenter addressed these concerns by confirming the procurement and configuration of three dedicated servers. This will include a mix of on-site hardware, cloud, and terrestrial servers for backup purposes. To ensure privacy, the platform will have access control functions. While some general, less sensitive information will be publicly accessible, more sensitive information will be restricted to authorized user groups approved by NANGO.

**Roadmap for Platform Population:** The presenter also provided an indicative roadmap for populating the platform. The prototype construction is expected to be completed by the first quarter of 2024, allowing for the commencement of data collection and population. Following the official launch, a dedicated website will provide access to the platform and its collected and analysed data for all registered CSOs.

### **Session Six: Fostering Strategic Partnerships for Inclusive Development in Zimbabwe.**

**Keynote Address by Guest of Honour: Mr. Totamirepi Tirivavi, MoPSLSW**



Mr. Tirivavi acknowledged the shrinking civic space in Zimbabwe, with the government's crackdown on CSOs under the guise of national security and anti-money laundering/terrorism financing efforts. He specifically mentioned the PVO Amendment Bill and its impact on NPOs. However, he urged NPOs to view the law not as a threat, but as a means of regularisation and legal protection within the country..

He commended NANGO for facilitating regular dialogue between NGOs and the government, emphasizing the importance of working together to improve Zimbabwe. He proposed quarterly meetings to discuss emerging issues, and the operating environment, and improve the existing relationship. He also highlighted the need for NGOs to be receptive to constructive criticism, just as they are when criticising the government, to achieve effective solutions. He further stressed the importance of evidence-based information in all interactions with the government.

Mr. Tirivavi addressed the issue of non-compliance, noting that only 200 of the 1300 registered PVOs comply with the reporting requirements outlined in Section 15 of the PVO Act. He urged CSOs registered as PVOs to fully understand the provisions of the Act for compliance purposes.

He explained the FATF Recommendation 8 and its application to the NPO sector. He acknowledged the unintended consequences of misapplying the standards, which triggered the review of the best practice paper and its interpretive notes. He clarified that MOUs are mandatory only for INGOs, not local NGOs and that fees charged for MOU processing are not a government policy. He assured the audience that his Ministry is working with the Ministry of Local Government and Public Works to resolve this issue.

Mr. Tirivavi expressed concern about CSOs operating outside their mandates and constitutions. He concluded by providing an update on the PVO Amendment Bill, stating that it has been referred back to Parliament with reservations. He encouraged CSOs to participate in the consultation process and contribute their aspirations. He emphasized the ministry's openness to engagement and dialogue for mutually beneficial outcomes.

### **Creating Fiscal Space to Support Local Development and Advance Domestic Financing for SDGs - Framing Advocacy Issues.**

This segment, led by Tafadzwa Chikumbu, focused on "Creating Fiscal Space to Support Local Development and Advance DRM for SDGs."



**"The mobilisation and effective use of domestic resources, underscored by the principle of national ownership, are central to our common pursuit of sustainable development, including achieving the sustainable development goals."**

Mr. Chikumbu defined Domestic Resource Mobilization (DRM) as "the process through which countries raise and spend their funds to provide for their people." He emphasized that DRM is the long-term path to sustainable development, enabling governments to alleviate poverty, deliver public services, and reduce dependence on aid.

He highlighted the **Addis Ababa Action Agenda**, adopted in 2015, as a key reference for framing advocacy initiatives on SDG financing. This document emphasizes that it is the primary responsibility of each country to mobilise resources to finance its development while recognising the importance of partnerships under SDG 17.

Mr. Chikumbu stressed that DRM is the most predictable source of government revenue, primarily generated by economic growth and an enabling environment. He urged CSOs to advocate for sound social, environmental, and economic policies, including counter-cyclical fiscal policies, to enhance DRM efforts. He also emphasized the importance of transparent institutions, the rule of law, and combating corruption at all levels.

Improved tax administration policies were highlighted as crucial for effective DRM. Mr. Chikumbu spoke about the need for improved tax policy, more efficient collections, reducing tax avoidance, and incorporating anti-abuse clauses into tax treaties. He also urged the government to address excessive tax incentives and recognise the vital role civil society plays in achieving SDGs, including mobilising citizens.

The need to integrate the informal sector into the formal economy was also emphasized, along with fostering strategic partnerships for inclusive development in Zimbabwe.

### **Key Messages from the Session**

- NANGO should consider facilitating regular and systematic engagements with state actors, for instance at quarterly meetings between NGOs and the government. This will foster engagement, enhance collaboration, and contribute to the development of Zimbabwe.
- NANGO should follow up with the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare on the issue of MOUs and other operational modalities expected of CSOs. This will ensure clarity and smooth operations for all parties involved.
- PVOs are encouraged to comply with the statutory requirements of the PVO Act, as outlined in Section 15. This includes submitting activity reports, notifications of address changes, and audited financial statements.
- CSOs should develop strong advocacy strategies to push back against the PVO Amendment Bill. The focus should be on Pushing for NPO Risk Assessment on Terrorism Financing to be conducted first, in line with the Risk Based Approach; Launching the ZIMSIIIX Platform for due diligence processes; and lastly, accelerating the Self-Regulation mechanism as a defence.
- CSOs should advocate for the devolution of power and resources; improved asset recovery mechanisms; strengthening of supreme audit institutions to promote transparency and accountability of public funds; and gender-based and child-friendly public financing.
- CSOs should engage in collaborative monitoring of government budgets and expenditures. This should be benchmarked against agreed targets, such as Agriculture - Maputo Declaration (10%); Health - Abuja Declaration (15%); and Education - Dakar Declaration (20%).

## Session Seven: Building a Strong Civil Society Movement in the Quest for Enabling Environment.

Creating a supportive environment is crucial for CSOs to operate freely and contribute positively to society. The legal and policy framework significantly influences CSOs' potential impact, and fostering collaboration with them ensures sustainable development. Protecting civic space requires ongoing efforts to strengthen CSOs' role in building societal trust, especially during crises. The session aimed to explore strategies for building strong movements, considering legal reforms and legislative agendas.



Valerie Zviuya, Executive Director of the Legal Resource Foundation (LRF), led the first part of the session, focusing on reshaping the CSO operating environment through scenario mapping of legal reforms. The presentation highlighted three key legal instruments affecting NGOs in Zimbabwe: The Criminal Law and Codification Reform Amendment Act, the Maintenance of Peace and Order (MOPA), and the Private Voluntary Organisation (PVO) Amendment Bill.

The Criminal Law and Codification Reform Amendment Act, enacted in June 2023, introduces a new crime related to undermining Zimbabwe's sovereignty. This amendment restricts citizens from seeking redress in foreign countries, violating several constitutional rights, including freedom of expression and association.

The PVO Amendment Bill, reintroduced in October 2023, faced constitutional reservations, and seeks to regulate CSO operations. The MOPA requires police notification for events, impacting CSO gatherings. Parliamentary recalls also pose challenges for CSO engagement.

Dzikamai Bere, National Director of Zimbabwe Human Rights Association (ZimRights), led the second segment, emphasizing the threats to civil society due to operational barriers. The presentation urged CSOs to contribute to an enabling environment and emphasized that a strong civil society results not only from the operating environment but also from the actions within the civic space.



To conclude, the session highlighted four fears hindering innovation and impact: the fear of rejecting partnerships misaligned with missions and values, the fear of confronting integrity deficits, the fear of team disagreement, and the fear of succession planning.

### **Key Messages from the Session:**

- NGOs must elevate innovation, and accountability, and foster effective partnerships to address historical systems of oppression. Confronting the fears hindering innovation within the sector is essential.
- NGOs should develop strategies to avoid potential criminalization during their operations. This includes refraining from attending unclear agency meetings, preparing written presentations for evidential purposes, and aligning meeting agendas with organizational objectives.
- NGOs need to address succession planning, allowing staff to comfortably exit without concerns about post-retirement survival. Establishing systems and processes to address economic challenges for NGO staff is crucial.
- CSOs should seek clarification on the arbitrary application of Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) in certain local authorities, considering there is no legal mandate for their requirement.
- NGOs should actively shift their approach, addressing the identified fears to enhance innovation and effectiveness.
- NGO staff should exercise caution, ensuring clarity in meeting objectives, maintaining written records for evidence, and aligning meeting agendas with organizational goals.

### **Session Eight: Solution-Focused High-Level Dialogue on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment**

The drive for women's participation in Zimbabwe's political and leadership landscape stems from a multitude of factors, deeply woven into the country's history, aspirations, and evolving social fabric. Women in Zimbabwe, like many across the world, have historically faced systemic and cultural barriers to equal opportunities in leadership positions. Their increased participation is seen as a crucial step towards achieving gender equality and dismantling these barriers, fostering a more just and equitable society for all. The global movement for women's empowerment and gender equality resonates with Zimbabwe. Women in the country are drawing inspiration and support from regional and international efforts, further fuelling their motivation to claim their rightful place in political and leadership spheres. This session sought to identify gaps and collectively map the way forward focussing on women's participation in politics and leadership as well as sharing experiences on feminist movement building.

The first presentation, titled "**Promoting Women's Participation in Politics and Leadership: Gap Analysis and Way Forward,**"

was delivered by Charity Jaravani from ZCC. The presenter bemoaned that only one among the 11 presidential candidates was a woman, and her candidacy was marred by bureaucratic delays, which significantly hindered her campaign and, consequently, her appeal to voters. Unfortunately, the media's coverage of this issue was lackluster, often failing to adequately highlight the challenges faced by women candidates and strategies to



overcome these hurdles, despite occasional mentions. The underrepresentation of women in the political landscape was identified as a barrier that is curtailing current efforts to achieve gender equality and women empowerment. Analysis by women's rights organisations for the 2023 general elections has shown that the media predominantly fixated on male political leaders, inadvertently reinforcing traditional gender norms and stereotypes. This was raised as a concern based on the realisation that, in any electoral process, the media wields significant influence in shaping public opinion and fostering political discourse. The presentation also highlighted that women are often relegated to unpaid care work while men continue to dominate leadership positions. Furthermore, the political arena itself presents significant challenges for women, with increased violence, exorbitant nomination fees during elections, and a deeply entrenched patriarchal culture acting as barriers to their participation.

The second presentation, titled "**Feminist Movement Building – Experiences from the Region,**"

was delivered by Wadzanai Vere, of Just Associates (JASS). JASS is an organisation dedicated to building collective power for justice, with a focus on amplifying the voices, visibility, and collective strength of women to work towards a just and sustainable future for all. The presentation emphasized the crucial connection between justice and power, stating that "whatever is just may be powerful, and whatever is powerful may be just." The presentation further emphasized that feminist movement building is about integrating gender equality goals and feminist perspectives into collaborations with diverse partners and organising women across various spaces.



Notably, she stressed the importance of confronting, undermining, and dismantling patriarchal and sexist power structures, and simultaneously nurturing and building liberatory power within feminist movements.

The presentation also delved into different types of power, differentiating between oppressive and transformative forms. Oppressive forms, such as "power over" exercised over others, were



contrasted with positive forms like "transformational power," "power within," "power with," "power to," and "power for." Development practitioners were challenged to be mindful of not introducing oppressive forms of power within their programmes. Additionally, she highlighted the importance of understanding the various levels of power at play when organisations engage in advocacy and lobbying, emphasizing the need to assess the capacities required for each level. JASS, through its "feminist movement building schools," extends an open invitation to collaborate and build stronger alliances within the movement.

### Key Messages from the Session

- CSOs to convene "feminist movement building schools" and develop training tools and toolkits to strengthen cross-movement, cross-issue, and cross-border collaborations among women's rights advocates.
- CSOs to revisit and adapt the "**Leave No One Behind**" framework to explicitly address the continued marginalisation of women. Prioritise women's empowerment, particularly in areas like constitutional literacy and political participation.
- CSOs to advocate for reforms to address the toxic political environment that perpetuates women's abuse and undermines their rights.
- CSOs to actively counter the decline in women's political representation observed from 2018 to 2023 through implementing strategies to ensure continued progress towards gender parity in positions of power.
- All CSOs should consider increasing the level of involvement and effective participation of women and girls at the grassroots level in development initiatives. This can be achieved by supporting community-led development efforts that prioritise women's voices and needs.
- Organisations working with women were challenged to improve on documentation of the views, aspirations, and experiences of women's rights activists to inform policy and practice changes.

### Session Nine: The Climate Change Debate – Leveraging Local Opportunities to Bolster Climate Change Mitigation and Adaption

The rising tide of the climate change debate has brought with it a crucial realization: the need for both mitigation and adaptation, especially considering the unique vulnerabilities of children. Pauline Chibvuma, representing UNICEF, eloquently painted a picture of the stark realities facing children in a changing climate. This session captures her key insights, alongside UNICEF's approaches to combatting this global challenge. Furthermore, the session delved into perspectives shared during a climate justice debate, with a lens on shaping the agenda for COP28 and beyond.



## **UNICEF's Response: Putting Children at the Centre**

Pauline Chibvuma, speaking on behalf of UNICEF, outlined three key approaches the organisation is taking to address this critical issue:

**1. Championing Children's Voices:** UNICEF insists on including children in national climate change policies and plans, ensuring their active participation in shaping their future.

**2. Empowering Young Agents of Change:** Recognising children as powerful allies, UNICEF advocates for their involvement in decision-making processes and ensuring their access to resilient essential services – water, healthcare, education, and food – that can withstand climate shocks.

**3. Building a Sustainable Future:** Mitigation efforts are a core focus, with UNICEF promoting renewable energy sources, waste management practices in urban and rural areas, and recycling initiatives to combat climate change at its root.

## **COP28 and Beyond: Perspectives on Climate Justice**

A dynamic climate justice debate, chaired by Rodgers Mpande of ZERO, brought together Joy Mabenge, Edwick Madzimore, and Byron Zamasiya as discussants. Their conversation centred on:

**1. Debt Distress and Climate Crisis:** The escalating climate crisis, fuelled by the dominance of fossil fuels and industrial agriculture, throws a harsh shadow over Zimbabwe, a nation already burdened by debt. Joy Mabenge, Country Director of ActionAid Zimbabwe, highlighted this perilous nexus, advocating for a transition to green energy and sustainable farming practices as pathways to a healthier planet and economic stability.

**2. Climate Financing:** Edwick Madzimore delved into the crucial issue of climate finance, which should empower developing nations like Zimbabwe to counter climate change and adapt to its effects. The Paris Agreement serves as a framework, yet Africa has mainly received loans, deepening their debt woes. Madzimore emphasized the need for grants, research funding, and a shift from military spending to environmental conservation – a call echoed by many voices in the debate.

**3. Humanitarian Response:** Byron Zamasiya focused on the vital role of civil society organizations (CSOs) in the face of climate-induced disasters. He urged organized advocacy to hold governments accountable and secure vital climate finance. His impassioned plea resonated with participants, who raised concerns about funding availability, particularly for children-focused initiatives, and sought information about reliable international NGOs involved in climate action.

Beyond funding, questions arose about the utilisation of the carbon tax and the transparency of

public finance management regarding climate efforts. The discussion also shifted to the collective stance on climate justice, stressing the importance of human rights and robust collaboration among African nations to tackle this global challenge.

The outdated Civil Protection Act, in dire need of replacement, sparked concern. Participants inquired about the status of the proposed Disaster Risk Management Bill, urging speedy implementation for better disaster preparedness. Likewise, the need for enhanced capacity-building initiatives emerged, aiming to equip both CSOs and government officials with the tools and knowledge for effective participation at COP meetings.

Throughout the debate, a clear message resonated: children, among the most vulnerable to climate change, must be active participants in shaping their future. Pauline Chibvuma from UNICEF echoed this sentiment, outlining their efforts to empower children and integrate their perspectives into climate policies.

As we move forward, collaborative action, transparent resource allocation, and empowering vulnerable communities, especially children, are crucial to achieving climate justice. Let us listen to the diverse voices, invest in sustainable solutions, and build a future where everyone, not just the privileged, can thrive in a healthy and resilient environment.



### **Session 10: Promoting Innovation in Citizen Engagement and Effective Participation**

This session focussed on step 2 of the CEAA-initiated Best Practice and Innovation Awards (BPIA) exercise, which is an approach adopted through the program to recognise innovative and creative ideas developed by NGOs in Zimbabwe in promoting civic engagement and participation. This was an inaugural edition of the BPIA and was designed as a two-step

process. The first step was for interested CSOs to submit their innovative activities or interventions, designed to tackle development challenges across diverse clusters and scales. A total of 5 organisations were shortlisted from the first step and supported to attend the retreat to make oral presentations before judges who then performed the final adjudication and determination of the winners. The BPIA is a component of the Social Lab Approach adopted by the CEAA to promote the co-creation of intervention, fostering collaboration and ensuring the CSOs work more systematically. This was therefore an opportunity for local, national, and international organizations to showcase their innovations, foster greater collaborations, and learn from each other.

The judging panel comprised individuals with diverse expertise in the NGO sector:

1. Tapiwa Chisakaitwa: Chief of Party, CEAA
2. Joy Mabenge: Country Director, ActionAid Zimbabwe
3. Dorcas Makaza: Chief of Party, Partnerships for Justice
4. Maureen Marimirofa: Head of Marketing, CBZ Bank
5. Ronika Mumbire: Executive Director, Zimbabwe Women's Bureau

Five shortlisted candidates presented their innovative projects:

- **BVTA:** Introduced an insurance scheme for informal traders, offering support for personal and business risks with three packages providing varying benefits and costs.
- **LRF:** Presented their Legal Aid Application, aiding individuals in navigating the justice delivery system through step-by-step guides, sample documents, and legal information.
- **ZDI:** Highlighted their Evidence-Based Advocacy Model, emphasizing their role as a research, advocacy, and thought leadership think tank, focusing on electoral impregnability and Zimbabwe's 2023 elections.
- **Signs of Hope:** Showcased their Disability National Budget Innovation, contributing to an inclusive 2023 National Budget with materials provided in disability-friendly formats and a Citizen's Guide.
- **Habbakuk Trust:** Shared their Engendered Traditional Justice System initiative, advocating for an improved justice system for women in traditional courts through research, engagement, and public awareness campaigns.

After the presentations, the panel deliberated and selected two winners: Signs of Hope Trust and BVTA. Both organizations were awarded a grand prize of \$1,000 each. The inaugural Best Practices and Innovation Awards acknowledged the outstanding contributions of Signs of Hope Trust and BVTA in promoting innovation and addressing social issues, showcasing NGOs' commitment to sustainable development and positive change in Zimbabwe.



**Session 11: Leadership and Governance: Retooling for a Sector Transformation in the Future**

The session delved into the imperative of transformative leadership within the context of local CSOs. The overarching goal was to provide insightful recommendations and strategies for CSO leaders to navigate sector transformations effectively.

The session primarily focused on the critical aspect of succession planning as an indispensable strategy for organisational sustainability and institutional strengthening. Recognising that leadership transitions are inevitable, the discussion aimed to equip CSO leaders with practical tips and considerations for effective succession planning. By addressing the challenges and opportunities associated with leadership change, the session aimed to foster continuity and resilience within the sector.

Furthermore, the session extended its discourse to emphasize the significance of prioritising physical wellness and health as integral components of leadership skills. Acknowledging the demanding nature of leadership roles within CSOs, the discussion aimed to underscore the importance of maintaining the well-being of leaders. Insights and recommendations were provided on how CSO leaders can incorporate self-care practices, balance work-life dynamics, and promote a culture of wellness within their organisations.

Facilitating the session were two distinguished discussants, Yona Wanjala, the Team Leader for DPI, and Pester Siraha, the Country Director for Population Services Zimbabwe (PSZ). Leveraging their extensive experience and expertise, the discussants shared practical insights, case studies, and actionable strategies to inspire transformative leadership practices.

The session, “**Tips for Transformative Leadership and Succession Planning**” led by Yona highlighted the need for a retooling of leadership approaches to meet the evolving demands of a dynamic and complex civil society landscape. Development in contexts where the space is shrinking requires a radical shift in leadership and governance. It is thus important for NGO leaders to create tools that allow for transformative leadership, succession planning, and change management as part of good governance practice. As we celebrate and recognise NGO leaders, there is a need to reinvigorate these leaders by supporting the development of their capacity in a manner that contributes to transformed systems.



A key focus of the session was the strengthening of governance structures to ensure transparency, accountability, and ethical conduct within CSOs. Yona discussed mechanisms for upholding the highest standards of governance, fostering trust among stakeholders, and aligning organisational practices with ethical values.

In the realm of transformative leadership, Yona emphasized the significance of adopting a "futuristic lens," emphasizing the importance of succession planning as a cornerstone of effective leadership. Upon assuming a leadership role, an individual should immediately initiate considerations for succession planning, ensuring a seamless transfer of leadership responsibilities and maintaining the organisation's continuity and stability.

While some organisations have established succession planning frameworks within their constitutions or modus operandi manuals, many lack these formal structures. Yona underscored the critical need for organisations to prioritize succession planning, emphasizing that it is not about anticipating the departure of the current leader but about proactively preparing for the future and ensuring the long-term sustainability of the organisation.

Yona further highlighted the critical importance of understanding the role of the Board in transformative leadership. The Board serves as a crucial source of guidance, support, and accountability for the organisation's leadership. Effective communication and collaboration between the Board and the leadership team are essential for steering the organisation towards its strategic goals.

Additionally, Yona cautioned against the potential for founders to wield excessive power within an organisation, creating an environment where their interests supersede the organisation's mission, overall goals, and objectives. This situation can arise when founders maintain majority control over the organisation's governance structure, limiting the ability of the Board and other

stakeholders to hold them accountable.

Yona highlighted the prevalence of "historical syndrome" within organisations, where individuals or groups resist change and cling to outdated practices due to their attachment to the organisation's history or their vested interest in maintaining the status quo. This reluctance to embrace change can impede transformative leadership efforts and hinder the organisation's ability to adapt to evolving needs and challenges.

Yona emphasized the potential influence of donor preferences on transformative leadership and succession planning. When organisations rely heavily on external funding, they may face pressure to align their strategic direction and leadership choices with the priorities of their donors. This can limit the organisation's autonomy and constrain its ability to pursue its vision for transformation.

The session titled, “**Prioritising Physical Wellness and Health as Part of Leadership Skill**” which was led by Pester Siraha delved into the inherent connection between leadership and mental well-being,

emphasizing that the demands of leadership often involve taking calculated risks and facing challenges that can exert a mental strain on individuals. She introduced the concept of the "As" – Awareness, Access, and Action – as a framework for addressing mental well-being within organizations.



### **Awareness: Understanding Employees, Education, and Training**

The first "A," Awareness, centres on understanding the needs and experiences of employees. This includes conducting regular employee surveys, providing opportunities for feedback, and fostering a culture of open communication. Additionally, investing in education and training programs can equip employees with the skills and knowledge to manage stress, build resilience, and maintain their well-being.

### **Access: Support Services for Mental Well-being**

The second "A," Access, emphasizes the importance of providing readily available support services for mental well-being. This includes offering therapy and counselling services, implementing flexible organizational policies that allow for work-life balance, and establishing peer support networks to foster a sense of community and shared experiences. Additionally, providing management training can equip leaders with the skills to recognize signs of stress or mental health concerns among their team members and intervene effectively.

### **Action: Reducing Stigma, Setting Realistic Expectations, and Promoting Relaxation**

The third "A," Action, focuses on practical measures to address mental well-being within organisations. This includes actively working to reduce the stigma associated with mental health issues, setting realistic work tasks and targets to avoid overburdening employees, and providing opportunities for relaxation and stress reduction activities. Organisations should move away from a culture of "policing" employees and instead prioritise creating a supportive and understanding environment that promotes mental well-being.



By adopting these strategies and embracing the "As" framework, organisations can foster a culture of leadership that prioritises both the professional and personal well-being of their leaders and employees, creating a more resilient and thriving organisation.

### **Key Messages from the Session**

- CSOs should clarify the authority of the Board in the organisation's governance structure to intervene in leadership matters, ensuring the organisation's best interests are served.
- Local CSOs should consider the impact of funding partners on transformative leadership and succession planning. While their support is valuable, it should not overly restrict the organisation's autonomy or dictate leadership choices.
- Local CSOs to establish clear boundaries and maintain open communication to preserve organisational independence and pursue the vision for transformation.
- CSOs to provide accessible mental well-being support services, including therapy, counselling, and flexible organisational policies for work-life balance.
- Local CSO Leaders should set realistic work tasks and targets to prevent overburdening employees and create opportunities for relaxation and stress reduction activities, fostering a supportive and understanding environment.
- Local CSOs to invest in education and training programmes to equip employees with skills for stress management, resilience building, and overall well-being.





## **Session 12: Bridging the Knowledge and Information Gap**

The session focused on bridging the knowledge and information gap, specifically addressing expectations from NPOs related to the implementation of Recommendation 8 by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF). Mr. Tichafa Chigaba, Deputy Director of FIU Zimbabwe, led the presentation titled "Sharing Current Efforts Towards AML/CFT and Expectations from NPOs; Opportunities Emerging from Revision of the FATF Recommendation 8 Best Practice Handbook."

The main goal was to update participants on the efforts within Zimbabwe to advance Anti-Money Laundering (AML) and Countering the Financing of Terrorism (CFT), emphasizing what is required from Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to comply with regulations. Mr. Chigaba provided an overview of the AML/CFT Framework in Zimbabwe, highlighting the establishment of the FIU statutory body in 2004 under the Money Laundering Compliance Act Chapter 9:24.

FATF, as an intergovernmental body, was explained with a focus on Recommendation 8, which aims to regulate the nonprofit sector for greater transparency and accountability. The presentation clarified that not all FATF 40 Recommendations directly affect NPOs, and Recommendation 8 specifically addresses combating the abuse of NPOs for financial crimes.

Recommendation 8 requires countries to conduct risk assessments to identify potential threats from terrorist entities to NPOs, aiming to protect them from abuse and promote accountability. The presentation outlined practical ways in which NPOs could be exploited for terrorism financing, such as diverting funds, affiliation with terrorist entities, abuse of programming, recruitment support, and misuse of NPO assets.

It was emphasized that Zimbabwe is currently rated partially compliant with Recommendation 8, leading to the proposed amendments in the PVO Bill. FIU Deputy Director advocated for self-regulation as the future for CSOs, particularly in addressing the risk of terrorism financing. The collaborative efforts of CSOs, along with the involvement of the donor community, were highlighted as essential in combatting terrorism financing and preserving trust and transparency in the NPO sector. The urgent attention to this issue is crucial for protecting NPOs from financial abuse associated with terrorism financing.

### **Key Recommendations and Action Points**

- NPOs are best positioned to determine effective self-regulatory mechanisms tailored to their local contexts. Governments should collaborate with the NPO sector to identify and adapt best practices, mitigating Terrorism Financing (TF) risks.
- Governments and NPOs can work together to map existing self-regulatory practices and integrate them into the local regulatory landscape.
- NPOs should integrate organizational integrity, partner integrity, financial transparency, and accountability into their self-regulatory frameworks to establish an effective mechanism.
- Develop and implement a self-regulatory framework that encompasses organizational integrity, partner integrity, financial transparency, and accountability measures.
- CSOs should actively participate in FATF processes, particularly in risk assessments.
- CSOs are encouraged to engage effectively in FATF processes, emphasizing active involvement in risk assessments to contribute to a comprehensive understanding of Terrorism Financing risks.
- NANGO should facilitate engagement sessions with relevant stakeholders to explain the risk assessment tool and its population, promoting effective participation in the risk assessment process.
- NANGO to facilitate CSOs sensitisation on the World Bank NPO Risk Assessment Tool and its application.



### **Session 13: Strengthening Sector-Wide Systems and Infrastructure for Anticipatory Action**

#### **Break Away One: Introducing the Health CSOs Database and its Significance in Enhancing CSOs Coordination for Health Systems Strengthening.**

The 13th NGO Directors Summer Retreat saw several networking organisations showcasing their efforts to bridge capacity gaps and enhance coordination among members.

One such presentation, led by Mduduzi Fuyana from the Zimbabwe AIDS Network (ZAN), focused on addressing challenges specific to the AIDS, TB, and Malaria diseases modules. Key issues identified included a lack of necessary data, weak governance structures, and unregistered or improperly constituted organisations. These gaps hindered CSOs from attracting funding and effectively contributing to Health Systems Strengthening.

The ZAN database aligns perfectly with the Global Fund's 2023-2028 strategy, which prioritises community health systems strengthening. This resource provides invaluable information about CBOs, enabling capacity building, organisational system improvement, and targeted resource allocation.

How the Database Strengthens Coordination:

1. Eliminates Duplication of Efforts: By knowing who is doing what and where organizations can collaborate more effectively and avoid redundancies.
2. Empowers Community Systems: With better coordination, community members can access essential services closer to home, strengthening local networks and responses.
3. Facilitates Universal Access to Health: The database fosters coordinated responses to disease outbreaks and pandemics, ensuring timely and comprehensive care for all.



**Break Away Two: Harmonising Strengths: Fostering Collaboration for Transformative Change.**

The session, **"Harmonising Strengths: Fostering Collaboration for Transformative Change,"** resonated as a call to action for collective impact. It envisioned a future where diverse actors across sectors – civil society, government, private sector, and communities – come together, transcending individual strengths, and forging potent synergies. The focus was on recognising and leveraging the unique contributions of each stakeholder, weaving them into a tapestry of transformative change. This session was chaired by Michael Ndiweni, Executive Director of BVTA, with the discussions led by Leonardo Chipendo, Dr. Kuda Mudzeke, and Rtd Commissioner Bishop Charles Masunungure.

The emphasis was not just on cooperation, but on intentional harmonisation. This meant identifying areas where strengths overlapped and complemented each other, crafting partnerships that amplified impact, and avoiding duplicating efforts. The session explored effective collaboration models, emphasizing the importance of trust, shared goals, and open communication in building bridges across sectors.

Moreover, "Fostering Collaboration" went beyond mere partnerships. It aimed to cultivate a culture of collaborative problem-solving, where diverse perspectives were actively sought and valued. This included empowering communities to take ownership of their development processes, ensuring their voices were heard and priorities considered.

Additionally, the session underscored the critical role of collaboration among CSOs in driving transformative change. The panel delved into strategies for strengthening inter-sector and systemic collaboration, emphasizing the need to transcend mere partnership and embrace a holistic approach to problem-solving.

Michael Ndiweni, the session's chair, stressed the importance of moving beyond inter-sector cooperation and adopting a systemic collaboration framework. This approach recognizes the interconnectedness of various sectors and advocates for the co-creation of solutions. By acknowledging the interdependencies within and between sectors, CSOs can design interventions that address the root causes of challenges and foster sustainable change.

Bishop Charles Masunungure highlighted two key factors essential for maximizing collaboration: knowledge and wisdom. Understanding the "5 Ws and 1 H" – what, who, why, when, where, and how – is crucial for effective collaboration. This entails gaining a thorough understanding of the partners' roles, motivations, and expectations. He emphasized that wisdom, the ability to apply knowledge appropriately, is essential in inter-sector collaboration. In this context, wisdom involves determining the sequence and coordination of actions within and between sectors to avoid inefficiencies and conflicts.

Dr. Kuda Madzeke emphasized the need for CSOs to maximize their impact by layering services and providing comprehensive support to beneficiaries. He suggested leveraging resources and mobilizing funds collectively to deliver effective services. This pooling of resources can enable CSOs to provide more comprehensive and holistic support, addressing the multifaceted needs of the communities they serve. Dr. Madzeke also emphasized the importance of closer collaboration with the government. By forging stronger partnerships with government agencies, CSOs can gain access to resources, expertise, and policy levers, enhancing their ability to achieve transformative change.

#### **Key Messages from the Session:**

- To broaden the scope of collaboration to encompass other sectors beyond NPO, addressing a wider range of social and environmental issues. Explore opportunities for cross-sectoral partnerships to leverage diverse expertise and resources for holistic problem-solving.
- CSOs were encouraged to fully support ongoing engagements, workshops, and events organised by NANGO to foster networking, interaction, and learning among CSOs as part of its coordination mandate. These platforms can promote knowledge exchange, identify potential collaboration partners, and strengthen the overall cohesion of the civil society sector.
- To consider pooling of resources to support NANGO's institutional strengthening thrust to enhance its capacity to support the work of CSOs. This can be further strengthened by exploring joint funding initiatives, shared resources, and innovative financing models to ensure the sustainability of NANGO's operations.



### Session 14: Tips for Resource Mobilisation by Grant Makers: Round Table Discussion

This session provided participants with an opportunity to explore the perspectives and innovative ideas of development partners regarding the reconsideration of fundraising for CSOs in Zimbabwe. It was held under the sub-theme "Tips for Resource Mobilisation by Grant Makers" and featured discussions led by representatives from grant-making institutions, including the EU, CEAA, Partnerships for Justice, and UNICEF.

Over the past years, there has been a consistent decline in development partner support for the work of local CSOs. Therefore, the session aimed to inspire CSOs and other development actors to adopt resource mobilisation techniques and strategies that align with changes in the ecosystem, fostering collaborations to thrive in an evolving funding landscape. Globally, there is a call for Non-Profit Organisations (NPOs) to implement practical, innovative finance mechanisms that increase social impact and drive sustainable development.



To initiate the discussion, the EU representative, Ville Suutarinen unpacked the strategic areas of interest for the European Union (EU) which are: to contribute to solidarity and mutual respect among peoples; promote free and fair trade; support programs aimed at poverty alleviation and support respect and protection of human rights. From the submission regarding rethinking fundraising in the ever-evolving ecosystem of NGO operating space, CSOs were urged to

develop sustainability plans for their organisations, based on scenario mapping and possible pathways analysis. He furthermore highlighted that there is a need for collective action by CSOs to form merit-based consortiums, which will be informed by some sort of strategic fitness exercise which will in turn help with competitive bids. CSOs were informed of the ongoing review of the EU Roadmap for Engagement with CSOs considering the emerging developments in the civic space. From the review process, calls for proposals shall be released for interested organisations to respond to.

Sally Jambwa, a representative from UNICEF, was also part of the roundtable discussion and



shared tips on resource mobilisation and attracting funding. UNICEF is an organisation that is centred on children and how issues like child protection, health, climate change, education, and HIV& AIDS affect children's day-to-day lives. From the conversation, CSOs were urged to conduct rigorous partner background checks to understand their scope of work, grant-making processes, and eligibility requirements before attempting to respond to a call for proposal or submit an unsolicited proposal. A concern was raised when CSOs submitted

proposals to UNICEF, as a case reference, with the demonstration of a lack of understanding of UNICEF's work and operations. Understanding and familiarity with different donors' work was the backbone of her key points highlighting how often organisations compromise their chances of getting donor funding by showing ignorance of donors' work. Participants were informed that UNICEF is currently working on child protection and development issues guided by the Zimbabwe United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework, an operational blueprint developed by the UN to advance the acceleration of SDGs implementation in Zimbabwe.

Robert Nyakuwa, a representative from CEAA took a different dimension and shared what donors often look out for, from organizations before awarding them

grants. The perspectives provided in this segment were borrowed mainly from the experiences of CEAA grant-making and awarding processes since its inception in 2021. CEAA as a program unit working on issues of democracy and governance space, has been actively engaging with CSOs in Zimbabwe and advancing resources to CSOs to support different initiatives on civic engagement matters. One of the key issues raised from the discussion was the failure of CSOs to comply with their policy procedures and manuals. This was qualified as a barrier to



effective donor management due to the accountability deficiencies that come with it. It also came out that, in some instances, CSOs sign grant agreement documents without thoroughly going through the terms and understanding their implications during the grant implementation and reporting stages. As such, CSOs leaders were strongly encouraged to go through the grant agreements, understand the conditions, and strive to apply and satisfy all the provisions of the grant agreement. He stressed that issues of compliance go beyond being awarded a grant. NGO leaders were challenged to take the review of reports and communications seriously in the submission of reports to deal with the submission of poor quality and shoddy reports to the donors. The quality of reports is a significant factor for consideration when making grant awarding decisions and performance assessments. CSOs were encouraged to document impact/success stories, no matter how small they might be. It is important to have a social media presence as this can be used for reference checks by donors. Documentation will also assist in profiling your work and capacity proof as part of the evidence that a particular CSO can conduct an activity based on the records.

To wrap up the session, Dorcas Makaza, from PfJ Program which is a program with East-West Management Zimbabwe (EWMI), challenged CSOs to view and conduct themselves as enterprises that are productive, self-perpetuating, and social investors in view to navigate the dwindling donor support. CSOs were propelled to utilise donor funding as an investment that can multiply to fund itself in the short or long term. She pointed out that there is a need for CSOs to strategically position themselves so that they are well-known and what type of business they are running. Organisations must develop a niche and maintain that niche to source foreign investment.



There is a need to strategically plan, brand, and market that niche. Directors were encouraged to support/institutionalise resource mobilisation by having a particular person doing that specific task as it is full-time, this can be in the form of hiring a Business Development Officer. To finish off her presentation, the presenter emphasized that CSOs need to think about issues to do with the global investment community. It is important to connect the dots with global trends to know what funding is available and why there is a lack of funding in a particular area. The geopolitics of the global community is critical for CSOs to connect with and know which periods certain donors will be actively giving out grants.

In conclusion, the session emphasized the need for CSOs to strategically position themselves, understand global trends, and connect with the global investment community to secure funding effectively.



### **Key Messages from the Session:**

- The EU to collaborate with NANGO in facilitating an extensive review process of the EU Roadmap for engagement with CSOs, ensuring broader consultations and diverse perspectives.
- NANGO to implement targeted capacity enhancement programmes to address institutional capacity deficiencies for CSOs facing challenges in securing funding.
- NANGO to facilitate regular quality assurance assessments for CSOs, ensuring diligent implementation and adherence to their policies and manuals.
- NANGO to establish regular interface meetings between CSOs and development partners to bridge the knowledge gap regarding the scope of work of various donors.
- NANGO to conduct capacity-building sessions for CSOs to embrace the concept of social enterprise and make investments in organisational sustainability.
- NANGO to convene meetings to discuss and share information on various regional and global crises, initiatives, and developments that impact funding availability, access, and purpose.
- NANGO to encourage local CSO leaders to consistently review their strategic plans, aligning them with the prevailing context, and promoting specialisation in specific niche areas to avoid superficial results.

**The Elephant Hills Action Agenda Document is attached as an annex to this report.**

**Save the date! The 14th NGO Directors Summer Retreat is scheduled to take place from 6 - 8 November 2024. We eagerly anticipate welcoming you once again!**



**13<sup>th</sup> NGO Directors Summer Retreat  
Resort Activities**





### **NANGO Annual NGO Awards 2023**

The NANGO Annual NGO Awards 2023 sparkled with a celebration of Zimbabwean civil society and business sector heroes, recognising the outstanding efforts and unwavering commitment of individuals and institutions in shaping a transformative, sustainable, and brighter future for the nation. Held as the concluding session of the 13th NGO Directors Summer Retreat, the awards ceremony resonated with the theme of **"Reimagining the Future of Civil Society: From Analysis to Action."**

Human Rights Defender of the Year honours was bestowed upon the Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights (ZLHR), whose unwavering advocacy for justice and protection of fundamental freedoms resonated throughout the ceremony. The Community Development Award saw BVTA take centre stage, recognised for their tireless efforts in empowering and supporting informal traders. The Gender Equality Award championed the Women's Coalition of Zimbabwe (WCoZ) for their ongoing fight for women's rights and advancement. The Deaf Zimbabwe Trust earned the Disability Rights Award for its dedication to creating an inclusive and accessible society for Persons With Disabilities (PWDs) in Zimbabwe. Youth empowerment soared with the EmpowerYouth Excellence Award bestowed upon the Youth Empowerment and Transformation Trust (YETT), highlighting their commitment to nurturing young voices and potential.

The NGO Communicator of the Year honours went to Shamwari Yemwanasikana for their impactful messaging, while Janet Zhou took home the coveted NGO Director of the Year title for her outstanding leadership and dedication to strengthening civil society. Development Partner of the Year recognition was awarded to USAID Zimbabwe for their invaluable support to Zimbabwean CSOs. Even corporate social responsibility was celebrated, with Econet Zimbabwe receiving the Corporate Social Responsibility Excellence Award for their

commitment to social good.

The NANGO Annual NGO Awards 2023 resonated not just with accolades, but with a renewed sense of purpose and collaboration. The closing ceremony served as a potent reminder of the critical role of civil society in shaping a vibrant, equitable, and just Zimbabwe. As the applause faded, a powerful message lingered: the fight for a better future continues, fuelled by the collective spirit and unwavering commitment of these award-winning champions and countless others within the nation's dedicated civil society.

*"To the champions of change, the voices for justice, and the builders of a brighter Zimbabwe, a thunderous congratulations! The NANGO Annual NGO Awards 2023 shine a light on your unwavering commitment, igniting a flame of hope and inspiration for all. May your stories of courage, innovation, and impact continue to echo, paving the way for a future where civic space thrives and every voice matters. Onward, together, let's celebrate your victories and amplify the call for an equitable and just Zimbabwe!" ~ NANGO Chairperson, Dr Lamiel Phiri.*





**CEAA Inaugural Best Practice and Innovation Awards 2023**



PARTNERS:

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@Coach Ennie Chipembere



STRENGTHENING THE VOICE OF  
THE NGOS  
Creating a Dialogue



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION  
OF NON-GOVERNMENT  
ORGANIZATIONS



**N**ANGO is the official voluntary coordinating body of registered NGOs in their diversity operating in Zimbabwe. NANGO is registered as a Private Voluntary Organisation (PVO) under the PVO Act Chapter [17:05]. It is a non-partisan, non-profit making and non-denominational organisation mandated to strengthen the voice of NGOs for the betterment of the people in Zimbabwe. NANGO's operations are guided by its constitution which is the supreme operational document that governs the conduct of the NANGO secretariat, board, and members. The board holds the oversight role over the functions and activities of NANGO. The board members are elected every three years during an elective Annual General Meeting. Administratively, NANGO is decentralised into five regional offices that coordinate the activities of the CSOs in all ten provinces of Zimbabwe. Cognisant of the diversity of membership, members are clustered into 10 thematic clusters in line with their programmatic focus and these are; Media, Arts and Culture, Children, Disability, Economic, Health, Human Rights, Humanitarian, Land and Environment, Women, AND Youth. Concomitantly NANGO bears the responsibility of unifying these various sectors by creating spaces for collaboration, networking, knowledge exchange, mutual support, and the development of common best practices.

**Our Objectives**

- 01**

**Objective**

To promote, coordinate and organise the participation and contribution of Non-Governmental Organisations in Zimbabwe in the development discourse of Zimbabwe.
- 02**

**Objective**

To promote and facilitate the collective agenda-setting, interaction, consultation, and exchange of information and experience with and among NGOs operating in Zimbabwe.
- 03**

**Objective**

To create an enabling and conducive operating environment for NGOs necessary in ensuring sector independence, improved accountability, and fulfilment of institutional mandates.
- 04**

**Objective**

To create and identify opportunities for NGOs to pursue their visions and missions while at the same time building members' capacities, resources, and synergies.

## Our Vision and Mission Statement

Vision	Mission
<p>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.</p>	<p>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.</p>

## 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.



## Thank You To Our Sponsors & Partners

From the depths of our hearts, we offer a chorus of gratitude to our esteemed partners and sponsors. Words alone cannot express the immense appreciation we hold for your unwavering support in our critical mission. Strengthening, representing, and coordinating the invaluable work of NGOs in Zimbabwe would not be a mere dream, but an impossibility, without your dedication and collaboration.

Through your exceptional financial and technical support, you have paved the way for us to create dynamic spaces for networking, dialogue, and engagement. These platforms are the fertile ground where member visions blossom into tangible contributions towards a Zimbabwe We Want. Your support empowers us to amplify the voices of our NGOs, ensuring their critical messages resonate far and wide, shaping a landscape of inclusive and sustainable development.

As we embark on the next chapter of our journey, we humbly invite you to remain by our side. Together, with your continued partnership, we can collectively weave a richer tapestry of progress, one thread at a time. For every challenge we overcome, for every community empowered, for every life transformed, the indelible mark of your support will shine through.

Thank you, from the bottom of our hearts, for being an integral part of our story. Together, let us continue to build a stronger, more inclusive, and transformative Zimbabwe, brick by brick, dream by dream.



# First Mutual Health Summer Retreat Prize Draw Winners



**The Elephant Hills Action Agenda Document is attached as an annex to this report.**

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