



National Annual Narrative Report

January to December 2023

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Table of Acronyms

AGM	Annual General Meeting
AML/CFT	Anti-Money Laundering and Combating Financial Terrorism
APECS	Action to Protect and Enhance Civic Space
CBOs	Community-Based Organisations
CEAA	Citizen Engagement and Accountability Activity
CIASA	Citizen in Action Southern Africa
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
DPI	Defenders Protection Initiative
EU	European Union
FATF	Financial Action Task Force
FIU	Financial Intelligence Unit
INGOs	International Non-Governmental Organisations
MoFED&IP	Ministry of Finance and Economic Development and Investment Promotion
MoPSLSW	Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare
NANGO	National Association of Non-Governmental Organisations
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
NSSA	National Social Security Authority
PVO	Private Voluntary Organisation
REC	Regional Executive Committee
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SRCSS	Southern Rhodesia Council of Social Services
VOICE	Voluntary Organisations in Community Enterprise
VLR	Voluntary Local Review
VNR	Voluntary National Review
YWCA	Young Women Christian Association
ZIMRA	Zimbabwe Revenue Authority
WCoZ	Women's Coalition of Zimbabwe
NPRC	National Peace and Reconciliation Commission
ZHCCCN	Zimbabwe Heads of Civil Society Coalitions and Networks



We Are NANGO

NANGO is the official voluntary coordinating body of registered NGOs in their diversity operating in Zimbabwe. NANGO is registered as a Private Voluntary Organisation (PVO) under the PVO Act Chapter [17:05]. It is a non-partisan, non-profit making and non-denominational organisation mandated to strengthen the voice of NGOs for the betterment of the people in Zimbabwe. NANGO's operations are guided by its constitution which is the supreme operational document that governs the conduct of 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
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.	A proactive community of NGOs responsive and committed to the sustainable development needs of all people in Zimbabwe and the full realisation of human rights, democracy, good governance, and poverty alleviation.

Our 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.

The 2023 Annual Narrative Report

Message from the NANGO Chairperson



It is with great pleasure that I write this foreword for the 2023 NANGO Annual Report. My second year as Chairperson has been one of challenges and triumphs, and I want to again thank our esteemed membership for entrusting me with this leadership role. On behalf of the National Executive Committee (NEC), I assure you of our unwavering commitment to fulfil our duties and responsibilities, supported by our valued members, stakeholders, and partners. 2023 was significant as we began implementing our Strategic Plan (2023-2025). This plan reflects changes within NANGO and the Civil Society landscape, ensuring we stay relevant to our constituency.

Reflecting on the state of Zimbabwean civil society in 2023 presents a mixed picture. The pre-election period saw increased restrictions on civic space, with legislation like the Criminal Law and Codification Reform Amendment Bill (July 2023) and the looming threat of the Private Voluntary Organisations (PVO) Amendment Bill creating a climate of fear and hindering critical discourse. Navigating this complex regulatory environment, coupled with resource constraints, further hampered our ability to operate effectively.

Yet, I am immensely proud of our diverse NGO community's unrelentless dedication and resilience. Despite challenges, our members remain beacons of hope, driving positive change across countless spheres – from human rights advocacy and democratic principles to vital social services, humanitarian assistance, and sustainable development. Your impact is undeniable.

Civil society has adapted, collaborated, and innovated in the face of hurdles. We have strengthened internal governance, embraced digital platforms for engagement, and fostered

closer collaboration across thematic areas and regions. Our commitment to dialogue and constructive engagement with stakeholders, including state actors, has yielded incremental progress.

Looking ahead, I remain cautiously optimistic. The 13th Annual NGOs Directors Summer Retreat in Victoria Falls allowed us to reimagine ourselves. While 2024 presents opportunities and challenges, we must remain vigilant in protecting civic space and advocating for an enabling environment. We must continue building collective capacity, leveraging technology, and strengthening internal accountability mechanisms. Most importantly, we must never lose sight of our essential role in upholding democratic values, promoting equitable development, and holding our duty-bearers accountable.

This report delves deeper into the specific milestones, lessons learnt, and challenges faced by NANGO and its membership in 2023. It showcases the remarkable work we accomplished in collaboration with our members and highlights areas where continued efforts are crucial. While the road ahead may be long and winding, I do not doubt that the spirit of collaboration, resilience, and unwavering commitment to a better Zimbabwe that defines our community will prevail.

Dr. Lamiel Phiri
Board Chairperson, NANGO

Message from the NANGO Executive Director



I am pleased to present this 2023 Annual Report, which offers a snapshot of NANGO's activities and their outcomes throughout the year. In January 2023, I assumed the role of Executive Director, having served in an acting capacity for the previous 10 months. While frequent leadership changes can be challenging, the transition was smooth thanks to the support of the Board, members, stakeholders, and partners.

Reflecting on the past year documented in this report evokes a mix of emotions: pride in our collective achievements, frustration at persisting challenges, and unwavering optimism for the future. 2023 demanded resilience, adaptation, and commitment from Zimbabwe's civil society, and NANGO stood resolutely alongside its members. Operating within a restrictive environment with limited resources presented significant obstacles. Shrinking civic space, restrictions on fundamental freedoms, and an uneven playing field threatened to silence our voices.

The ever-shifting environment for civil society continued throughout 2023. With 2023 being an election year, political stakes were high, and civic space predictably shrunk. The toxic and polarised political context made navigation difficult for our members. Despite these difficulties, CSOs fought back and continued various activities and initiatives to maintain operations.

Throughout 2023, NANGO collaborated with other CSOs on governance reforms through a national dialogue process involving development partners. While the dialogue held the potential for constructive engagement with the government, it failed to create secure spaces for CSOs to advocate for an enabling environment. The arrest of civil society staff members on unfounded charges of parallel vote tabulation on election day extinguished any hope kindled by the dialogue process.

Despite these challenges, we celebrate successfully pushing back the PVO Amendment Bill, which still poses a threat to our association and members. Additionally, we enhanced engagements with sector regulators to maintain positive CSO-government relations, crucial for achieving an enabling environment. NANGO initiated the "Action to Protect and Enhance Civic Space" project, aimed at fostering an enabling environment for CSOs. The project also addresses burdensome administrative requirements, such as Memorandums of Understanding

(MoUs) and clearance letters, imposed by the government. Furthermore, NANGO advocates for a clearer policy framework for CSOs, including standardised and clarified entry point requirements at all government levels.

The 2023 NANGO NGO Directors Summer Retreat was an inspiring experience filled with thought-provoking sessions aimed at strengthening the anticipatory capacities and future readiness of civil society, considering emerging issues and the operating environment. This retreat marked a significant departure from previous editions, embracing a highly collaborative and inclusive approach. CSO leaders shared valuable insights and celebrated the incredible work of our diverse NGO community. Sharing experiences and learnings enriched our understanding of the current landscape and fuelled collective growth and development. I am confident that the ideas and connections forged during the retreat will continue to inspire and guide our collective efforts in 2024.

Another key highlight for the year was the development of the Zimbabwe Social Investment Exchange Platform (ZimSIIX) in partnership with the Centre for Humanitarian Analytics (CHA). The ZimSIIX is a web-based portal created to profile CSOs, perform data analysis, and generate reports informing decision-making by various stakeholders. The platform was presented during the Summer Retreat, showcasing its interface, information collection and privacy features, purpose, and analytics and report generation functions. It will be used for in-country social investment management, coordination, and decision-making by various stakeholders, including private, and non-private actors, and academia. The platform offers functionalities such as NGO profiles, impact reports, advisory reports, investment tracking reports, analytical reports, and compliance tracking reports.

I express my deepest gratitude to the NANGO National and Regional Executive Committees (RECs) for their guidance in 2023. My heartfelt appreciation also goes to the NANGO Secretariat for their unwavering commitment throughout the year. We remain firmly committed to our vision, mission, and core values as we coordinate Civil Society in Zimbabwe. This annual report serves as a primer for anyone seeking to understand and appreciate our work in 2023.

Our work would not have been possible without the continued support of our partners and friends. I extend my sincere appreciation to all our partners, including CEAA, Action Aid Zimbabwe, GIZ, EU, FnF, UN Women, UNICEF, and our various private sector partners. Your ongoing support affirms the power of collective action and the commitment to building a more just, equitable, and democratic future. I invite you to engage with this report, celebrate our successes, and join us on our collective journey towards a brighter 2024.

Finally, I am grateful to all partners, the Board, and the staff for supporting me as I held the fort in my first year as Executive Director. I thank you all and wish you the best of luck in 2024.

Ernest Nyimai
Executive Director, NANGO

REGIONAL OVERVIEW FOR 2023



NANGO Northern Region Regional Chairperson's Note

The NANGO Northern Region (NR) REC extends its sincere appreciation to all members for their collaborative efforts in realising regional expectations and upholding set standards during the reporting period. The NR has evolved into a formidable force, propelled by teamwork and a shared commitment to supporting the achievement of NANGO's mission and objectives. Despite the challenges faced in 2023, marked by various obstacles, our members exhibited resilience and maintained a steadfast focus on attaining their organisational objectives.

Throughout the reporting period, the civic space in the region continued to shrink, characterised by heightened existential threats and attacks on civil liberties. These threats posed significant challenges to fundamental rights, including freedom of expression, association, assembly, and the dissemination of information. The origins of these threats were diverse, ranging from legislative and financial issues to administrative hurdles. The looming uncertainty surrounding

the PVO Amendment Bill cast a shadow over the operations of CSOs, posing impediments to their vital work. Despite these adversities, our members demonstrated unwavering commitment and determination in executing their mandates, complementing government efforts in the process.

We are pleased to acknowledge that, as a region, we successfully navigated through some of the challenges encountered, standing resilient and cohesive as a team. In the words of Andrew Carnegie, "Teamwork is the ability to work together toward a common vision. The ability to direct individual accomplishments toward organizational objectives. It is the fuel that allows common people to attain uncommon results." The NR exemplifies this spirit of teamwork, and our fervent hope is that we continue to collaborate seamlessly for even more remarkable and impactful outcomes.

Dr. Lamiel Phiri
REC Chairperson, Northern Region

NANGO WESTERN REGION

Regional Chairperson's Note

Taking on the role of REC Chairperson during a world still reeling from COVID-19 and Zimbabwe facing its 2023 Harmonised Elections, our term, on behalf of the REC Members, was undeniably one of the challenges. With a deteriorating economy, undermined socio-political rights, and the PVO Amendment Bill shrinking operating space, NGOs faced constant hurdles to relevance.

Despite these difficulties, the REC remained steadfast in driving the Non-Profit sector agenda. The pandemic, wars like the Ukraine conflict, and climate justice concerns shifted international funding away from development, impacting many NGOs. This, along with rising youth drug abuse, a ballooning informal sector, and mass healthcare worker migration, necessitated exploring domestic fundraising strategies for CSO survival – a crucial conversation for 2024.

Yet, amidst these complex dynamics, the REC, supported by its members, demonstrated remarkable resilience. Collaborations, like NANGO's 13th Directors Summer Retreat and various capacity-building programmes, ensured 2023's success in sustaining CSOs.

Therefore, I implore each of you to continue defending the civic space and vitalising NANGO's role. Thank you for entrusting me with this leadership. To borrow from J.S. Mbiti, "I am, because we are and since we are therefore I am." None of this would have been possible without you.

Michael Ndiweni
REC Chairperson, Western Region

NANGO EASTERN REGION

Regional Chairperson's Note

I extend my appreciation for the dedicated efforts across our various NANGO thematic clusters as we collectively work towards amplifying the voice of NGOs in Zimbabwe, especially in the Manicaland province. In my role as the NANGO Eastern Regional Chairperson, I would like to express gratitude for the ongoing support received from the Regional Executive Committee (REC), esteemed NANGO members, partners, key stakeholders, and Secretariat, especially considering the challenging and uneven operating environment for CSOs in Zimbabwe.

The year 2023 has presented a set of challenges, creating a somewhat stagnant environment for numerous NGOs in both the region and the nation. This period has been characterised by restricted CSO operations due to stringent operational procedures, limited engagement in the 2023 harmonised general elections, and various factors that have constricted the operating space. The ongoing amendments to the PVO Act have notably contributed to this shrinking operating space, impacting CSOs, particularly those registered as Trusts in the region.

A substantial number of NANGO members in the region face difficulties in certain districts, encountering obstacles such as the requirement for Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) and other administrative procedures imposed by local authorities. The prevailing regulatory environment reflects the state's continuous efforts to try to shape and influence CSOs' behaviour. While acknowledging the state's legitimate interest in enhancing security, we also observe the potential use of regulations to achieve specific political and social objectives.

Despite these challenges, CSOs have remained resilient and actively engaged across all tiers of development. The commitment and dedication of our members have been instrumental in maintaining a presence and contributing to the advancement of our collective goals.

Frank Mpahlo
REC Chairperson, Eastern Region

NANGO MIDLANDS REGION

Regional Chairperson's Note

In 2023, much like the preceding year, our region faced a multitude of challenges that impacted both the region as a whole and our members across various dimensions. These challenges manifested in diverse forms, and it is incumbent upon the Board to address them with professionalism and effectiveness. By fostering collaboration, promoting innovation, and upholding a commitment to excellence, the Board maintains a firm confidence that our members can successfully overcome these challenges, emerging stronger and more resilient than ever before.

The operating environment remained volatile, presenting difficulties for CSOs to meet their demands. In 2023, numerous organisations encountered regulatory and registration challenges, particularly at the District Level, where Local Authorities imposed inconsistent and non-standardized administrative and operational requirements on NGOs. The growing trend of demanding Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and Clearance Letters by Local Authorities added complexity and cost to the already burdensome process of acquisition. The first half of the year witnessed a decline in the number of activities held by various NGOs, attributed to a shrinking resource base and various other reasons.

Despite the challenging circumstances that affected the region, the commitment to the association's mandate of fostering a proactive NGO community dedicated to sustainable development remained unwavering. The region invested considerable effort in capacitating and coordinating members, navigating the myriad challenges that beset both the region and the country at large. Our emphasis on valuing membership and stakeholder feedback, fostering collaborations, and building consortia underscores our commitment to empowering a resilient civil society community. Members continue to be the cornerstone of our association's work, and our goal is to ensure that we persist in providing essential services to our membership despite the adversities. In times like these, we must stand united, offering unwavering support to our members.

Charles Mazorodze
REC Chairperson, Midlands Region

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RESULTS AND PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS FOR 2023

CHAPTER ONE: NANGO FLAGSHIP EVENTS

Annual NGO Directors Summer Retreat 2023

Orchestrated by [NANGO](#) in collaboration with members, partners, and stakeholders, the 13th 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. The retreat kicked off with an enlightening conference foresight session which looked at the journey travelled from the 12th edition to the 13th 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 foresight. 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 13th 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](#). The full summer retreat report can be [accessed here](#). The Elephant Hills action agenda document can be [accessed here](#).

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.

Seen

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 Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to remain impactful and relevant, they must proactively prepare for future scenarios and proactively shape solutions.

Seen



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.

Seen



@nangozimbabwe





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.

Seen

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.

Seen



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.

Seen



@nangozimbabwe





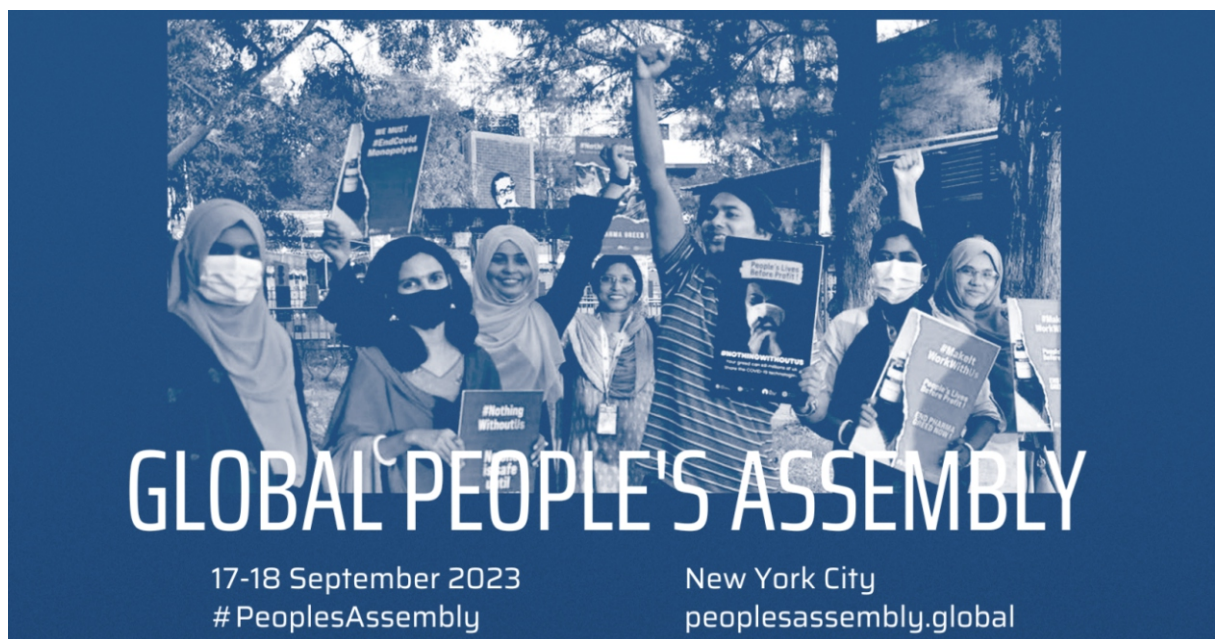
Global Week to Action: National People's Assembly 2023

The Global Week to Action: People's Assembly serves as an annual rallying point for global citizens, advocating for governmental accountability in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Spearheaded by the Global Call to Action Against Poverty (GCAP), this collaborative endeavour unites diverse voices in a concerted effort to drive meaningful progress towards the SDGs. At its core, the week-long event is dedicated to demanding the implementation of the SDGs by governments worldwide, fostering a sense of urgency and collective action. Typically held in September, the Global Week to Action dedicates a specific timeframe for advocacy and mobilisation, with the 2023 edition spanning from September 15th to 25th. Central to its activities are the organisation of local and national People's Assemblies, where communities and civil society representatives converge to share their perspectives and insights.

As part of the Global Week to #Act4SDGs 2023, NANGO mobilised CSOs to participate in national, regional, and global assemblies. A national People's Assembly organised by NANGO with support from GCAP was attended by 28 CSO representatives seeking to bring together representatives from communities and constituencies on a national dialogue; to collectively discuss the SDG Mid-Point in the context of the worsening food, poverty, and financial crisis specifically social protection, debt and austerity measures, war and conflict, and climate justice. The People's Assembly served as a vital platform for key stakeholders to assess the achievements and challenges related to the progress of SDGs in Zimbabwe. Deliberate efforts were made to ensure that there was representation for all NANGO thematic clusters with a special focus on women and gender-focused organisations, grassroots CBOs, youth-focused

organisations, and organisations of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs). The discussions centred around analysing the implementation of SDGs in Zimbabwe. This allowed CSOs to identify areas requiring urgent action and to realign efforts towards SDG attainment.

Participants developed a Civil Society Declaration on the SDG mid-point which was submitted to the Ministry of Public Service, Labour, and Social Welfare (MoPSLSW), who are the implementers of SDGs in government, for the government's consideration. The activity successfully enhanced the knowledge of CSOs on SDGs and called for greater collaboration amongst stakeholders. Members called for discussions around SDGs to be an ongoing process rather than a once-off event. The government and other stakeholders were encouraged to leverage the work of CSOs for data collection when developing Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) and Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs).



Additionally, a global assembly convenes as the [United Nations General Assembly \(UNGA\)](#) to synthesize and harmonize these diverse perspectives, fostering cross-regional collaboration and solidarity. While the most recent event took place in September 2023, valuable resources and insights, including the 2023 People's Assembly Declaration, remain accessible online [accessible here](#), underscoring the enduring impact and relevance of this global movement for change.



CHAPTER TWO: NANGO INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING AND ORGANISATIONAL CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

Strengthening Internal NANGO Governance Framework

*Development of the new Strategic Plan (2023
– 2025*

The new [Strategic Plan](#) (2023 – 2025) was finalised, adopted by the Board, and launched during the NANGO 60th National AGM. Since its formation, NANGO has evolved in view to adapt to changes in the operating environment. Despite shifts in the operating environment, the coordination role of NANGO has become even more relevant and continues to guide the organisation's evolutionary and value proposition path. The new Strategic Plan (2023 - 2025) is largely hinged on the rich history and foundations of NANGO as the umbrella body of NGOs operating in Zimbabwe. This strategy encapsulates our commitment to deliver concrete results that ensure inclusiveness, proactiveness, and shared values amongst NGOs in Zimbabwe. This strategy, with full membership ownership throughout the process, is a result of extensive consultations involving a wide range of stakeholders whose input contributed to the definition of key priorities and the associated Key Results Areas (KRAs). It lays out ambitious aspirations to reset the NANGO brand hence the theme, “**Building An Association That Is Fit For Purpose**”. The process of developing this strategy took into cognisance the fluidity of the operating environment, thus it provides scope for flexibility and responsiveness to issues emerging in the operating environment.

We are at a time where we are **rebooting, resetting, and repositioning** ourselves to regain our position and legitimacy as the convener, coordinator, and umbrella association of NGOs in Zimbabwe. There are many expectations from our members and stakeholders that we are determined to go all the way to fulfil. This is an ambitious three-year strategic plan with five strategic focus areas that we believe respond to the current operating environment in which we find ourselves.

Strategic Priority 1: Institutional strengthening for a higher-performing NANGO. We believe the stronger NANGO is as an institution the more effective it will be in coordination and servicing of the NGO sector in Zimbabwe. This, for us, entails strengthening our governance framework, updating our policies and procedures to suit the current context, being true to our values and being guided by them in every aspect, optimising the working environment within the organisation, continually innovating to become a better fit for the future, improving accountability and communication with our stakeholders and raising sufficient resources to support our work.

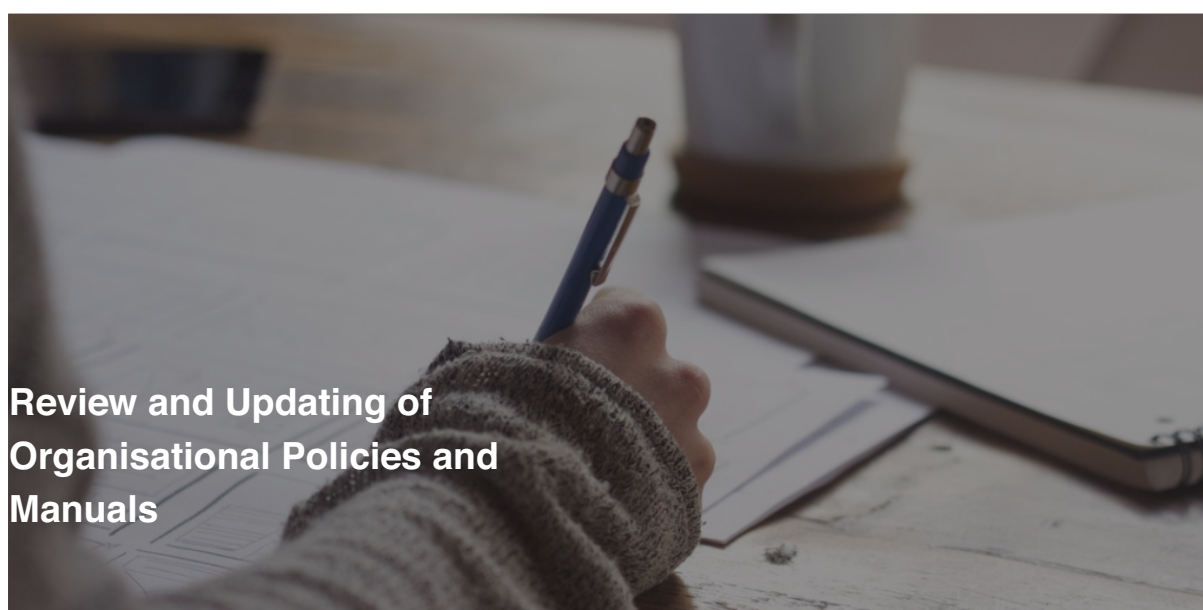
Strategic Priority 2: Improving NANGO's value proposition to its membership as a convener and coordinating organisation as well as making the NANGO brand more attractive to Zimbabwean CSOs. NANGO cannot exist without its membership. We seek to fully service our members through convening, coordinating, and building collaborative networks among members. The organisation will ensure that it effectively plays these roles to remain relevant and attract new members. Under the new strategy, we intend to revisit our value proposition to members, listen more to them, and be more responsive to their needs and expectations of us as an umbrella body.

Strategic Priority 3: Pivoting NANGO as the hub of choice for CSO capacitation, training, mentorship, knowledge curation, and operational support. We are at a time when there is a greater scrutiny on NGOs in terms of operational efficacy, sustainability, and Value For Money (VFM), the imperative need for institutionalised capacity development, training, and mentorship of these organisations has never been more pressing. As an umbrella body, we intend to leverage our alumni, networks, as well as our wide access to expertise and training resources within our networks to consolidate and package various kinds of training programmes aimed at improving the way NGOs are led and operate in Zimbabwe.

Strategic Priority 4: Strengthening NANGO to become a solid platform for advocacy, lobbying, and policy influencing in matters related to the CSO operating environment as well as national development issues. For CSOs to operate effectively and achieve the desired impact in Zimbabwe, there should be an enabling operating environment in which laws, policies, practices, and institutions regulating the CSO space achieve the desired oversight function while not causing undue bureaucracy, burdensome overreach and constraining to the work of the developmental organizations. We believe that the regulatory function should not choke operational efficiencies and that accountability should be mutual and not burdensome. Given current developments in the CSO regulatory arena, with an anticipated tightening of the operating environment throughout this strategic period, we commit ourselves to continue engaging and defending the CSO operating environment to enable ease of doing work among our members. Under the same token, we will also play our part to ensure that we protect our

member organisations from abuse and mismanagement, which present the risk of regulatory overreach consequently.

Strategic Priority 5: Promoting effective action on the SDGs. As NANGO together with our members, we are already playing a critical role in advancing the implementation and achievement of the SDGs through local-level programmes, complementing government developmental programmes, and through national engagements. We are convinced, therefore, that deepening CSO participation in the SDGs processes, including convening the organisation and coordinating actions aimed at building strategic collaborations with the government and private sector as well as keeping mutual accountability will be an important contribution by NANGO and its members in advancing the SDGs in the country.



Review and Updating of Organisational Policies and Manuals

In line with the new Strategic Plan (2023 – 2025), the review and update of policies are key to ensuring the policy framework of the organisation remains relevant and continues to drive the association's priorities as well as increase agility and transparency in decision-making, risk management, and focus on key strategic issues. In 2023, we began implementing a stronger governance model and Organisational Development Framework (ODF) (including strengthening our systems and procedures) to ensure the improvement of our performance and accountability as NANGO.

The association facilitated the review and update of the Finance Policy and Manual. This process included the re-alignment of the policy to national and international accounting standards. NANGO is also challenged by its members and partners to become the funding manager for CBOs that do not qualify to apply for funding and thus sub-granting has lately become an issue that requires sound provisions in the NANGO Finance Policy. With advancements in accounting software packages, internet or virtual banking systems, and

advanced payroll systems; it was imperative for NANGO to update its Financial Policy and Manual. The process also ensured that NANGO has adequate financial management systems in place both at the Head Office and Regional offices. Recognising the growing use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in financial management, the review process included scoping for more suitable software to enhance financial management. Additionally, as part of this exercise, a Grant Making and Partnership Policy was developed, and the Human Resources and Conditions of Services Policy and Procurement Policy were aligned with the new provisions of the Finance Policy and Manual.

Development of New Models and Platforms

Information and Communication Dissemination Platforms

In the period under review, NANGO continued its commitment to staying abreast of technological advancements, not only on a local scale but also within the broader regional and global contexts. A significant milestone during this time was the establishment of the "NANGO UpdateHub," an online information hub launched in May 2023. Functioning as a WhatsApp-based group chat, this platform caters to individuals interested in staying informed about developments within the NGO sector. As of December 2023, the UpdateHub boasts a robust membership of 131 individuals, hailing from various regions of Zimbabwe and even extending beyond national borders.

The NANGO UpdateHub serves as a dynamic repository of information, offering a wide range of resources. These include access to NANGO publications and reports, updates on initiatives by the broader civil society sector, current news, funding, and job opportunities, as well as valuable capacity-building resources. With regular updates, the digital information hub has evolved into an indispensable resource for anyone seeking insights into the Zimbabwean NGO sector. Membership is open and easily accessible through the organisation's [website](#) or by sending a text message expressing interest via any of our social media accounts (@nangozimbabwe).

In a bid to diversify its communication channels, NANGO expanded its presence to popular streaming platforms, Spotify and SoundCloud, in July 2023. These platforms serve as avenues for broadcasting podcasts produced by NANGO and the broader civil society. The content of these podcasts spans critical topics such as human rights, climate change, CSO initiatives and impact, and ongoing endeavours to create an enabling environment for CSOs operating in Zimbabwe, among other relevant subjects.

Adding another dimension to its outreach strategy, NANGO introduced a digitally based monthly magazine titled 'The NANGO Review' in January 2023. This publication aims to comprehensively document key issues that may have been overlooked or missed during the month under review. With a total of four magazine issues produced and shared via the [website](#)

and promoted across all social media channels, 'The NANGO Review caters to a diverse audience. This includes beneficiaries of NGO initiatives (the public), NANGO members, CSOs representatives, development partners, the media, and the business sector. The magazine covers five main areas: NANGO Secretariat work and news updates, NANGO Members' key highlights, Regional and Global Civil Society Updates, Elections, and Opportunities.

The introduction of these new communication channels and tools aligns with NANGO's commitment to strengthening the voice of CSOs operating in Zimbabwe. Furthermore, the organisation recognized a void created by the closure of [Kubatana](#), a prominent civil society information hub in Zimbabwe. Given Kubatana's significant impact in disseminating information related to the NGO sector in Zimbabwe, NANGO acknowledges that more steps are required to fill this void. The initiatives launched during this period are seen as initial steps in the right direction, with the acknowledgment that much more remains to be done.

Engagement Platforms/New Avenues Created

At the 13th NGO Directors Summer Retreat held from 22 – 24 November 2023 at Elephant Hills Hotel in Victoria Falls, a pioneering approach to communication and engagement was introduced as the organisation harnessed the power of the WhatsApp platform to enhance interaction among participants. This marked the first instance of utilising WhatsApp in this capacity during such an event. The primary objective was to streamline communication channels, allowing for the seamless exchange of feedback, questions, announcements, and valuable inputs among event organisers, facilitators, discussants, and participants.

This strategic move was motivated by the widespread use of WhatsApp in Zimbabwe, recognising it as a ubiquitous and user-friendly platform. Leveraging the familiarity of this messaging app aimed to facilitate easy and convenient communication for all involved in the retreat. The decision proved particularly advantageous as it aligned with the prevailing communication preferences in the region.

Moreover, the retreat venue, recognising the contemporary needs of the participants, ensured that everyone had access to data by providing a stable Wi-Fi connection. This initiative aimed to eliminate any barriers to participation, ensuring that all attendees could fully engage in the interactive and dynamic discussions facilitated through the WhatsApp platform.

Beyond the retreat's conclusion, the impact of this innovative approach endured, with discussions persisting on the WhatsApp platform. This ongoing engagement speaks to the success and effectiveness of this communication strategy, demonstrating its enduring value as a medium for continued collaboration, networking, and knowledge-sharing among the diverse group of NGO directors, development partners, government officials, and business

representatives.

The incorporation of WhatsApp into the fabric of the NGO Directors Summer Retreat not only embraced technological trends but also underscored the organisation's commitment to fostering inclusive and accessible engagement avenues. As this initiative continues to yield positive outcomes, it sets a precedent for future events within the NGO sector, showcasing the adaptability and forward-thinking nature of the organisation in utilizing contemporary tools for effective engagement and collaboration.

Feedback Mechanisms in Place

Feedback mechanisms serve as a cornerstone for institutions like NANGO, enabling a comprehensive assessment of impact, identification of improvement areas, and the fortification of their endeavours. The significance of soliciting feedback from a diverse array of key stakeholders cannot be overstated, as it is integral to ensuring that NANGO effectively advocates for and meets the evolving needs of civil society in Zimbabwe.

The NANGO Annual General Meetings (AGMs) represent a robust and formalised feedback mechanism that has been decentralised to accommodate the unique challenges and issues at the regional level. Each of NANGO's five regions conducts its own AGM, providing a platform for stakeholders to share insights and offer feedback specific to the work of NANGO within their respective regions. The insights garnered during these regional AGMs form the foundation for the National AGM agenda, where stakeholders collaboratively contribute further insights, revisions, and suggestions for improvement.

Recognising the temporal constraints of AGMs occurring later in the year, NANGO acknowledges the importance of maintaining informal feedback mechanisms. Throughout the year, the organisation, operating both as a learning institution and a representative entity for the NGO sector in Zimbabwe, remains committed to transparency and inclusivity. The open-door policy encourages stakeholders to contribute valuable insights and feedback continuously, fostering a collaborative environment that aligns NANGO's mission with the interests of its diverse stakeholders.

In the pursuit of robust engagement, NANGO strategically employs real-time data harvesting and analysis tools. These tools, including Google Forms, Mentimeter, Kobo Collect, and Social Media analytics, facilitate effective and efficient feedback mechanisms. By gauging outcomes and perceptions, these tools empower NANGO to make dynamic and responsive adjustments, ensuring that its initiatives meet the ever-evolving needs of the NGO sector.

In 2023, during the 13th NGO Director's Summer Retreat, NANGO took a step further in its commitment to data protection and security. Google Forms emerged as a near-real-time initiative for post-event feedback, capitalising on the widespread use of smartphones among participants and the provision of Wi-Fi at the venue. This not only ensured seamless internet access but also promoted efficient and secure feedback collection.

Beyond digital avenues, NANGO maintains an accessible channel for stakeholders to share insights directly. Stakeholders are encouraged to reach out to Secretariat members, particularly Coordinators, providing a personalised and direct route for feedback on specific issues or areas. This inclusive approach caters to all stakeholders, including those facing challenges accessing digital platforms. Regional Coordinators, taking a lead role in this process, ensure that the feedback loop remains responsive to the diverse needs of the NGO sector, embodying NANGO's commitment to a collaborative and inclusive feedback culture.



Recognising its pivotal role in representing the civil society sector in Zimbabwe, NANGO places a high premium on learning from global experiences to continually enhance its relevance and effectiveness in pursuit of its mission. As a testament to this commitment, NANGO's application to become a member of Forus—an innovative global network fostering civil society for impactful social change—was successfully approved in mid-2023.

Forus stands as a dynamic global network, comprising 68 National NGO Platforms and 7 Regional Coalitions across five continents. At the heart of Forus lies a vibrant and diverse membership, each contributing unique perspectives and experiences to the collective pursuit of social change. This newly established affiliation is poised to elevate NANGO's standing, providing an invaluable opportunity to broaden its reach and showcase the impactful work of NGOs in Zimbabwe on a global stage.

One of the core strengths derived from this affiliation is the access it affords NANGO to a plethora of resources, be they financial, academic, or pertaining to institutional capacity strengthening. These resources are instrumental in enhancing NANGO's ability to serve the interests of its stakeholders more effectively, facilitating the growth and sustainability of the NGO sector in Zimbabwe.

Moreover, affiliation with Forus opens avenues for NANGO to engage with a global network of NGOs committed to creating an enabling environment for civil society on the ground. This expanded network offers opportunities for collaboration, knowledge-sharing, and collective advocacy on issues that resonate both locally, regionally, and globally. Through this affiliation, NANGO is positioned not only to contribute its insights but also to learn from the diverse experiences of CSOs worldwide.

As part of this collaborative effort, NANGO is excited to leverage the wealth of information and resources offered by Forus, enriching its understanding of best practices and innovative approaches in civil society engagement. The affiliation is a strategic move that aligns with NANGO's ongoing commitment to learning, adapting, and ensuring the sustained impact of its policy advocacy and representation efforts.

For those interested in learning more about Forus and its global network, detailed information is available on their [website](#). This affiliation marks a significant step forward for NANGO, providing a platform to amplify the voices of civil society in Zimbabwe and contribute meaningfully to the global discourse on social change and sustainable development.

Lessons Learnt

1. **Importance of Streamlined Submission Channels:** The need for a streamlined submission process to facilitate the seamless flow of valuable content, information parcels, news updates, and contributions from stakeholders.
2. **Tailoring Communication for Diverse Stakeholders:** The necessity of developing targeted communication approaches that resonate with specific audiences, enhancing engagement and understanding.
3. **Strategic Resource Mobilisation and Allocation for Digital Initiatives:** The importance of strategic resource mobilisation and allocation to ensure the effective implementation and sustainability of digital tools and platforms for information dissemination.

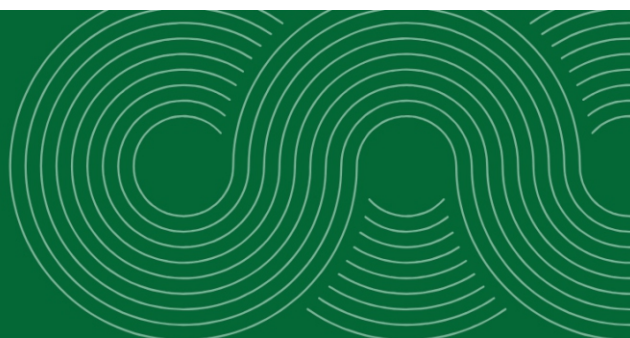
Successes

1. Establishment of NANGO UpdateHub launched in May 2023, serving as a WhatsApp-based information hub.
2. Introduction of 'The NANGO Review', a digitally based monthly magazine launched in January 2023.
3. Extended presence on Spotify and SoundCloud in July 2023.
4. Innovative use of WhatsApp for streamlined communication at the 13th NGO Directors Summer Retreat.
5. Successful approval of NANGO's application to become a member of Forus.

Action Points for the Future

1. **Establish Robust Submission Channels:** Develop a user-friendly and centralised platform for stakeholders to submit content. This could involve the creation of an online portal or submission form that allows contributors to easily share their insights, updates, and perspectives.
2. **Customised Communication Strategies:** Implement tailored communication strategies that cater to the diverse needs of stakeholders. Conduct audience analysis to understand the preferences and communication styles of different groups, allowing for the creation of targeted and relevant content.
3. **Strategic Resource Mobilisation and Allocation for Digital Initiatives:** Conduct a comprehensive review of digital initiatives and prioritise resource allocation based on impact and organisational goals. Seek external partnerships or collaborations to access additional resources for digital advancements.

CHAPTER THREE: MEMBERSHIP VALUE PROPOSITION AND COORDINATION



Curations and Sharing of Knowledge and Information.

Amidst threats to civic space, Zimbabwe implemented regulations related to Anti-Money Laundering and Combating Financial Terrorism (AML/CFT). To address the limited knowledge among CSOs regarding Financial Action Task Force (FATF) Recommendation 8 requirements and accusations levelled against them, NANGO in collaboration with the Defenders Practitioners Initiative (DPI) from Uganda, conducted a sensitisation and awareness-raising workshop. A total of 20 CSO representatives, spanning NANGO's 10 thematic clusters and five regions, were sensitised on AML/CFT. The program focused on the theme "**Safeguarding Civic Space while Countering the Financing of Terrorism**" and covered global, regional, and sub-regional normative frameworks, effective strategies to protect the NPO sector, and mitigating unintended consequences from the incorrect implementation of FATF Standards.

The training equipped members to carry out background checks on donors and participate in the NPO risk assessment conducted by the Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU). Further knowledge on AML/CFT compliance was disseminated during the CSO Compliance and Accountability Support Meetings across all NANGO regions, attended by 158 CSOs. Additional insights were shared at the 13th NGO Directors' Summer Retreat, with 140 CSOs participating.

Recognising compliance as a means to legitimise CSO work and push back against unintended laws and regulations, NANGO conducted five regional CSO Compliance and Accountability Support Meetings. These meetings capacitated 158 CSOs, providing insights from officials representing the Zimbabwe Revenue Authority (ZIMRA), National Social Security Authority (NSSA), PVO Registrar, FIU, and development partners, unpacking statutory instruments and donor requirements. This proactive approach aimed to enhance CSOs knowledge and foster a more conducive operating environment.



The Midlands regional office facilitated a relationship between the Institute for Community Development in Zimbabwe (ICODZIM) and the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission (NPRC) to partner and carry out programmes on Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and Conflict Resolution in Midlands and Masvingo. A collaboration was formed between ICOD and NPRC, and they are currently implementing projects together. The primary focus of this partnership is to enhance, promote, and integrate disability inclusion and gender mainstreaming. A meeting was held on the 26th of April 2023 with 43 CSO representatives attending the meeting. The main objective was to discuss the challenges women and girls in their diversity face when accessing justice and explore ways in which women can play a pivotal role in peace-building initiatives and conflict resolution at the community level. Key topics covered include the GBV experiences of women and girls in extractive communities, the mandate of the NPRC, and how the youth and women can work with the NPRC. The partnership was aimed at ensuring a lasting relationship between ICOD Zimbabwe and the NPRC in the implementation of activities especially those to do with peace and conflict. Beyond this activity, the two are currently working together on other activities.

Membership Experience and Networking Support

End of Year Appreciation Dinner



NANGO Eastern Region hosted its inaugural End of Year Appreciation Dinner on December 8, 2023. The event, attended by 54 delegates, provided an opportunity for networking and reflection on the accomplishments of CSOs throughout the year. Honourable Misheck Mugadza, Minister of State for Provincial Affairs and Devolution, graced the occasion as the Guest of Honor. Corporate banks (NMB and Steward Bank), Genesis Energy Fuels, and various business partners showcased their products. NANGO members received certificates of appreciation, and the evening offered a platform for unwinding, networking, and fostering collaborations between CSOs and the private sector for the upcoming year 2024.

NANGO Media Arts and Culture Sector

The NANGO Media Arts and Culture sector explored the impact of art in conveying messages related to Human Rights, Gender Equality, Reproductive Health, and more. NANGO Eastern Region secretariat and seven members participated in an Arts Festival organised by Mutare Tales at Musangano Lodge in Mutare. The festival aimed to provide a platform for young artists from various genres to exchange, develop, and promote their work. Discussions focused on how NGOs can effectively contribute to the arts sector, emphasizing collaboration opportunities. It was noted that government recognition of arts and culture as vehicles for national development is still pending. NANGO's engagement in this sector demonstrates its commitment to community and national development by conveying developmental information through music, drama, poetry, paintings, and dances.

Collective Reflections and Actioning

Leadership Changes in Manicaland Province

The 2023 harmonised elections led to changes in local leadership structures, particularly in the Manicaland Province. The province welcomed a new Minister of State for Provincial Affairs and

Devolution, along with a new Secretary for Provincial Affairs and Devolution. These key stakeholders closely collaborate with NANGO members across the seven districts in the province. The NANGO Eastern Region Executive Committee (REC) seized the opportunity to meet with Honourable Advocate Misheck Mugadza, strengthening the relationship between CSOs and local leadership. Honourable Mugadza expressed interest in future engagements with all regional NANGO members.



Commemoration of International Women's Day

NANGO Regions marked International Women's Day under the theme “DigitALL Innovation and Technology for Gender Equality.” A virtual meeting, attended by 47 CSO representatives, celebrated women and girls championing transformative technology and digital education. An online campaign showcased the achievements of women in politics, business, sports, arts, and culture. The NANGO Women thematic cluster representative, Muchanyara Mukamuri from the Young Women Christian Association (YWCA), and OMNI Contact representative, Mr. Makhamhadze, facilitated the activity, providing capacity-building and sharing inspirational stories on women and technology transformation.

Action to Protect and Enhance Civic Space in Zimbabwe (APECS) Initiative

NANGO, in collaboration with the Centre for Humanitarian Analytics (CHA) and Citizens in Action Southern Africa (CIASA), started the implementation of the Action to Protect and Enhance Civic Space in Zimbabwe (APECS) project in August 2023. Supported by the Citizen Engagement and Accountability Activity (CEAA), the project seeks to address civic space challenges being faced by CSOs operating in Zimbabwe. These challenges include restrictive legislation, non-standardised entry requirements, weakened coordination systems, and compromised sector capacity. CSO Movement Building Meetings were conducted in the NANGO five regions, fostering self-introspection and reflection within the sector. The meetings aimed to promote an enabling operating environment, facilitate effective CSO actions, and address factors contributing to the shrinking civic space. The need for reviving NANGO sector meetings was identified to facilitate coordinated fundraising initiatives through consortiums and rebuild trust with various institutions and influential figures, including Councillors, Traditional leaders, the Business fraternity, Chapter 12 Institutions, and the media.

NANGO – Gweru City Council Engagement

The Midlands Region Secretariat successfully initiated discussions with the acting town clerk of Gweru City Council (GCC) regarding the MoU processing fee (written “PVO registration fee” in

GCC 2023 budget statement), aiming to secure a reduction from the initial amount of US\$2 169. Following the town clerk's suggestion, the regional office developed and submitted a formal letter to GCC which will be shared in the annexures. Encouragingly, GCC advised NANGO to pursue the matter during the next budget consultations. The regional office mobilized members and proactively engaged in budget consultations where NGOs called for the removal of the fees. The council said that the issue has been noted and will be debated further but they also proposed that a certain fee should be charged for processing of the MoUs.



NANGO-Intellectus Campus Capacity Strengthening Partnership

In a significant move to enhance the capabilities of its member organisations, NANGO signed a three-year Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with [Intellectus Campus Zimbabwe](#) on 3 March 2023. This partnership leverages the strengths of both organisations, fostering collaboration and resource sharing in the crucial area of capacity enhancement and institutional strengthening for NGOs. The core objectives are two-fold: to cultivate stronger working relationships and tap into each other's resources for member organisations development, and to establish a mutually beneficial partnership that capitalizes on their unique strengths while preserving institutional autonomy.

This collaboration builds upon existing capacity development initiatives, aiming to strengthen the civil society sector to deliver on its mandate more effectively. The focus lies on providing technical assistance in a wide range of areas, including financial management, project management, and transformative leadership. By equipping CSOs with robust internal systems, this partnership ultimately seeks to enhance their ability to deliver high-quality services to communities across Zimbabwe.

During the initial review period, the partnership yielded impressive results. Five successful training programs were conducted, attracting a total of 207 participants. The curriculum offered a diverse range of topics, catering to various needs. A virtual webinar explored the application of Artificial Intelligence (AI) for NGOs, attracting 87 participants. For those seeking in-person training, workshops were held on financial management (12 attendees), monitoring and evaluation analytics (6 attendees), and transformative leadership through a Toastmasters webinar (63 virtual attendees). Rounding out the offerings was a direct training program attended by 36 participants. This initial success bodes well for the continued growth and impact of the NANGO-Intellectus Campus Zimbabwe partnership.



Resource Mobilisation: Guidelines of Japanese Grant Assistance for Grass-Roots Human Security Projects (GGP)

On 19 January 2023, NANGO took a proactive step to connect its members with valuable funding opportunities by hosting a virtual information session on the Japanese Grant Assistance for Grass-Roots Human Security Projects (GGP). This nationwide meeting, accessible to all of NANGO's five regions, attracted representatives from 67 CSOs eager to learn more about the program.

The GGP, a financial assistance program offered by the Japanese government, provides crucial support for small-scale development projects that address basic human needs and empower communities at the grassroots level. Risa Miseki, Grant Manager, served as the session's facilitator, guiding participants through a comprehensive overview of the program. Her

presentation covered key areas such as GGP's project focus, eligibility criteria, and the application process. Recognising the importance of accessibility, Ms. Miseki also shared reference materials to ensure all attendees, even those who might have missed parts of the live session, had the resources they needed.

Furthermore, NANGO strategically disseminated these resources to its entire membership, extending the reach of the program beyond the virtual meeting. This two-pronged approach aimed to not only educate CSOs about the GGP but also to increase program uptake within Zimbabwe, ultimately contributing to a more robust resource mobilisation strategy, particularly for CBOs.



CSO Coordination and Capacity Enhancement for Health Systems Strengthening

NANGO, under this project, designed interventions aimed at responding to the existing coordination and capacity gaps. Based on the lessons learnt in implementing other projects of similar scope, there was a lack of formalised and structured CSO monitoring systems and tools to allow strategic information to be generated and utilised at a community level. More importantly, there was an absence of clearly defined community health system indicators that support the monitoring of GFATM-supported interventions. Tracking of GF-supported interventions by CSOs has been weak, as evidenced by the lack of a reporting framework that links routine community data to overall medium- and long-term reporting mechanisms. In this regard, it was prudent to utilise the State of Transparency and Accountability Barometer (STAB) monitoring system that allows for real-time and effective capture of data, analysis, and dissemination to critical stakeholders such as the Country Coordination Mechanism (CCM), the Ministry of Health and Child Care (MoHCC), the National AIDS Council (NAC), UNDP, and

others for effective decision-making around GF support to Zimbabwe.

Through this proposed project, NANGO sought to achieve enhanced data collection and processing of strategic information from the community level to support documentation, tracking, monitoring, and evaluation of GF support for improved health system strengthening and delivery. The focus was to enhance CSOs capacity so that they are more sustainable and can replicate the acquired capacities to continue with the monitoring beyond the project lifespan for resilient and sustainable systems for health as GFATM envisions. The action was largely informed by lessons learnt and experiences from the implementation of the Civil Society National Indicative Program (CSNIP) Monitoring and Advocacy Project implemented by NANGO, which had a strong bias on health systems strengthening. The CSNIP established a STAB framework, a model used to track the implementation and results of the National Indicative Program (NIP). This was therefore a unique opportunity to scale up the scope of the STAB, especially for GF-supported interventions. Though the country-level GF processes provide the Civil Society (CS) space to participate in various country processes, the absence of a CSO-driven monitoring framework has been the missing link.

Implementation of the project started with stakeholder inception and sensitisation on the project, its objectives, and the intended outcomes. This was key in ensuring maximum support, buy-in, and ownership of the project by key stakeholders. During the inception meeting, the stakeholders had an opportunity to proffer recommendations in terms of other dimensions and indicators that the project can consider adopting and mainstreaming. The project has therefore adopted various recommendations made by the key stakeholders. A mapping of the CSOs and CBOs to be part of the project as monitors was successfully conducted. A total of 70 monitors seconded from 70 CSOs (one monitor per organisation) were trained across the five regions of NANGO. The monitoring was done using the standard data collection tools developed, piloted, and tested during the project inception. The monitors were submitting reports quarterly, and this culminated in the STAB which was then used as an advocacy tool. The STAB provided demand-oriented information to the CCM oversight committee as it captures the perceptions of patients in terms of satisfaction and quality of service provided with a strong bias on GFATM interventions.

Through various NANGO platforms, consultations and feedback mechanisms were facilitated between CSOs, CCM representatives, and the CSOs constituency. Feedback gathered from the CSOs and CBOs revealed a better appreciation of CCM structures and roles and the GF funding model and country processes by CSOs. The first specific objective of the project was to ensure CSOs generate and utilise community-based information to inform GF support and decisions, and this was achieved. The second specific objective sought to strengthen CSOs engagement with policymakers, implementors, and partners to lobby and advocate for policy

changes, means of implementation, and practice. Existing platforms for engagement created by NANGO in the past and current initiatives are used for engagement at all levels.

NANGO in collaboration with other partners namely ZAN and FACT Zimbabwe jointly supported CSOs for effective participation and influence on the GC7 process from the development of the one-year addendum extension to the Zimbabwe National HIV/AIDS Strategic Plan (ZNASP IV), development of priority charter for the GC7, writing process, review of the Technical Review Panel (TRP) comments and the grant-making process. Before the GC7 processes, the project facilitated CSO sensitisation and orientation into the new GF Funding Model 4 (NFM4) and the new GF Strategy for CSOs to effectively engage with the country processes. The project was therefore instrumental in coordinating the participation of CSOs in the writing process using the solid evidence gathered through this project using the STAB framework. A documentary titled, ["Empowering CSOs for Stronger Health Systems: NANGOs Journey with BACKUP Health"](#) was developed, and it documented project results, lessons learnt, and emerging issues. The project facilitated various engagements with key structures such as the Health Centre Committee, National AIDS Council, AIDS service organisations, MoHCC, and other key stakeholders across the NANGO five regions. The STAB report, produced, was used to engage key stakeholders especially CCM and PRs, fostering debate and accountability on the achievement of health outcomes through GFATM support. Partnerships and synergies have also been explored and utilised with other actors and BACKUP Health initiative implementing partners.

Sector Capacity Strengthening in Mainstreaming Food Systems into Climate Justice Agenda

NANGO, in collaboration with the Catholic Agency for Overseas Development (CAFOD), organized a cluster meeting aimed at enhancing the capacity of its members in the Land and Environment sector to effectively integrate issues related to Food Systems and Climate Justice. This half-day hybrid meeting was conducted at a national level and saw the participation of members from across all five NANGO regions. In total, 57 participants attended the meeting, with 26 joining physically at the NANGO head office and 31 participating virtually.

The meeting comprised four key sessions, each focusing on essential topics. These sessions covered an array of subjects including an overview of Climate Change, exploring the intricate relationship between Climate Justice and Food Systems, understanding Gender and Social Inclusion aspects within Food Systems advocacy, and delving into Climate Change policies and their implications on Food Systems. Structured presentations were delivered by the facilitator, Mr. Sydney Chisi, the Executive Director of Reyna Trust, providing valuable insights and guidance throughout the sessions.

The primary objective of the meeting was to foster knowledge sharing among participants and equip them with the necessary tools and understanding to advocate effectively for sustainable solutions in the realm of Food Systems and Climate Justice. The agenda was meticulously crafted to ensure a comprehensive exploration of the selected topics, enabling participants to gain deeper insights into the complexities and interconnections within this crucial field.

CSOs Self-Regulation Consultative Meetings

A clarion call for CSOs to self-regulate was answered by NAYO, conducting training on CSO self-regulation for 14 members from the NR. This comes as a response to the context, trends, and emerging issues bedeviling CSOs operations that require them to take a bold stance to protect the civic space. Self-regulation boosts confidence, provides self-censorship amongst CSOs, and helps build CSO credibility by government and other key stakeholders. Self-regulation does not entirely remove the role of government, rather, the government will still retain its regulatory role as the regulator. Various self-regulation mechanisms were introduced, aligning to mitigate excessive regulation by governing bodies. The most appropriate mechanism was highlighted as that of choosing a body that will coordinate and govern the CSOs activities and conducts. Most of the participants agreed that with the current trends in the CSOs operating environment, it was high time CSOs should start the conversation on self-regulation.

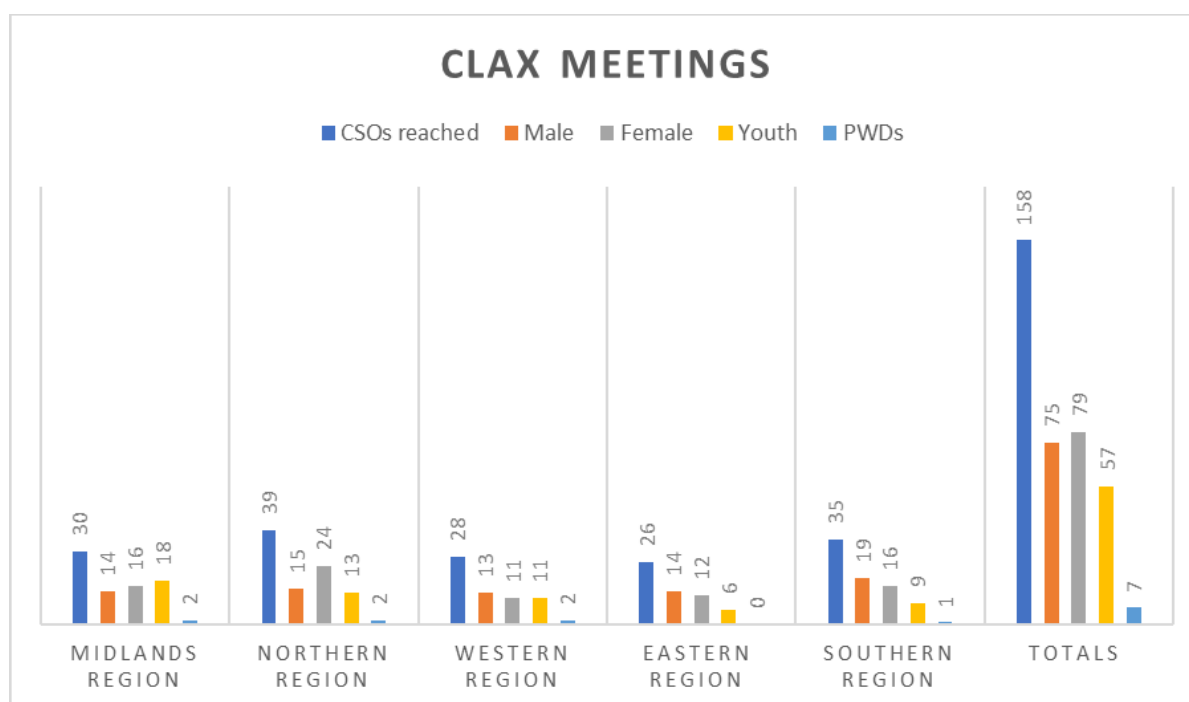


CSOs Accountability and Compliance Support Meetings

CLAX meetings in NANGO's five regions reached 158 CSOs, providing compliance training from authorities such as the FIU, ZIMRA, and NSSA. A total of five meetings were held across the country and one meeting was held at a national level during the NGO Directors' Summer Retreat where a session on compliance with available regulators was presented. NANGO facilitated three meetings in Harare, Bulawayo, and Gweru whereas the Citizen in Action Southern Africa (CIASA) facilitated meetings in Masvingo and Mutare. Cumulatively, 158

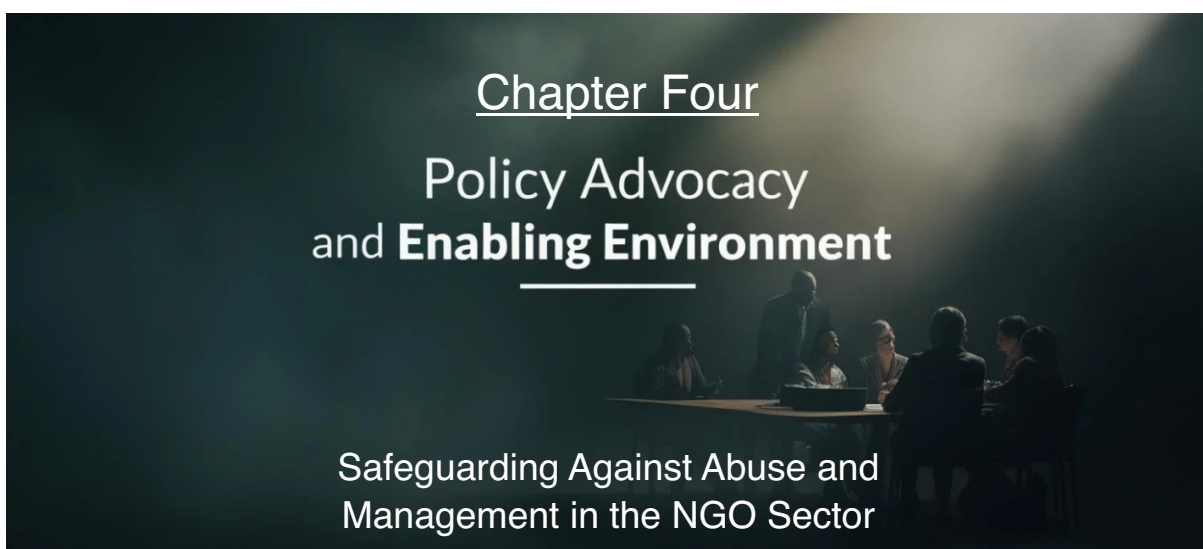
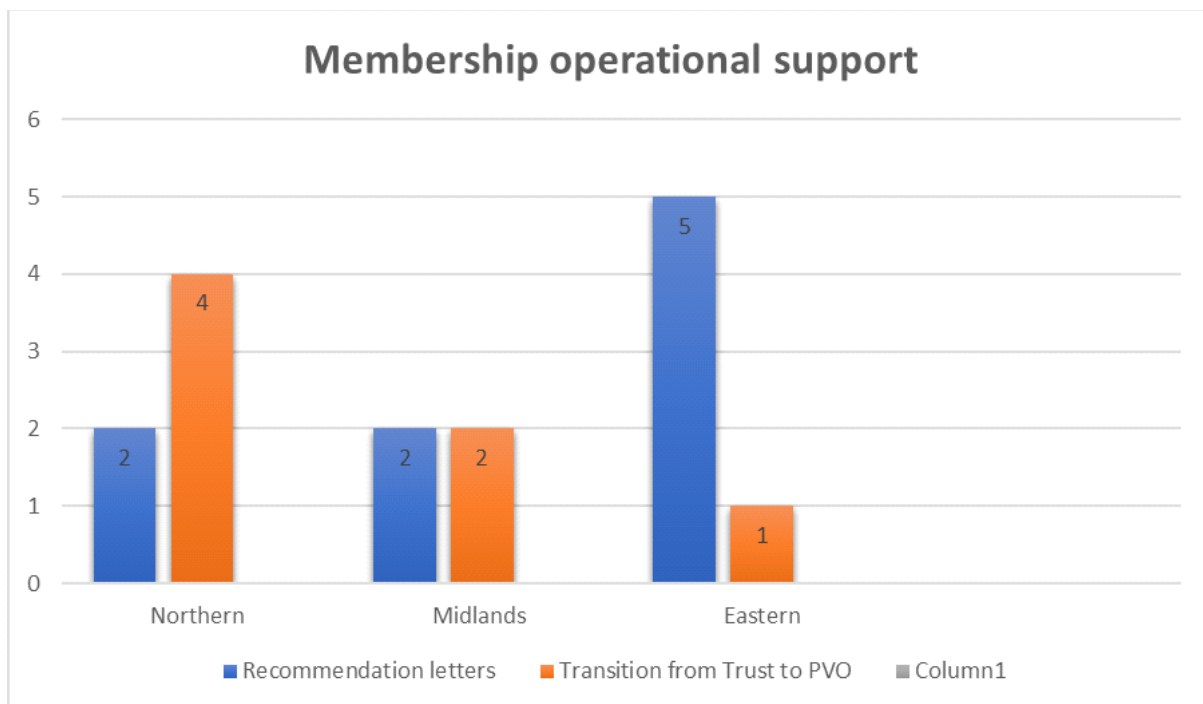
participants were reached through these meetings. Out of the 158, 75 were males, 79 were females, 57 were youth and 7 represent Persons with Disabilities. A total of 19 representatives of regulatory institutions are the National Social Security Authority (NSSA), Zimbabwe Revenue Authority (ZIMRA), Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU), MoPSLSW, and members of the National Taskforce on Anti-Money Laundering and Countering of Financing of Terrorism (AML/CFT) was reached. The meetings were held physically over one day in each region. on how the Non-Profit Organisation (NPO) sector can comply with and meet expectations on various statutory, policy, and legislative requirements.

These meetings provided a platform for productive dialogue and deliberation on issues that inform the best practices for CSOs compliance with existing laws and regulations. They served as an opportunity to unpack existing and newly introduced regulatory frameworks governing the work of CSOs and Community-Based Organisations (CBOs), with a particular focus on compliance requirements as a way of pushing back against restrictive legislative frameworks. Four regulatory institutions unpacked their regulatory frameworks during the meeting and these are, ZIMRA, NSSA, FIU, and MoPSLSW for PVOs.



Membership Operational Support

Maximizing effectiveness for its members, NANGO assisted 22 member organisations with recommendation letters during the reporting year. As the operating space for CSOs continued to shrink, NANGO actively supported seven members in transitioning from Trusts to PVOs amid the ongoing process of amending the PVO Act, emphasizing a commitment to operational support and a valuable membership proposition.



Safeguarding Against Abuse and Management in the NGO Sector

The Parliament has since November 2021, been working towards the amendment of the PVO Act. If passed, the amendments will provide the government additional and extensive powers to control how civil society governs itself and pose a threat to the constitutionally enshrined principles of freedom of expression, association, and assembly. According to [news reports](#) and MoPSLSW, 291 PVOs were deregistered in 2023 for failing to comply with regulations. The need to comply with the global FATF recommendations has been cited as the central purpose of the amendment. According to the [CIVICUS Monitor](#), a tool assessing the state of civic space in more than 190 countries and providing evidence of restrictions on human rights, Zimbabwe is listed amongst Angola and Mozambique as countries where restrictions on civil space have been continuing in the form of censorship, violent response to protests and restrictive laws. The PVO Act also compromised CSOs voice in the 2023 Harmonised elections and enhanced

shrinking space for civic activities as noted in the Election Watch 32/2023 (The EU Observer Mission Final Report) of 30 November 2023.

For CSOs to operate effectively and achieve the desired impact in Zimbabwe, there should be an enabling operating environment in which laws, policies, practices, and institutions regulating the CSO space achieve the desired oversight function while not causing undue bureaucracy, burdensome overreach and constraints to the work of the developmental organizations. The regulatory function should not choke operational efficiency and accountability should be attainable. Given current developments in the CSO regulatory arena, with an anticipated tightening of the operating environment, NANGO continued its commitment to continue engaging and defending the CSO operating environment throughout the year through capacity building, compliance, and legitimacy projects amongst others. Under the same token, NANGO also plays a key role in protecting member organizations from abuse and mismanagement, which present the risk of regulatory overreach consequently. NANGO galvanizes members towards a unified policy-influencing agenda to broaden matters related to socio-economic and political developments in the country.

During the period under review, NANGO started implementing the APECS initiative – a two-year long project and the CSO Legitimacy, Accountability, and Compliance Support Initiative (CLAX) project – a 12-month initiative to complement the APECS initiative. These projects were critical in providing the necessary platforms for engagement and advocacy for an enabling environment for CSOs in the country.

The overall goal of the APECS project is to defend and enhance civic space in pursuit of an enabling operating environment for CSOs in Zimbabwe at multiple levels of CSOs' influence and operations. Over the past decade, the operating environment for CSOs in Zimbabwe has become volatile and fluid, primarily due to social, economic, and political developments in the country. These factors have hindered the advancement of CSOs' interests in creating an enabling operating environment. The legislative regulations governing CSOs in Zimbabwe have become increasingly restrictive. In response to this, NANGO, under the APECS Project, held CSOs Coordination and Movement Building Meetings that helped strengthen CSOs coordination, capacity to respond and adapt to shrinking civic space, and complex operating environments. Five meetings were held in person during the third quarter in all NANGO regions at designated venues in the Northern, Southern, Eastern, Midlands, and Western regions. Cumulatively, a total of 193 CSO representatives attended the five meetings out of a target of 200 participants. In terms of the gender composition of participants, 101 were male and 92 were females, translating to 47 percent women representation. A total of 14 participants were representatives from the disability cluster and 76 participants were youths. Deliberate efforts were made to ensure representation for all NANGO clusters, with a special focus on women and

gender-focused organisations, grassroots CBOs, youth-focused organisations, and Organisations of People with Disabilities. CSOs agreed to remain non-partisan and sincere in their approach to ensure the improvement of State and Non-State Actors relationship. It was also agreed that there is a need for regular engagements with key government ministries and institutions to help build relations with state actors as well as ensure compliance where necessary and in accordance with laws and policies effective in the country.



NANGO collaborated with the Legal Resources Foundation (LRF) to help unpack the Criminal Law (Codification and Reform) Act 2023. The 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 Act undermines the freedom of expression as enshrined in the Zimbabwe constitution and subsequently the erosion of political and civil liberties in the country. The weaponization of the law has been one of the key highlights of the “Second Republic”. It carries harsh sentences like the death penalty for acts the government deems unpatriotic.

Subsequently, the CLAX project seeks to enhance CSOs' legitimacy, accountability, and compliance to defend and safeguard civic space in Zimbabwe. The project is motivated by the increasing trend towards restricting the operating space for CSOs in Zimbabwe using legislative and administrative instruments that seek more control and regulation of the NGO sector. Under this project, NANGO managed to hold five CSO Compliance and Accountability Support meetings. The meetings created a platform for different organisations to deliberate (under the guidance of the regulatory bodies) on existing and newly introduced regulatory frameworks for CSOs and CBOs focusing mainly on compliance requirements. To encourage fruitful dialogue and deliberations, 40 CSOs and CBOs were targeted per meeting. The regulatory frameworks .

that were covered during the sessions included the PVO Act, NSSA Act, Income Tax Act, Labour Act, the Criminal Law (Codification and Reform) Act / Patriotic Act, and the PVO Amendment Bill.

The FIU was also engaged to help in safeguarding against abuse of the NGOs, especially looking at the FATF Recommendation 8 which speaks to AML-CFT. Cumulatively, a total of 158 CSOs attended the meetings. 75 participants were males and 79 were females with 57 being youths whilst seven were PWDs. CSOs called upon the FIU, NSSA, ZIMRA, and other regulatory authorities to conduct more outreach programs to raise awareness on compliance so that NGOs understand the regulations and be able to comply with necessary regulations.



Stakeholder Engagement in Civic Matters

CSOs Engagement Meeting with the President

Following the passage of the PVO Amendment Bill (H.B. 10, 2021) by both houses in February 2023, only presidential assent remained for it to become law. In response, Zimbabwean CSOs took a proactive stance. The Zimbabwe Heads of Civil Society Coalitions and Networks (ZHSCCN) was formed in this context. Representing 20 leading CSOs across various thematic areas, the ZHSCCN aimed to foster collaboration and provide constructive engagement with the government on national development priorities outlined in Zimbabwe's development strategies and plans.

Seeking to influence the PVO Amendment Bill before its assent, the ZHSCCN secured a meeting with President Emmerson Dambudzo (ED) Mnangagwa. A delegation of 16 representatives attended, including Dr. Lamiel Phiri, Chairperson of NANGO. President Mnangagwa was joined by representatives from the Ministry of Finance and Economic

Development (MoFED), the Auditor General's Office (AG), and MoPSLSW. During the meeting, the ZHSCCN presented a ["CSOs Joint Submission on the PVO Amendment Bill,"](#) a comprehensive document outlining clause-by-clause concerns and recommendations. The President acknowledged the submission and committed to having the Auditor General review it before advising him on the next steps. This action demonstrated a willingness to consider CSO input, a critical aspect of a healthy democracy.

CSOs-Government Engagement Meeting

From the resolutions of the 12th NGO Directors Summer Retreat, NANGO organised a CSOs-Government Engagement Meeting held on the 13th of July 2023 at the Kadoma Ranch Hotel where issues of administrative and operational modalities of CSOs operations at the local government level were discussed. The engagement meeting was attended by 40 CSOs and 10 government officials from the line ministries. Both CSOs and government officials identified the absence of a systematic, structured, and time-lined engagement platform between the government and CSOs as one of the root causes of operational challenges faced by CSOs. The government officials openly confirmed that they do not know about some of the challenges faced by CSOs in real-time for prompt response, support, and clarification. A resolution was therefore made for NANGO to facilitate the convening of such systematic and structured engagements on a quarterly basis. It was also highlighted that other key ministries and government institutions such as the Ministry of Home Affairs (law enforcement agencies); Office of the President and Cabinet (OPC) - (the leading institution for provincial administration), and the Urban Councils Association of Zimbabwe (UCAZ) should always be part of the conversations around operational modalities for CSOs at the local government level.

The Government officials challenged CSOs to develop policy positions and case references or proposed models on how the operational modalities of CSOs can be enabled to advance the work that NGOs are undertaking with various constituencies. These policy monograms can assist in shaping and framing the discussions for the quarterly engagement forums that were proposed. These should incorporate policy learnings from other jurisdictions at the same time ensure the application of the logic of appropriateness.

Key Takeaways from the Activities

- NANGO was challenged to facilitate regular interface dialogue meetings between NGOs and the government to build trust and deal with polarization. Through the 13th NGO Directors Summer Retreat, CSOs advocated for the NPO Risk Assessment on FATF Recommendation 8. The FIU has since begun the consultation for the exercise to be conducted demonstrating responsiveness. Both, CSOs and government officials who attended the workshops identified the absence of a systematic, structured, and time-lined engagement platform between government and CSOs as one of the root causes of

operational challenges faced by CSOs.

- The Government officials openly confirmed that they do not know about some of the challenges faced by CSOs in real time for prompt response, support, and clarification. A resolution was, therefore, made for NANGO to facilitate the convening of such systematic and structured engagements quarterly. There are plans by the government to review the Policy on Operations of Non-Governmental Organisations in Humanitarian and Development Assistance in Zimbabwe developed by MoPSLSW (30 July 2003) as the guiding and reference policy on the operational modalities for PVOs. This policy is currently misapplied by local authorities demanding MoUs and clearance letters from NGOs.
- From the CLAX post-meeting evaluations, over 50 percent of CSOs who participated in the workshops confirmed a better understanding of tax regulations and other legal requirements. It is anticipated that this will translate to better compliance, reducing the risk of penalties and fines. This can save the NGO valuable resources and help maintain its reputation.
- The workshops also equipped CSOs with financial transparency. The feedback received so far shows that CSOs gained the necessary skills and knowledge to manage their finances more effectively and demonstrate greater transparency to donors, governments, and the public.
- The compliance workshops coincided with the introduction of the new tax administration systems and over 50 percent of CSOs reached have been successfully onboarded into the new system. These organisations now have up-to-date tax profiles and tax clearance.
- Engage in clarifying discussions on the legal status of MOUs and raise awareness within the CSO community about various acts affecting their operations, including the Criminal Code, MOPA, and the PVO Amendment Bill.
- Development and implementation of a self-regulatory framework that encompasses organisational integrity, partner integrity, financial transparency, and accountability measures.



CHAPTER FIVE: PROMOTING CSOs ACTION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Building Blocks for the 2024 VNR Process

Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) are essential tools supporting accountability for SDG16 and other SDGs at both national, regional, and global levels. They provide insight into SDG implementation, encourage inclusive multi-stakeholder participation, and support more effective 2030 Agenda implementation. Rather than an end in themselves, VNRs accelerate SDG implementation, reaffirming Member States' commitment to peaceful, just, and inclusive societies, and transparent and accountable reporting on SDG implementation.

The overarching goal of VNRs is to facilitate sharing experiences, and mutual learning, and accelerate 2030 Agenda implementation. Reports from VNR processes form the basis of annual reviews at the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF). Zimbabwe has presented two VNRs at the HLPF and is scheduled for its third in July 2024.

Meaningful VNRs involve inclusive, participatory, transparent, and thorough reviews at national and sub-national levels, producing evidence-based lessons and solutions followed by concrete action and collaboration driving SDG implementation. VNR reports should extend beyond national statistics, focusing on sub-national implementation efforts. Sub-national analysis reveals hidden realities and ensures inclusivity in accounting and reporting processes.

The theme for 2024 is “Reinforcing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Eradicating Poverty in Times of Multiple Crises: The effective delivery of sustainable, resilient, and innovative solutions.” The main goals under review are SDG 1 (no poverty), SDG 2 (zero hunger), SDG 13 (climate action), SDG 16 (peace, justice, and strong institutions), and SDG 17 (partnerships for the goals).

Preparations for the VNR process typically begin between August and October of the preceding year, ensuring adequate consultation with stakeholders and several activities are already underway in preparation for the HLPF in July 2024. A capacity-building workshop held in Kadoma from October 4th to 6th, 2023, focused on enhancing local and national government capacities for localising SDGs and the Zimbabwean National Development Strategy 1 (NDS-1) through Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs). This process, feeding into the VNRs, involved five NGOs and highlighted CSOs as critical partners in data collection and the development of the VNR and CSO Alternative SDGs Report (Spotlight Report). Local Authorities identified for piloting the VLR conducted a stakeholder mapping exercise, selecting CSOs operating in the identified local authorities to be part of the VLR stakeholders.

Zimbabwe, under the MoPSLSW's guidance, is conducting consultative meetings in all 10 provinces to gather data for the VNR report. The MoPSLSW has conducted consultative meetings in six provinces to date, with the remaining four provinces to be concluded by mid-February 2024.

In April 2024, there will be a validation workshop and this workshop will have officials from the government, development partners, CSOs, academia, and players from the private sector. The workshop is aimed at consolidating information from provincial consultations, cluster meetings, surveys conducted, administration reports, and official data from the Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency (ZimStat).

In May 2024, there will be a production of the key messages from the validation process and a position paper. The final report will be submitted on the 14th of June 2024 and the presentation of the report will be submitted in July 2024. Currently, a VNR video is being worked on by the MoPSLSW and will be disseminated across various sectors upon its finalisation.

After the presentation at the HLPF, the Ministry will embark on a dissemination exercise across all 10 provinces as a way of post-VNR advocacy. This will also be under the guidance of the MoPSLW.

CHAPTER SIX: COMMUNICATION AND VISIBILITY STATUS REVIEW



The year 2023 stands as a transformative period in NANGO's communication and visibility strategy, marked by the official launch of the NANGO Strategic Plan (2023 – 2025), bold innovations, strategic outreach endeavours, and impactful engagements. Throughout the year, NANGO demonstrated its commitment to elevating its advocacy initiatives, capacity strengthening its member organisations, and reinforcing its role as the leading voice for the non-profit sector. The introduction of new communication platforms, targeted campaigns, and the cultivation of robust relationships with stakeholders significantly contributed to enhancing NANGO's influence and presence.

While celebrating the achievements of the year, it is essential to acknowledge that the journey was not without its challenges. The landscape of communication and visibility presents ongoing opportunities for improvement. NANGO remains dedicated to addressing these areas and fine-tuning its strategies, ensuring that it continues to effectively represent and amplify the impactful work of its members not only within Zimbabwe but also on the regional and global stages.

In a world overflowing with information, our trusty pen has evolved into a tricky tool. Deepfakes and false stories now shape stories and narratives, influencing opinions with surprising ease. This powerful tool cuts through our information world, leaving civil society feeling battered. The space for community involvement got smaller, especially in 2023, with misinformation and disinformation making it even tougher. Zimbabwe's NGOs faced these challenges, battling negative stories created by the media, lawmakers, authorities, and sometimes even the public.

This commitment to positive dialogue showed results in 2023. With support from CEAA, NANGO had a face-to-face discussion with the government, specifically MoPSLSW, about the tricky issue of MOUs and Clearance Letters. The meeting, with representatives from 40 local CSOs, the government, and the NANGO Secretariat, showed NANGO's belief in dialogue as a way to make progress. A powerful 15-minute video documentary highlighted the transformative work of NGOs, creating a story of collaboration and positive impact.

This fight for positive narratives was not just on one front. The 13th NGO Directors Summer Retreat was full of strategies to rebuild public trust. Participants saw the power of solidarity and envisioned partnerships with different sectors like business, academia, and media. This shift from defending to working together promised to change public views, moving from negative NGO narratives to stories of shared responsibility and progress. The scars of the PVO Amendment Bill, a reminder of the vulnerability of civic space, pushed for this new approach.



NANGO strengthened its narrative-building power by holding a Media Engagement and Sensitisation Meeting on 7 December 2023. This important activity brought together 23 media professionals and three NGO representatives, working towards the creation of new narratives beneficial to the transformative and sustainable development of the country. The activity yielded valuable

insights into media practitioners' perspectives on the true nature of CSO work in Zimbabwe. This was crucial in identifying biases contributing to negative media portrayals of CSOs and their initiative. Additionally, the activity provided an overview of CSOs role, also taking into consideration issues of legitimacy and accountability, which helped to shift some negative perceptions among media practitioners. Perhaps most importantly, the activity laid the groundwork for improved engagement and collaboration between the media and civil society sectors, with media practitioners expressing a clear desire for continued improved partnership and collaboration.

Digital Media

2023 was a year etched in dynamism and challenge for the association. As the country navigated the complexities of a post-pandemic landscape and the political climate surrounding the 2023 Harmonised Elections, NANGO emerged as a resolute voice for the Non-Profit sector, both online and offline.

Our digital channels buzzed with activity, serving as vital platforms for advocacy, information dissemination, and stakeholder engagement. NANGO's website became a nexus for critical updates on policy changes, funding opportunities, and advocacy campaigns. Social media played a pivotal role in amplifying the voices of our member organisations, showcasing their impactful work on the ground, and raising awareness about pressing social issues.

The year saw several digital campaigns spark widespread engagement and drive positive change. The #DefendCivicSpace campaign challenged the shrinking operating environment for

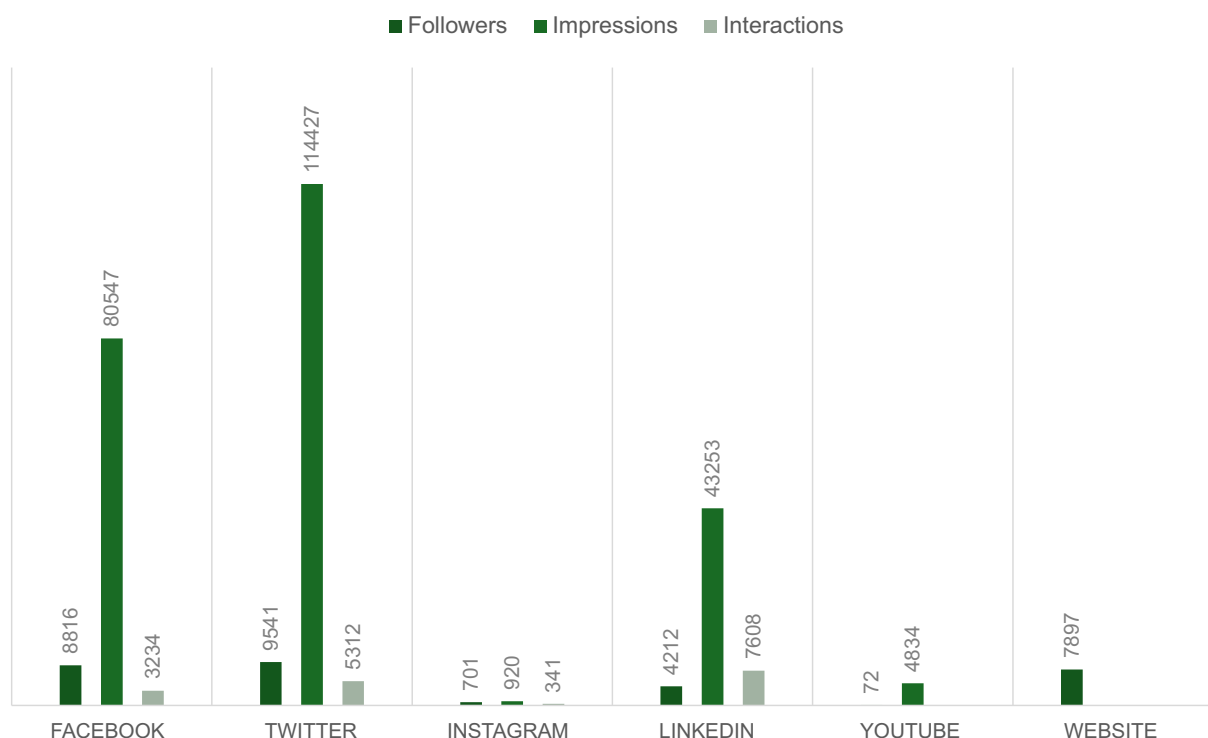
NGOs, garnering significant online traction and fostering crucial conversations about protecting democratic values. Additionally, the #UniteToAct campaign rallied renewed enthusiasm towards the acceleration of SDGs implementation at the national, regional, and international levels. The #WorldNGODay sparked conversations on the crucial work that CSOs are doing in the communities they serve and impact stories from members of NANGO were shown both on social media and the website.

As we step into 2024, the digital realm remains a fertile ground for NANGO's continued growth and impact. We will continue to leverage the power of technology to advocate for a strengthened civic space, champion the vital work of our members, and empower civil society to contribute meaningfully to Zimbabwe's development.

This report is merely a glimpse into the dynamic digital tapestry woven by NANGO in 2023. We remain committed to utilising the power of digital communication to amplify our voices, connect with stakeholders, and ultimately, create a brighter future for Zimbabwe's vibrant Non-Profit sector.

Digital Media Overview for 2023

NANGO 2023 DIGITAL MEDIA OVERVIEW



Lessons Learnt

1. To achieve more results, the organisation must strengthen its private sector engagement strategy since the business sector can both financially and technically support communication-related initiatives and activities.
2. There is a need to tailor communication to suit the specific needs of the diverse needs of NANGO key stakeholders.
3. With most people preferring digital formats of communication, updates, and information, there is a need to improve the digital presence of NANGO and the growth of the newly launched website through consistent updates and resource uploads.

Successes

1. Launched the NANGO WhatsApp Information Hub.
2. Social media campaigns like #WorldNGODay and #UniteToAct increased public awareness and engagement in critical policy debates.
3. Successfully set up a Google 4 Analytics account for the website to monitor and evaluate the impact of our website.
4. Conducted an engagement and sensitisation meeting with the media to forge new partnerships and demystify negative perceptions around the legitimacy and accountability of CSOs operating in Zimbabwe.
5. Built a media database to allow for easy communication of NGO work and the creation of a new narrative suitable to the enhancement of civic space.

Challenges

1. Limited human and financial resources to build a sound digital information hub for stakeholders such as the NANGO Digital Library and a membership portal on the website.
2. Limited content creation and gathering, especially from member organisations resulted in visibility activities failing to live their full potential.
3. Lack of a systemic strategy to conduct a communication activities impact assessment or MEL to gather feedback on what is working, what needs improvement, and why certain initiatives failed to generate the intended impact.
4. Lack of consistent communication and information tailored to the specific needs of the diverse stakeholders that the organisation serves, most importantly, the member organisations.
5. Limited financial resources to finance awareness and advocacy campaigns, especially on mainstream broadcast and print media channels.

Action Points for the Future

1. Expand the reach and impact of the digital platforms including the website.
2. Build strategic partnerships with media outlets, private sector entities, and academic institutions to enable technical and financial resource mobilisation-.
3. Invest in data analytics and digital marketing tools to further optimise communication strategies.
4. Conduct regular training workshops for NANGO members and CSOs on effective communication and media engagement.
5. Establish a dedicated monitoring and evaluation framework to track and measure the impact of communication efforts.



Indicator	Reach/Value (2022)	Reach/Value (2023)
Number of Coordination Meetings Conducted	24	29
Number of CSOs Representatives Reached	294	419
Number of Networking Platforms Created	13	24
Number of Publications Produced and Disseminated	5	9
Number of Membership Support Visits	39	43
Number of CSOs Engaged as IPs	75	145
Number of CSOs Mobilised for Policy and Advocacy	189	419

Partners and Sponsors Appreciation



As we contemplate the events of the year 2023, we take a moment to extend our profound gratitude and heartfelt appreciation for the invaluable support and generosity you have provided throughout this period. The steadfast commitment and financial contributions from our esteemed partners and sponsors have been instrumental in propelling our mission forward and effecting significant enhancements in our value proposition to our members and key stakeholders. Your belief in our cause has emboldened us, infusing our work with renewed vigour and unwavering determination. Thanks to your support, we have been able to execute essential programmes, furnish critical resources, and extend vital assistance to stakeholders facing diverse challenges.

Beyond the financial support, we are genuinely thankful for the partnership and trust you have vested in us. Your guidance, expertise, feedback, and collaborative spirit have played a pivotal role in shaping our strategies and ensuring the efficacy of our initiatives. We hold in high regard the relationships we have cultivated within our ecosystem and eagerly anticipate further fortifying these connections in the years ahead.

As we reflect on the accomplishments and milestones of this year, we acknowledge that none of this would have been attainable without the unwavering support of our generous partners and sponsors. Your steadfast belief in our vision and organisation objectives has consistently served as a wellspring of inspiration and motivation for our entire team.

We extend our deepest gratitude to the following for their invaluable sponsorship and partnership:

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