



Enhancing
Civil Society Visibility
in Zimbabwe

Annual Narrative Report

January to December 2024

March, 2025

Strengthening the Voice of NGOs Operating in Zimbabwe



The National Association of Non-Governmental Organisations (NANGO)

ANNUAL REPORT 2024

January - December

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Designed By: Chris Katsaura

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Table of Acronyms

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| AGM | Annual General Meeting |
| AML/CFT | Anti-Money Laundering and Countering Financial Terrorism |
| APECS | Action to Protect and Enhance Civic Space in Zimbabwe |
| CBO | Community-Based Organisations |
| CCM | Country Coordinating Mechanism |
| CSOs | Civil Society Organisations |
| CSR | Corporate Social Responsibility |
| DDC | District Development Coordinators |
| EU | European Union |
| EWMI | East-West Management Institute |
| FIU | Financial Intelligence Unit |
| FNF | Friedrich Naumann Foundation in Zimbabwe |
| GF | Global Fund |
| GPEDC | Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation |
| HLPF | High-Level Political Forum |
| KRA | Key Result Area |
| LRF | Legal Resources Foundation |
| MoFED&IP | Ministry of Finance, Economic Development & Investment Promotion |
| MoPSLSW | Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare |
| MOUs | Memoranda of Understanding |
| NA | National Assembly |
| NANGO | National Association of Non-Governmental Organisations |
| NAYO | National Association of Youth Organisations |
| NEC | National Executive Committee |
| NECWEI | National Employment Council for Welfare and Education Institutions |
| NED | National Endowment for Democracy |
| NGOs | Non-Governmental Organisations |
| NSSA | National Social Security Authority |
| OBS | Open Budget Survey |
| PVO | Private Voluntary Organisation |
| QuAAM | Quality Assurance and Accountability Mechanism |
| REC | Regional Executive Committee |
| SDGs | Sustainable Development Goals |
| SRCSS | Southern Rhodesia Council of Social Services |
| T2R | Talk to your Regulator |

| | |
|------------------|--|
| TIZw | Transparency International Zimbabwe |
| UNHR | United Nations Human Rights |
| USAID | United States Agency for International Development |
| VMCZ | Voluntary Media Council of Zimbabwe |
| VNR | Voluntary National Review |
| VOICE | Voluntary Organisations in Community Enterprise |
| ZCC | Zimbabwe Council of Churches |
| ZIMRA | Zimbabwe Revenue Authority |
| ZIMRIGHTS | Zimbabwe Human Rights Association |
| ZIMSIIX | Zimbabwe Social Impact Investment Exchange |
| ZLHR | Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights |
| ZTN | Zimbabwe Television Network |



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We Are NANGO

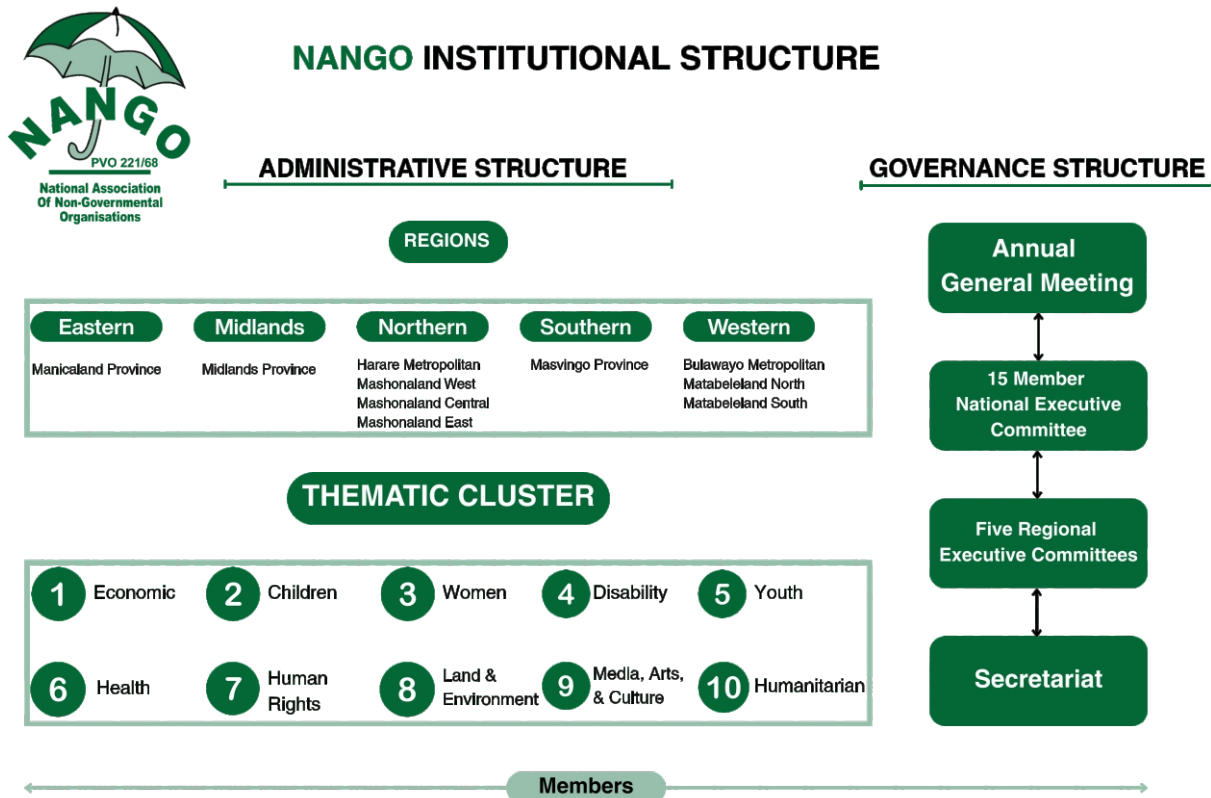


The National Association of Non-Governmental Organisations ([NANGO](#)) is the official voluntary coordinating body of registered Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in their diversity operating in Zimbabwe. NANGO is registered as a Private Voluntary Organisation (PVO) under the PVO Act Chapter [17:05]. 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 was founded in 1962 as a welfare organisation under the name of the Southern Rhodesia Council of Social Services (SRCSS), predominantly for social welfare organisations. NANGO was formally registered in 1968 following the promulgation of the Welfare Organisations Act in 1967, later transformed into the PVO Act in 2001. Post-independence in 1980, there was a gradual increase in the number of NGOs operating in Zimbabwe, particularly in the rural areas, and thus the organisation was renamed Voluntary Organisations in Community Enterprise (VOICE). The organisation was renamed, 10 years later, to the National Association of Non-Governmental Organisations (NANGO) due to geographical expansion and a wider membership base. Now with 62 years of existence and having learnt vast experience in NGO coordination, NANGO continues to be ambitious as well as to broaden its value proposition to its membership going into the future. As of December 2024, NANGO has a total membership base of 1,260 NGOs across Zimbabwe, with membership drawn from PVOs, Trusts, and Common Law Universitas. Of these, 877 were active in 2024.

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 (AGM). Administratively, NANGO is decentralised into five regional offices that coordinate the activities of the NGOs in all ten provinces of Zimbabwe. Cognisant of the diversity of membership, members are clustered into 10 thematic sectors in line with their programmatic focus: Media, Arts and Culture, Children,

Disability, Economic, Health, Human Rights, Humanitarian, Land and Environment, Women, and Youth. NANGO is responsible for unifying these various sectors by creating spaces for collaboration, networking, knowledge exchange, mutual support, and the development of common best practices. The NANGO Institutional Structure is as given below:



What Drives Our Ambition

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

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



Our Organisational Values

1. **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.
2. **MEMBER-CENTRICITY:** 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.
3. **INTEGRITY:** We are firm believers in integrity by abiding by the highest ethical standards of transparency, accountability, and mutual respect.
4. **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.
5. **COLLABORATION AND 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.
6. **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.
7. **DIVERSITY:** Our wide membership reflects our sustained belief in a development sector that embraces and converges the country's rich socio-cultural diversity.
8. **INNOVATION:** We constantly explore creative ways to strengthen NGOs operating in Zimbabwe. We are agile and responsive to the changing needs of our stakeholders.

Our Strategic Priority Areas (2023 – 2025)

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

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

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

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

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

At a time of greater scrutiny on NGOs in terms of operational efficacy, sustainability, and VFM, the imperative need for institutionalised capacity development, training, and mentorship of these organisations has never been more pressing. As an umbrella body, we intend to leverage our alumni, networks, as well as our wide access to expertise and training resources within our networks to consolidate and package various kinds of training programmes aimed at improving the way NGOs are led and operate in Zimbabwe. With the capacity needs of NGOs wide-ranging from transformative leadership, and organisational development to governance, to project cycle management right through to reporting, we consider it essential that we standardise the capacity building, training, and mentorship, ensuring that it is not ad hoc, but comprehensive and responsive to actual needs on the ground, at the same time being recognised for credibility among key stakeholders in the development space. We are convinced this will enhance our members' achievement of operational efficiency.

The realisation of impact at the grassroots level enables them to demonstrate VFM and equips them to be sustainable going into the future. We believe the NGO sector is a critical player in

advancing socio-economic development in Zimbabwe and, to that effect, must be technically supported to be fully effective. We intend to achieve this through the establishment of a CSO Academy to serve the sector in Zimbabwe. The CSO Academy will strike a balance between courses that focus on theory and practice, packaged in the form of short courses and masterclasses (in the preliminary phases) to ensure a fast route to gaining accredited and practical skills that can easily be applied to daily programming.

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 the work of the developmental organisations. We believe that the regulatory function should not choke operational efficiencies, and that accountability should be mutual and not burdensome. Given current developments in the CSO regulatory arena, with an anticipated tightening of the operating environment throughout this strategic period, we commit ourselves to continuing to engage and defend the CSO operating environment to enable ease of doing business 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 presents the risk of regulatory overreach as a consequence. As NANGO, we will also galvanise our members towards a unified policy influencing agenda (beyond just the sector-specific issues) to broader matters related to socio-economic and political developments in the country.

Strategic Priority 5: Promoting effective action on the SDGs.

As NANGO, we believe that NGOs are already playing a critical role in advancing the implementation and achievement of the SDGs through local-level programmes, complementing government developmental programmes, and 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.

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THE 2024 NATIONAL ANNUAL NARRATIVE REPORT



NANGO Chairperson's Overview: Civil Society at a Crossroad

2024 marked the conclusion of my third and final year as the Chairperson of NANGO. On behalf of the Board, I extend my deepest appreciation to the entire membership of NANGO, Secretariat, distinguished stakeholders, and the partners of the association for the trust and confidence you placed in us. It has been an honour to serve and steward the association during a period of immense complexity and transformation. Together, we have upheld the principles of solidarity, accountability, and resilience in the face of both opportunity and adversity. I would like to commend my fellow Board members for their steadfast dedication, thoughtful leadership, and tireless pursuit of our shared mission. The progress we achieved in 2024 was made possible through our strong collaboration with stakeholders, development partners, and, above all, the committed team at the NANGO Secretariat.

The year 2024 marked the second year of our Strategic Plan (2023 – 2025), a roadmap developed to guide our collective efforts in strengthening civic space, promoting accountable governance, and amplifying the voice of civil society. It was a year that demanded both resilience and innovation, as we responded to a dynamic and, at times, constrained operating environment. The civic space in Zimbabwe continued to face mounting pressures. Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) operated amidst growing uncertainty, with intensified scrutiny, regulatory ambiguity, and limited avenues for engagement. The ongoing debate around legislative reforms signalled a potential shift in how CSOs are governed, raising concerns about autonomy, operational freedom, and the future of civic actors.

Communication gaps between regulatory authorities and civil society widened mistrust, with many organisations struggling to interpret and meet evolving compliance expectations. These challenges not only disrupted operations but also weakened the ability of CSOs to effectively deliver on their mandates, particularly in underserved and vulnerable communities.

Resource constraints remained a pressing issue. Zimbabwe's macroeconomic environment continued to be defined by inflationary pressures, currency volatility, and declining donor inflows. These factors significantly impacted the financial sustainability of many organisations, forcing them to adopt leaner models of operation and realign programmatic priorities. While the sector demonstrated remarkable agility, the scope and scale of developmental challenges often exceeded available capacities and resources.

The broader socio-economic climate further compounded these difficulties. Rising poverty, youth unemployment, substance abuse, and a surge in mental health challenges placed additional burdens on civil society. In many cases, CSOs stepped into the gap, providing essential services in health, education, and social protection where state structures were overstretched or absent. Yet, the magnitude of demand frequently eclipsed our ability to respond, highlighting the critical need for enhanced collaboration among government, civil society, and the private sector.

Throughout 2024, organisations working in the areas of governance, human rights, and accountability reported an increasingly restrictive environment. Heightened surveillance, intimidation, and delegitimization of CSOs threatened to erode civic trust and participation. The narrative framing of CSOs as adversarial actors rather than development partners undermined the spirit of national dialogue and inclusive development. Despite these challenges, the role of CSOs in upholding democratic values and promoting social justice remains not only relevant but indispensable.

As we look ahead, there is an urgent call for a renewed social compact; one that recognises the essential role of civil society in nation-building. Strengthening civic space must be a national priority. This requires inclusive, respectful dialogue between government and civil society; legal and regulatory frameworks that promote, rather than restrict, civic participation; and a shared commitment to transparency, equity, and sustainable development. Zimbabwe's development cannot be externally driven alone. There is a growing imperative to harness domestic resources more strategically, including value addition and beneficiation of our natural assets. Sustainable national development must be rooted in inclusive partnerships, accountable institutions, and resilient communities.

In closing, 2024 was a year that tested the tenacity and unity of our sector. Yet, it also reaffirmed the vital role CSOs play in advancing the aspirations of our people. As we turn the page, let us recommit ourselves to the ideals that define us: service, solidarity, and the unrelenting pursuit of a just, democratic, and prosperous Zimbabwe.

Thank you.



Dr. Lamiel BK Phiri
National Board Chairperson, NANGO

NANGO Executive Director's Overview

2024 marked my second year of leading the NANGO Secretariat, a journey defined by purpose, persistence, and progress. Leading such a dynamic and committed team has been both humbling and inspiring. Each day has brought with it opportunities to serve, to lead with intention, and to strengthen the very foundations of our institution. Against the backdrop of a challenging operating environment, we remained steadfast in our mission to empower civil society organisations, amplify their voices, and reinforce their role as vital agents of development, democracy, and good governance. It has been deeply fulfilling to witness our collective efforts translating into tangible action, responsive support to our membership, and renewed energy within the sector.

At the institutional level, 2024 was a year of recalibration and service-oriented leadership. We deepened our focus on delivering value to our members, enhancing our internal systems, and fostering meaningful engagement across all regions. Through capacity-building initiatives, strategic partnerships, and stakeholder engagement platforms, we have not only responded to the pressing needs of our members but also ensured that NANGO remains a credible, agile, and resilient convener of the NGO sector. The progress we have made is a testament to the spirit of collaboration, the dedication of the NANGO Secretariat, and the trust and active participation of our members across the country. Together, we are shaping a stronger, more responsive civil society that is ready to rise to today's challenges and shape tomorrow's Zimbabwe.

2024 was a transformative year for NANGO, marked by bold strides in advancing our mission to promote an enabling environment for CSOs in Zimbabwe. Amidst shifting regulatory, political, and funding landscapes, NANGO remained steadfast in its mandate of championing civil society's relevance, legitimacy, and sustainability as a driver of inclusive and accountable development.

We are proud to reflect on several key milestones that defined our collective journey in 2024. A significant achievement was the strengthening of structured engagement between CSOs and sector regulators, fostering an environment for open dialogue and mutual understanding. These engagements helped us to register progress towards addressing longstanding challenges such as the administrative burden of securing Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs), clearance letters, and the implications of the Private Voluntary Organisations (PVO) Amendment Bill. Through sustained advocacy, NANGO facilitated various interface meetings to address these regulatory hurdles.

In the area of coordination and movement building, NANGO convened 37 coordination meetings (15 at the regional level and 3 nationally), reaching 314 CSOs. These platforms enabled collective action, consensus-building, and reflection on key policy and operational issues affecting the sector. A flagship highlight of the year was the 14th Edition of the NGO Directors' Summer Retreat, held from 23–25 October at Troutbeck Hotel in Nyanga, under the theme “Empowering Civil Society to Navigate an Evolving Landscape for Collective Impact.” With 143 participants in attendance, the retreat served as a pivotal moment of reflection, strategy development, and capacity strengthening. The retreat also witnessed the launch of the Talk to Your Regulator (T2R) Initiative, a groundbreaking platform aimed at bridging the gap between CSOs and regulatory authorities. The T2R initiative seeks to demystify compliance processes, enhance transparency, and promote constructive state-CSO relations, a crucial step toward fostering a supportive and responsive regulatory framework.

In our policy advocacy portfolio, NANGO spearheaded the participation of civil society in Zimbabwe's 2024 Voluntary National Review (VNR) on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Through targeted capacity-building, 61 CSOs were empowered with the tools to monitor SDG progress, engage in policy dialogue, and contribute to the national VNR report. The resulting CSO submission provided alternative perspectives and evidence-based recommendations that enriched Zimbabwe's SDG narrative and reinforced inclusive development.

We also advanced the groundwork for voluntary self-regulation by initiating processes to standardize and harmonize NGO practices in line with international norms. This was complemented by the continued development of the ZIMSIIIX platform, a central digital hub to profile NGOs, showcase impact, and foster sector-wide accountability. A cornerstone of our self-regulation work was the introduction of the Quality Assurance and Accountability Mechanism (QuAAM). This structured framework supports NGOs in conducting self-assessments, followed by external validation from Regional Executive Committees. QuAAM aims to institutionalize a culture of integrity, performance measurement, and continuous improvement across the civil society sector.

In the spirit of providing members with fulfilling exposure and experience, the 2024 Northern Region NGO Expo & Winter School stood out as a successful model for membership value proposition. Featuring 61 exhibitors and attended by at least 185 delegates, this initiative promoted local visibility, stakeholder engagement, and shifting of the narrative. The regional Winter Schools and Expos will now be rolled out across all five regions in 2025.

NANGO also took a leadership role in the 4th round of monitoring under the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (GPEDC), alongside the National Association of Youth Organisations (NAYO). As CSO focal points, we facilitated CSOs' consultations and dialogues, data collection, and capacity-building to ensure that Zimbabwean civil society contributed meaningfully to discussions on inclusive partnerships, aid effectiveness, and mutual accountability.

Despite constrained donor funding and a tightening civic space, NANGO responded by promoting financial resilience and adaptive leadership within CSOs. We supported organisations to explore innovative financing mechanisms, strengthen internal governance, and remain responsive to emerging national priorities. Through targeted capacity-building sessions on governance, advocacy, compliance, financial management, and digital transformation, we helped position CSOs for greater agility and impact. These efforts were complemented by peer learning exchanges and strategic convenings that fostered collaboration, foresight, and resilience.

In addition to our achievements, we remained conscious of the challenges that CSOs in Zimbabwe continue to face, including the evolving regulatory landscape, shrinking civic space, and limited funding to support CSOs work. As we transition into 2025, the civil society sector must remain resolute, strategic, and united. The incoming leadership of NANGO is geared to build on the momentum we have collectively created; deepening impact, expanding partnerships, and advancing CSOs cause in Zimbabwe. We must continue to work collaboratively to defend and protect civic space, amplify the voices of marginalized groups, and position civil society as a trusted and indispensable partner in development.

Let me take this opportunity to express my profound gratitude to the outgoing National Board Chairperson, Dr. Lamiel Phiri, and the entire National Executive Committee (NEC) for their unwavering dedication, guidance, and leadership during their tenure. I also warmly welcome the newly elected NEC led by Mrs. Pester Siraha, ushered in through our successful Elective Annual General Meetings. We look forward to their stewardship as we navigate the next chapter of civil society's contribution to national transformation.

To our Regional Executive Committees (RECs), the dedicated NANGO Secretariat, our funding and technical partners, and all civil society actors, we thank you deeply for your support, collaboration, and resilience. Together, we will continue to drive meaningful transformation, build a strong and credible civil society, and ensure that CSOs remain a formidable force for social justice, good governance, and sustainable development in Zimbabwe. Let us remain committed to our shared vision: an empowered, effective, and accountable civil society sector for a better Zimbabwe.



Ernest Nyimai
Executive Director, NANGO

REACH ANALYSIS

Table 1: Reach Analysis 2024

| Indicator | Unit of Measurement | Reach/Value 2023 | Reach/Value 2024 |
|---|---------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Number of Coordination meetings conducted | Meetings | 29 | 37 |
| Number of CSOs representatives reached | Participants | 419 | 537 |
| Number of networking platforms created. | Forums | 24 | 21 |
| Number of publications produced and disseminated. | Publications | 9 | 8 |
| Number of CSOs reached. | Meetings | 123 | 314 |



CHAPTER ONE: NANGO INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING

Membership Overview

NANGO's membership base remains the cornerstone of its institutional mandate, serving as the driving force behind the association's mission and impact. The continued engagement and active participation of members underscore the relevance and value of NANGO in Zimbabwe's evolving civic space. As a voluntary representative body for NGOs across diverse sectors, NANGO is committed to ensuring that its membership remains strong, dynamic, and responsive to the changing needs of civil society. The association's ability to coordinate, advocate, and amplify the collective voice of CSOs is directly linked to the strength and vibrancy of its membership network.

Recognizing that its mandate is guided by the interests and priorities of its members, NANGO has continued to prioritize enhancing membership value, servicing, and engagement. This includes expanding the range of benefits available to member organisations, strengthening capacity-building initiatives, and ensuring that CSOs remain well-informed and empowered to navigate operational and regulatory challenges. In line with this commitment, NANGO has made deliberate efforts to attract new members, ensuring greater inclusivity, representation, and sectoral diversity.

Despite the operational and financial constraints faced by the civil society sector in 2024, NANGO successfully registered 15 new organisations, further solidifying its role as the key coordinating body for NGOs in Zimbabwe. The growing membership base reflects the trust and confidence that CSOs continue to place in NANGO as their representative platform for

advocacy, networking, and capacity strengthening.

As NANGO continues to strengthen its institutional framework, it remains committed to ensuring that members receive tailored support, access to strategic partnerships, and meaningful opportunities for engagement. The table below provides a detailed breakdown of the new organisations registered under NANGO during the reporting period, illustrating the expansion and diversification of the membership base in 2024.

Table 2: New Members Approved per Region 2024

| No | NANGO Region | Organisation | Status |
|----|--------------|--|--------|
| 1 | Eastern | Bongai Shamwari | PVO |
| 2 | Eastern | Everyone's Child Charities | Trust |
| 3 | Eastern | Community Development and Empowerment Organisation | PVO |
| 4 | Northern | Women Against All Forms of Discrimination | Trust |
| 5 | Northern | Shunamite Child Care Organisation | PVO |
| 6 | Northern | Zimbabwe Health Interventions | PVO |
| 7 | Northern | Friends for Children Development | PVO |
| 8 | Northern | Jedidiah Trust | Trust |
| 9 | Western | Africa Kibura | PVO |
| 10 | Western | Apostolic Zion Association | Trust |
| 11 | Western | Fight Against Substance Abuse | PVO |
| 12 | Midlands | Green Africa Trust | Trust |
| 13 | Midlands | Yamurai Support Organization | Trust |
| 14 | Midlands | Midlands AIDS Caring Organization | PVO |
| 15 | Midlands | Womandla Foundation | Trust |

The table below provides a detailed breakdown of NANGO's membership growth and composition from 2023 to 2024, showcasing the expanding reach and influence of the association within Zimbabwe's civil society ecosystem.

Table 3: Active Membership Overview per Region 2024

| Region | 2023 | 2024 |
|----------|------|------|
| Eastern | 76 | 79 |
| Midlands | 71 | 75 |
| Northern | 565 | 570 |
| Southern | 48 | 48 |
| Western | 102 | 105 |
| Total | 862 | 877 |



CHAPTER TWO: COORDINATION AND CAPACITY STRENGTHENING

In 2024, NANGO remained steadfast in its commitment to strengthening the coordination and capacity of CSOs across Zimbabwe, ensuring that the sector remains well-organised, resilient, and responsive to emerging challenges. As the umbrella body for NGOs, NANGO recognizes that effective coordination is essential for fostering collaboration, amplifying collective advocacy efforts, and enhancing the sector's impact on national development and democratic governance processes. Throughout the year, the association prioritized initiatives aimed at improving sector-wide engagement, promoting knowledge exchange, collective reflection, and equipping CSOs with the necessary skills and tools to thrive in an evolving operating environment.

Against the backdrop of shrinking civic space, regulatory constraints, and funding uncertainties, NANGO intensified its capacity enhancement programs, ensuring that its members were adequately prepared to navigate legal, financial, and operational challenges. This is key in addressing operational deficiencies that continue to militate against CSOs, thereby

compromising their legitimacy, accountability, and transparency. The association convened nine thematic cluster meetings, training workshops, and knowledge-sharing forums, focusing on good corporate governance, financial sustainability, advocacy strategies, digital transformation, and compliance with existing regulatory frameworks. It is anticipated that the initiatives will not only build institutional resilience but also promote sector-wide alignment with international best practices in civil society governance and management.

CSO Coordination and Movement Building Meetings

Throughout 2024, NANGO remained committed to coordinating and strengthening civil society movement-building efforts to ensure a unified and strategic response to challenges facing the sector, including the contentious PVO Amendment Bill, H.B. 2, 2024. As part of this effort, 10 regional coordination and movement-building meetings were conducted, reaching a total of 366 CSO representatives. These meetings were held under the Action to Enhance Civic Space in Zimbabwe (APECS) initiative, with support from the East-West Management Institute (EWMI) and USAID. The primary objective was to foster a coordinated and proactive approach to the operational and regulatory hurdles faced by CSOs, while also building a stronger civil society movement to advocate for an enabling environment.



The meetings were structured around three key objectives: (1) Updating CSOs on ongoing processes surrounding the PVO Amendment Bill and engaging in collective scenario mapping and strategic planning; (2) Providing a platform for CSOs to share their experiences with operational requirements and demands from local authorities; and (3) Offering feedback to the wider CSO sector on national-level engagements conducted to date. These discussions were critical in ensuring that civil society actors remained informed, prepared, and actively engaged in advocacy efforts to address sector-wide constraints.

Given the legal and policy implications of the PVO Amendment Bill, the meetings were conducted in collaboration with legal analysis think tanks, including the Legal Resources Foundation (LRF), Amnesty International Zimbabwe, and Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum. These partners provided expert analysis on the legal provisions of the Bill, outlining the potential risks to CSO autonomy, operational freedom, and long-term sustainability. Presenters also highlighted the broader trend of shrinking civic space both within Zimbabwe and across the region, reinforcing the urgent need for collective and strategic engagement on regulatory issues.

The meetings managed to create a platform to provide a comprehensive update on national, regional, and global civic space engagements, shedding light on regulatory constraints, funding challenges, and the broader implications of the PVO Amendment Bill. The presentation emphasized the importance of moving beyond reactionary responses and instead developing concrete, solution-oriented advocacy strategies. The discussion also included updates on ongoing advocacy efforts related to the misapplication of FATF Recommendation 8, which has been used in some instances to justify restrictive regulations against NGOs under the guise of countering terrorism financing.

Strengthening NGO Accountability through the QuAAM Framework

During the reporting period, the association, in collaboration with consortium partners under the APECS project, made substantial progress in promoting transparency and accountability within Zimbabwe's civil society sector. This was achieved through the development and roll-out of the Quality Assurance and Accountability Certification Mechanism (QuAAM)—a voluntary self-assessment and regulation framework designed to strengthen internal governance and promote self-governance among NGOs. The QuAAM framework was introduced to enhance legitimacy, accountability, transparency, compliance, and self-regulation within the Zimbabwean NGO sector. It provides a holistic evaluation of various aspects of organizational functionality, including governance structures, financial management systems, program effectiveness, and stakeholder engagement mechanisms.

A key milestone in operationalizing the QuAAM initiative was the Training of Trainers (ToT) workshop held in Kwekwe from 22 to 23 February 2024. The session brought together 29 participants drawn from the NANGO Board and Secretariat, representing all five NANGO regions. The training was designed to equip board members with in-depth knowledge of the QuAAM framework, including its intended implementation process across the civil society sector. Additionally, the workshop served as a platform to solicit critical feedback on the draft tool and finalise its structure for broader sectoral use. The finalised draft features 37 sub-domains that form the basis of assessment and certification.

The ToT was instrumental, as the successful implementation of QuAAM is anchored on active board participation and leadership. The process begins with the NANGO Regional Coordinator disseminating the QuAAM tool to interested NGOs, who voluntarily opt into the initiative. Participating organizations are required to complete the self-assessment tool—available both online and offline—and submit their responses to the Regional Coordinator. This submission is followed by an on-site verification visit conducted jointly by the Regional Coordinator and representatives of the Regional Executive Committee (REC). The verification phase includes a structured engagement between the NGO and the REC to review findings and co-develop an Improvement Plan, which serves as the foundation for future capacity-strengthening interventions. Based on the organization's performance and compliance level, the REC determines whether to award the QuAAM certification. Certified organizations are subsequently profiled and integrated into the Zimbabwe Social Impact Investment Exchange (ZIMSIIIX) platform.

As part of broader awareness and stakeholder engagement efforts, NANGO successfully sensitized 560 representatives from civil society organizations, government agencies, development partners, the private sector, media, and the general public on the QuAAM initiative. This was accomplished through various platforms, including the Civil Society Organisation (CSO) Coordination and Movement Building meetings, the Northern Region NGO Expo & Winter School, and the 14th Edition of the NGO Directors Summer Retreat.

The QuAAM initiative is expected to yield multiple benefits for the civil society sector, including enhanced public trust, reduced reliance on external regulation, the promotion of best practices, and the consolidation of collective strength for advocacy and policy influence. At the organizational level, the framework is poised to improve internal governance, elevate legitimacy and accountability, foster a culture of learning and collaboration, and empower stakeholders through increased ownership and participation in decision-making processes.

QuAAM Registration Portal: <https://zim-siix-qos-registration.vercel.app/home/dashboard>



14th NGO Directors Summer Retreat

The 14th NGO Directors Summer Retreat, held from 23 to 25 October 2024 at Troutbeck Resort, Nyanga, brought together 143 delegates representing local and international CSO leaders, development partners, regulatory authorities, and key stakeholders. Convened under the theme **“Empowering CSOs to Navigate Evolving Landscapes for Collective Impact,”** the retreat provided a strategic platform for fostering sector-wide coordination, strengthening engagement with regulators, and enhancing organisational capacity to address emerging challenges in the civic space.

The retreat's coordination component focused on reinforcing multi-stakeholder collaboration, strengthening CSO-regulator relations, and promoting collective advocacy efforts. A key highlight of the discussions was the launch of the Talk to Your Regulator (T2R) Initiative, introduced during the session titled **“Bridging the Gap: Strengthening CSO-Regulator Engagement for Compliance and Civic Space Protection”**. Another critical discussion, **“Shifting Spaces for Strengthening Civic Voice and Participation,”** explored the evolving civic space in Zimbabwe and the strategies needed to strengthen sector resilience amid regulatory and financial challenges. In addition, the session on **“Navigating Zimbabwe's Law-Making Process: Institutional Roles, Legal Reforms, and Opportunities for CSO Advocacy”** equipped participants with practical knowledge on legislative engagement and policy influence, ensuring that CSOs are effectively involved in shaping governance processes that impact their work.

The capacity-building aspect of the retreat was designed to equip CSO leaders with practical strategies for sustainability, leadership, and operational efficiency. The session on “Rethinking Funding Strategies Beyond Traditional Grants” explored alternative financing models, such as social enterprise approaches, impact investment opportunities, and innovative resource mobilisation strategies, emphasizing the importance of financial sustainability and reducing donor dependency. Another session, “Visionary Leadership: Navigating Organisational Changes and Shifts,” focused on adaptive leadership, governance best practices, and crisis management, providing CSO leaders with insights on navigating internal and external challenges effectively. Furthermore, discussions on the “ZIMSIX Platform” highlighted how digital solutions will improve financial accountability, transparency, and impact measurement within the sector, reinforcing the importance of technology-driven governance and resource tracking for CSOs.

Overall, the 14th NGO Directors Summer Retreat was a transformative gathering that strengthened civil society coordination and capacity building, equipping organisations with the skills, strategies, and networks needed to navigate the evolving civic and regulatory landscape. Through engaging dialogues, collaborative learning, and practical takeaways, the retreat reinforced the critical role of collective action, innovation, and adaptive leadership in ensuring the sustainability and impact of Zimbabwe's civil society sector. For a full report of the summer retreat, [click here](#).





Launch of the Talk to Your Regulator (T2R) Initiative

Strengthening CSO-Regulator Engagement for Compliance and Civic Space Protection

On 24 October 2024, NANGO, in collaboration with the Civic Advisory Hub (CAH), successfully launched the Talk to Your Regulator (T2R) Initiative during the 14th NGO Directors Summer Retreat at Troutbeck Resort, Nyanga. This structured dialogue and engagement platform aims to bridge the gap between NGOs and regulatory authorities, fostering mutual understanding, compliance clarity, and a more enabling environment for civil society in Zimbabwe. The T2R initiative is guided by three core objectives: enhancing awareness of compliance requirements for NGOs, strengthening relationships and collaboration between NGOs and regulators, and advocating for streamlined regulations that facilitate a more conducive operating space for CSOs.

The launch was attended by five key regulatory institutions: the MoPSLSW, represented by Patience Chiputura (PVO Compliance Officer); the National Employment Council for Welfare and Education Institutions (NECWEI), represented by General Secretary Rose Mambo; the National Social Security Authority (NSSA), represented by Acting Deputy Director of Contributions and Compliance Walter Chagadama; the Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU), represented by Deputy Director Tichafa Chigaba; and the Zimbabwe Revenue Authority (ZIMRA), represented by Regional Manager Mkhululi Nkulumo. The civil society sector was represented by Frank Mpahlo, Executive Director of Green Governance Trust and NANGO Board Treasurer.

The T2R initiative is a vital intervention in addressing the growing disconnect between regulatory institutions and civil society actors, particularly in light of increasing operational challenges, restrictive regulatory frameworks, and the looming implications of the PVO Amendment Bill. By providing a structured and systemic dialogue mechanism, T2R empowers

NGOs with critical compliance knowledge, reduces bureaucratic hurdles, and fosters greater transparency and accountability in the sector. The initiative also serves as an advocacy tool for regulatory reform, ensuring that compliance processes are clear, fair, and reflective of best practices in governance and accountability.

Key Outcomes of the T2R Launch

At its launch, the T2R initiative generated strong consensus among NGOs, regulators, and development partners on the necessity of continuous engagement to bridge knowledge gaps and build trust among stakeholders. Regulators and CSO representatives signed a pledge, committing to open, structured dialogue and sustained engagement to improve compliance frameworks and create an enabling operating environment for CSOs. The advocacy component of the initiative was also emphasized, with stakeholders agreeing on the need for progressive regulatory reforms that allow NGOs to focus on their development work without unnecessary administrative burdens.

Session Overview: Compliance Challenges and Regulatory Engagement

The session on compliance challenges and regulatory engagement focused on clarifying requirements for CSOs and identifying regulatory obstacles, emphasizing the need for transparent communication and trust-building between the civil society sector and regulatory bodies.

Key Insights and Recommendations

1. CSOs and regulators agreed to fully implement the T2R initiative and ensure systematic, regular engagements to streamline compliance requirements.
2. NANGO was encouraged to roll out the QuAAM to strengthen sector-wide compliance and transparency.
3. CSOs committed to actively engaging in FATF evaluations, including the National Risk Assessment and NPO Risk Assessment, to address global compliance concerns affecting NGOs.
4. Regulators were urged to facilitate, rather than restrict, civil society work, ensuring that regulatory frameworks protect civic space and allow NGOs to fulfil their mandates effectively.

The Talk to Your Regulator (T2R) Initiative represents a transformative step toward a more transparent, collaborative, and enabling environment for CSOs in Zimbabwe. Moving forward, NANGO will continue to facilitate structured dialogue, advocate for regulatory reforms, and support CSOs in navigating compliance challenges, ensuring that civil society remains a key partner in Zimbabwe's development trajectory.



Strengthening Coordination and Capacity Building at the Northern Region NGO Expo & Winter School 2024

The Northern Region NGO Expo & Winter School 2024, held from 19 to 21 September 2024 at the Zimbabwe International Book Fair (ZIBF) in Harare Gardens, provided a critical platform for CSOs to enhance coordination, strengthen capacity, and amplify their contributions to Zimbabwe's development agenda. The event, attended by 61 exhibitors and 185 public participants, brought together CSO leaders, development partners, policymakers, and regulatory authorities to engage in strategic discussions, knowledge-sharing sessions, and networking opportunities. Hosted under the theme “Amplifying the Role, Impact, and Contributions of NGOs Towards Inclusive and Sustainable Development in Zimbabwe,” the Winter School underscored the vital role of NGOs in promoting social justice, good governance, and sustainable community development.

Strategic Engagement on Environmental Governance and Budget Transparency

This featured two significant discussions focused on NANGO's strategic objectives. The first session on Opportunities and Challenges in the NANGO Strategic Objectives Focusing on the Land and Environment Cluster” addressed policy gaps and emphasized the importance of environmental sustainability and community-driven land governance. It called for climate-responsive programming, encouraging civil society organizations (CSOs) to adopt innovative solutions and advocate for policies that support environmental conservation and sustainable land use. The second session on Budget Transparency and Accountability in the Health Sector concentrated on financial governance in Zimbabwe's health sector, highlighting the need for

improved transparency in public health financing, strategies to combat financial mismanagement, and the equitable distribution of healthcare resources. This discussion reinforced the essential role of civil society in monitoring national budget processes, promoting greater accountability in government spending, and ensuring effective utilization of public funds for health service delivery. Overall, the outcomes highlighted the critical need for CSOs to engage in advocacy for both environmental and health sector reforms.

Civic Space Advocacy, Regulatory Reforms, and Digital Innovation

During the Expo, two sessions were facilitated on “Sector-wide Sensitisation on the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation (GPEDC) 4th Round of Monitoring Process” and “Zooming in Around the PVO Amendment Bill Process 2024: Where Are We Now?”. These focused on enhancing sector-wide coordination, regulatory engagement, and the use of digital tools to improve NGO transparency. Discussions centred on the importance of CSOs actively participating in international development frameworks and the implications of the PVO Amendment Bill on CSO autonomy and operational freedoms. Concerns regarding overregulation were raised, emphasizing the need for proactive advocacy and continued engagement with policymakers to protect civic space. A key highlight was the introduction of the ZIMSIIIX platform, a digital tool designed to bolster CSO visibility and accountability, showcasing the impact of civil society initiatives in Zimbabwe. The Expo successfully equipped participants with strategies and tools to address challenges in environmental governance, health sector transparency, and regulatory reforms. Key outcomes included the recognition of the need for stronger advocacy efforts, enhanced internal governance, and greater adoption of digital solutions among CSOs. Moving forward, NANGO plans to implement targeted capacity-building initiatives, foster dialogue between NGOs and regulators, and promote collaboration to ensure a resilient civil society sector in Zimbabwe.

Key takeaways from the event emphasized the need for CSOs to strengthen advocacy efforts, enhance internal governance structures, and adopt digital tools to improve transparency and credibility. Moving forward, NANGO will continue implementing targeted capacity-building initiatives, facilitate structured dialogue between NGOs and regulators, and promote sector-wide collaboration to ensure a resilient and impactful civil society sector in Zimbabwe.



Sector-wide CSO Sensitisation and Consultation on the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation (GPEDC) 4th Round of Monitoring Process

In 2024, NANGO continued to explore strategic platforms and alternative advocacy mechanisms to advance the protection of civic space and promote a more enabling operating environment for CSOs in Zimbabwe. One of the key platforms identified was the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation (GPEDC), which provides a framework for multi-stakeholder collaboration, accountability, and the alignment of development efforts at national and international levels. In response to an invitation from the Ministry of Finance, Economic Development, and Investment Promotion, NANGO and the National Association of Youth Organisations (NAYO) were designated as the CSO focal point for the GPEDC 4th Round Monitoring Process. This role tasked both organisations with sensitizing the CSO sector on the monitoring process, gathering data on Indicator 2 - Enabling Environment - which assesses the CSO operating environment, and ensuring that Zimbabwean civil society voices are represented in the global process.

As part of this initiative, a total of five sector-wide consultations were conducted at the regional level and a total of two consultations were conducted at the national level, reaching a total of 380 CSO representatives. The sector-wide consultations aimed to assess the challenges that CSOs face in their operating environments, particularly those that undermine the effectiveness of development cooperation and the sustainability of NGO-led interventions. CSOs reported a range of challenges, including increased regulatory constraints, financial sustainability issues,

restricted access to funding, and barriers to engaging with government and development partners in policy-making processes. These factors have direct implications on the ability of NGOs to deliver on their mandates effectively, weakening their contributions to national development goals. The consultation process also highlighted the ongoing concerns surrounding the shrinking civic space in Zimbabwe, particularly in light of the restrictive provisions of the PVO Amendment Bill, which has the potential to limit CSO operations, impose excessive administrative burdens, and hinder organizations from accessing external funding sources.

In response to these challenges, CSOs collectively committed to leveraging key advocacy spaces and global platforms, including the GPEDC, as mechanisms for pushing back against restrictive regulations and advocating for a more conducive operating environment. The GPEDC 4th Round Monitoring Process offers a valuable opportunity to provide evidence-based data on the barriers affecting civil society operations, strengthen multi-stakeholder dialogue on development effectiveness, and advocate for reforms that enhance the role of CSOs in national development frameworks. As part of their focal point mandate, NANGO and NAYO pledged to facilitate ongoing consultations, ensure sectoral representation, and provide timely feedback to the broader CSO community regarding engagements within the GPEDC framework.

Furthermore, NANGO reaffirmed its commitment to strengthening members' capacities in harmonizing various processes around civic space, ensuring that CSOs are well-equipped to engage in structured advocacy, navigate regulatory requirements, and effectively participate in international development cooperation frameworks. This includes building awareness on global monitoring processes, training organisations on compliance and self-regulation, and fostering greater collaboration among CSOs, government actors, and development partners. By aligning national advocacy efforts with international development frameworks, NANGO aims to enhance civil society resilience, protect operational freedoms, and promote a more inclusive and transparent governance landscape in Zimbabwe.

Selection of CSO Representatives in the CCM Meeting

On 14 May 2024, the Country Coordinating Mechanism (CCM) Selection Meeting was convened to enhance members' knowledge on the Global Fund (GF) processes and the role of the CCM in Zimbabwe. The meeting was organized by the CCM Secretariat, which serves as the country secretariat for the GF and brought together multi-stakeholders and NANGO members from all over the country.

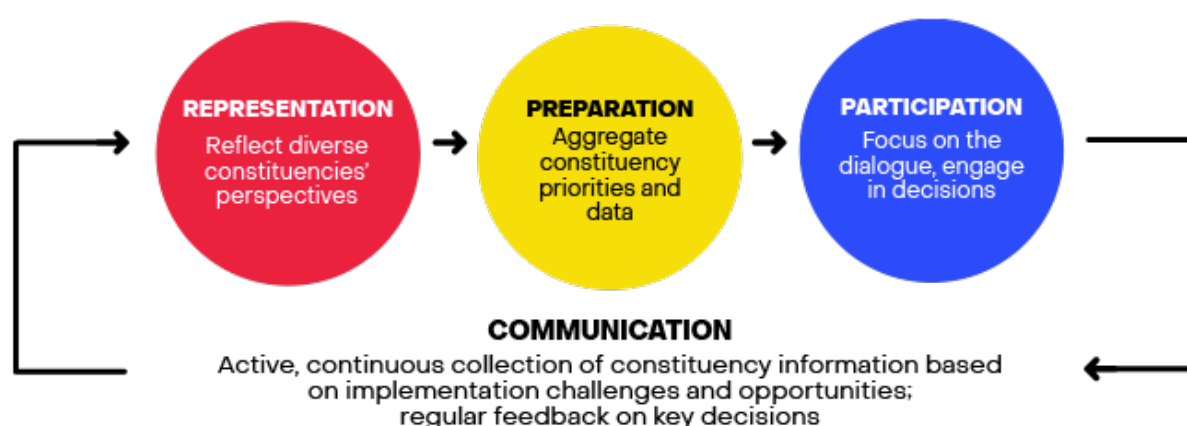
A key outcome of the meeting was the selection of new representatives for the watchdog sector within the CCM, as the term of office for the incumbent had come to an end. Following a transparent and consultative process, Mr. Nyimai, Executive Director for NANGO, was elected

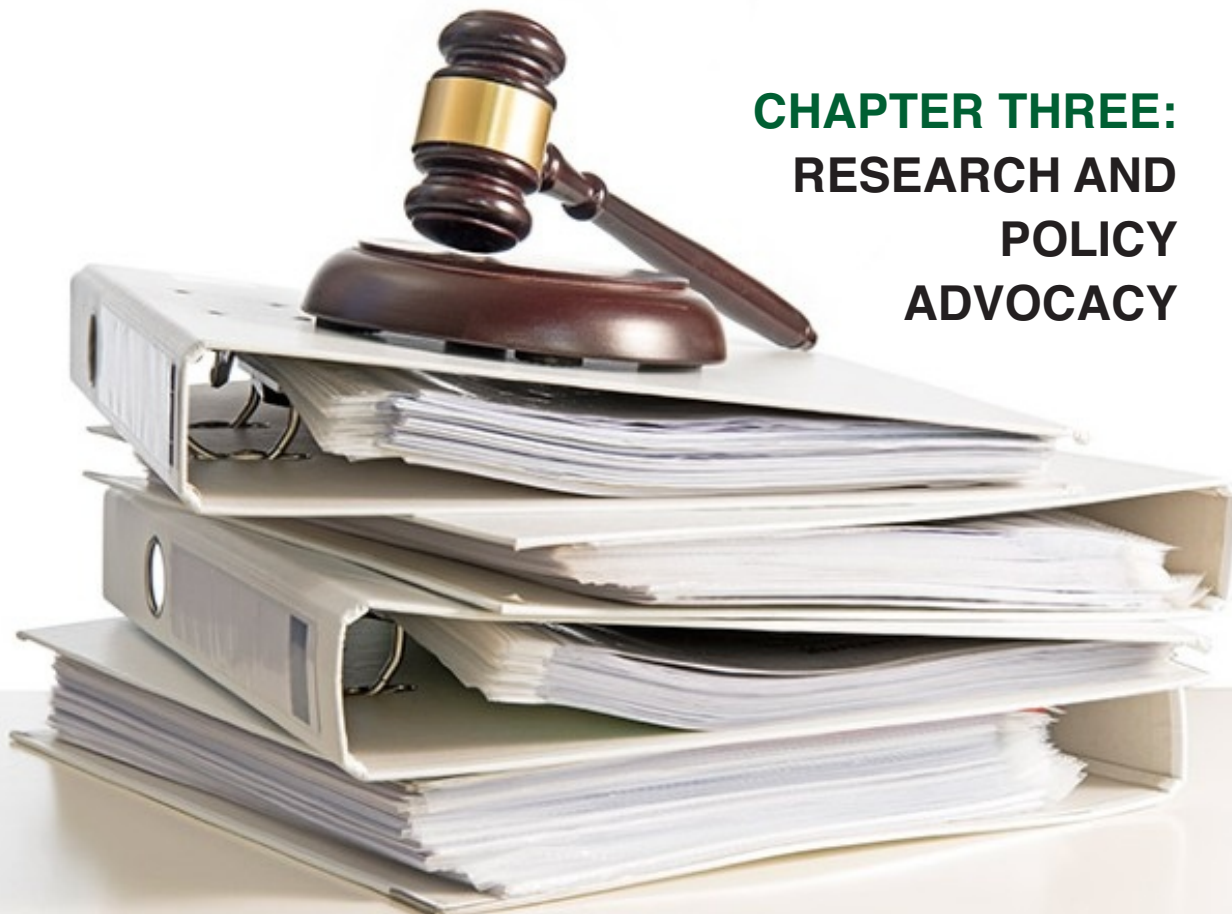
as the Substantive Member, while Mrs. Mangongo, Director for Mwana Trust organisation operating within the NANGO Eastern Region, was selected as the Alternate Member.

Recognizing the strategic role and mandate of NANGO, members collectively agreed that the organisation should permanently occupy the Substantive Member position within the CCM, ensuring consistent representation and continuity in civil society engagement with the Global Fund. The Alternate Member position will continue to be open for election, allowing for rotational representation and broader sectoral participation. The term of office for these representatives is three years, aligning with the standard governance cycle of the CCM.

In Zimbabwe, the Country Coordinating Mechanism (CCM-Zimbabwe) plays a vital role in managing the country's relationship with the Global Fund. It serves as the official national body responsible for coordinating the development of grant applications and overseeing the implementation of Global Fund-supported programs targeting HIV, tuberculosis, and malaria. CCM-Zimbabwe is made up of diverse stakeholders, including representatives from government ministries, civil society, faith-based organizations, the private sector, people affected by the three diseases, and development partners. This inclusive composition ensures that decisions are transparent, locally driven, and responsive to the needs of affected communities. The CCM ensures that grant-funded activities align with national health strategies, and it regularly monitors performance, addresses implementation challenges, and promotes accountability among recipients of Global Fund resources. Through this structure, Zimbabwe maximizes the impact of Global Fund investments to strengthen its health system and improve health outcomes across the country.

Drivers of effective engagement





CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH AND POLICY ADVOCACY

NANGO is committed to ensuring the active involvement and meaningful participation of CSOs in policy advocacy, which is crucial for the formulation and implementation of pro-people policies. To achieve this, NANGO makes deliberate efforts to inform, educate, and capacitate its membership, ensuring their effective participation in policy processes and their ability to engage decision-makers with evidence-based policy recommendations. This approach seeks to influence policy change, promote effective policy implementation, and mobilize resources for sustainable development. The ultimate goal of policy advocacy is to achieve desired policy reforms or ensure the effective implementation of existing policies that contribute to national development.

Under Strategic Priority 4 of the NANGO Strategic Plan (2023-2025), the organisation aims to strengthen the capacity of its members to become a solid platform for advocacy, lobbying, and policy influencing, particularly in matters related to the CSO operating environment and broader national development issues. A key strategic commitment under this pillar is defending the CSO regulatory environment by engaging with policymakers, protecting member organisations from excessive government regulation, and addressing the weaponisation of laws and policies that govern civil society operations. Additionally, NANGO prioritizes building the capacity of its members to enhance their advocacy, governance, and compliance mechanisms. To ensure a unified policy agenda and collective policy influence on socio-economic and political issues, NANGO facilitated CSO participation in various platforms and policy discussions.

NANGO implemented several key projects and initiatives, including the Voluntary National Review (VNR) process, supported by Forus; the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (GPEDC) process, supported by the EU and the National Endowment for Democracy (NED); and activities aimed at protecting and safeguarding civic space for a better-performing CSO sector.

VNR serves as an essential platform for monitoring progress on SDGs at the global level. They provide critical insights into SDG implementation, promote inclusive multi-stakeholder participation, and support effective progress towards the 2030 Agenda. Rather than being an end in themselves, VNRs serve as mechanisms to accelerate SDG implementation and reaffirm member states' commitments to peaceful, just, and inclusive societies through transparent and accountable reporting. The overarching objective of the VNRs is to facilitate experience-sharing, promote mutual learning, and strengthen collaborative action for SDG acceleration. Reports generated from the VNR process form the basis for annual reviews at the [High-Level Political Forum \(HLPF\)](#).

Zimbabwe has previously presented two VNRs at the HLPF and is scheduled to present its third review in July 2024. In preparation for this, NANGO coordinated CSO participation in the development of an Alternative CSO VNR Report, which contributed to the official Zimbabwe National Report on SDGs. Through this process, NANGO ensured that civil society perspectives, particularly from marginalized groups, were reflected in the national development discourse.

To strengthen CSO knowledge of the VNR process, SDGs, and HLPF mechanisms, a total of four CSO Sensitization and Consultative meetings were conducted across four regions (Northern, Eastern, Midlands, and Western), reaching a total of 60 CSO representatives. Each one-day session engaged 20 CSO representatives from thematic clusters, focusing on SDGs of particular national importance, such as SDGs 1 (No Poverty), 2 (Zero Hunger), 13 (Climate Action), 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions), and 17 (Partnerships for the Goals).





The primary objective of NANGO's involvement in the VNR process was to enhance CSO participation, ensuring greater government accountability for SDG commitments. By equipping CSOs with knowledge, tools, and advocacy skills, the initiative sought to integrate diverse perspectives into the national SDG framework and improve government transparency in SDG implementation. Specific goals included:

- Increasing CSO knowledge and engagement in the VNR process.
- Generating evidence-based policy recommendations and inputs for national reporting.
- Developing an independent Alternative VNR Report reflecting civil society perspectives. (Access the report [here](#))
- Using the VNR process as an advocacy tool to hold the government accountable for its SDG commitments.

From stakeholder engagements, it was noted that meaningful VNRs must be inclusive, participatory, transparent, and thorough, incorporating national and sub-national perspectives to produce evidence-based lessons and solutions. A key recommendation from CSO consultations was that VNR reports should extend beyond national statistics, emphasizing sub-national implementation efforts to reveal localised development realities and ensure inclusivity in accounting and reporting processes.

Key activities included:

- CSO Sensitization and Consultations Workshops – Workshops conducted in four regions to enhance CSO knowledge of the VNR process, SDGs, and HLPF mechanisms. Each session engaged 20 CSO representatives from thematic clusters focused on key SDGs.

- Stakeholder Engagement Meeting – A multistakeholder meeting where CSOs presented their findings and recommendations to a diverse audience, including government agencies, private sector entities, and development partners.
- Development of a Joint CSO Submission for the National VNR Report – A consultant helped draft a consolidated CSO position paper representing the collective input of CSOs.
- Updating the SDG Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Framework – CSO input led to a revised M&E framework better aligned with current priorities. ([Click Here](#))
- Creation and Distribution of Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) Materials – flyers, posters, and educational content were shared to increase public awareness of the VNR process and SDG progress, which helped increase awareness of the VNR

The project's results included strengthened civil society engagement, enhanced accountability, and improved multi-stakeholder collaboration. It bolstered the capacity of over 60 CSOs, enabling them to engage more effectively in the VNR process, monitor SDG progress, and contribute to policy dialogue. The development of a comprehensive CSO submission for the national VNR report provided critical recommendations and alternative narratives, underscoring the importance of inclusivity in the SDG process. Overall, the project fostered an inclusive and accountable approach to SDG implementation through effective CSO engagement in Zimbabwe's VNR process, ensuring diverse community priorities were represented in the national conversation on sustainable development and strengthening government accountability.

Regional and International Advocacy

Participation in the 2024 United Nations Civil Society Conference – Nairobi, Kenya



In May 2024, NANGO, through the representation of Executive Director Ernest Nyimai, participated in the historic 2024 United Nations Civil Society Conference held at the UN Office in Nairobi, Kenya, the first of its kind to be hosted in Africa. The conference convened over 2,150 delegates from 115 countries, representing civil society, governments,

academia, and the private sector. NANGO's participation amplified the voice of Zimbabwean civil society on a global platform, spotlighting national progress and challenges in advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially in the context of Zimbabwe's 2024 Voluntary National Review (VNR). The conference provided a strategic opportunity to engage in discussions on multilateralism, civic space, and the Pact for the Future. It introduced ImpACT Coalitions—interdisciplinary groups driving reform ahead of the Summit of the Future scheduled for September 2024. Key takeaways included stronger civil society inclusion, youth

leadership, and the recognition of civil society as a critical actor in shaping global development agendas. NANGO's engagement in this conference reaffirms its commitment to inclusive global governance and strengthening Zimbabwean CSOs' influence in international development processes.

Regional Engagement on Countering the Financing of Terrorism While Safeguarding Civic Space – Kampala, Uganda



On 5–6 August 2024, NANGO participated in a high-level regional conference held in Kampala, Uganda, under the theme "Together – Countering the Financing of Terrorism While Safeguarding Civic Space in Africa." Hosted by the Civic Advisory Hub in collaboration with Defenders Protection Initiative and Spaces for Change, the conference convened 140 delegates from across Africa, including government officials, civil society, financial institutions, and academia.

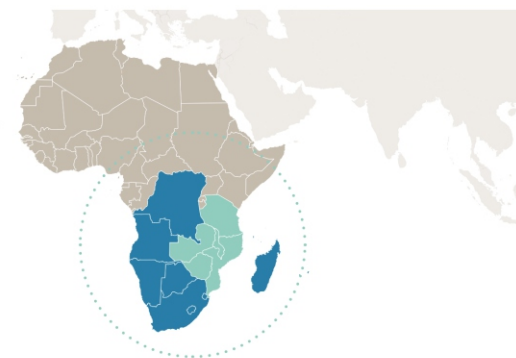
Ernest Nyimai, NANGO's Executive Director, presented a plenary session on the Zimbabwean experience, highlighting the unintended consequences of Countering the Financing of Terrorism (CFT) measures on Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). He emphasized the lack of a national NPO risk assessment and the blanket application of FATF standards, which has led to stricter banking requirements, arbitrary arrests, and growing mistrust between regulators and CSOs. NANGO showcased practical coping strategies being implemented in Zimbabwe, such as bridging knowledge gaps through partnerships with ICNL and DPI, promoting regulator-CSO dialogue through initiatives like Talk to Your Regulator, and developing peer-led quality assurance mechanisms to enhance self-regulation within the NPO sector.

Accelerating SADC's Development through the Socially Accountable Generation and Use of Public Resources

3rd Regional Dialogue for Non-State Actors on the SADC RISDP 2020-2030

REGISTER HERE TO JOIN US ONLINE

<https://bit.ly/RISDPNSADialogue>



DAY 1: 13th September

Morning:

- Highlights of communiqué and action plan from the Sept 2022 Regional RISDP NSA Dialogue – moving the agenda forward
- Keynote address – Socially accountable generation and management of finances for development in SADC
- Update on the implementation of the SADC RISDP 2020-2030

- SADC PF Transformation into the SADC Parliament & SADC PF Model Laws (PFM & GBV) - Moving from regional discussion to national actions
- Thematic Reflections on SADC RISDP Recommendations for 2023 – 2024 - Focus on social sectors of health, agriculture, and education; cross-cutting issues of gender, youth, climate change; and role of industrialisation and trade

Afternoon:

- Understanding the SADC RISDP at regional and national levels – breakaway sessions

DAY 2: 14th September

Morning:

- Report back from Day 1 breakaway sessions
- Operationalisation of the SADC Non-State Actors Engagement Mechanism
- SADC National Committees- Status and role in monitoring the RISDP

Afternoon:

- Reviewing and updating action plans and recommendations – National and Regional Breakaway sessions
- Presentation of communiqué
- Closure and Way Forward

Participation in the Regional Dialogue for Non-State Actors on the SADC RISDP 2020–2030 | 9–11 August 2024 | Harare, Zimbabwe

NANGO participated in the Regional Dialogue for Non-State Actors (NSAs) on the SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) 2020–2030 ahead of the SADC Summit. The event convened regional CSOs, the SADC Parliamentary Forum, and the SADC Secretariat to assess RISDP implementation progress, identify gaps, and co-create inclusive regional development strategies. NANGO contributed strategic insights on enhancing civil society engagement and data-informed participation in regional governance. Key issues discussed included persistent youth unemployment, inadequate health and agricultural financing, climate change resilience, and delays in operationalizing the SADC Regional Development Fund. NANGO committed to follow-up actions including advocating for an inclusive SADC National Committee in Zimbabwe, debriefing members on outcomes, sharing VNR lessons regionally, and strengthening collaboration with regional CSO platforms. These actions aim to improve CSO alignment with RISDP priorities and reinforce civil society's role in fostering participatory and accountable development in Southern Africa.

Participation in the Forus General Assembly | 13–17 May 2024 | Gaborone, Botswana

In May 2024, NANGO participated in the Forus General Assembly held in Gaborone, Botswana. The Assembly brought together national NGO platforms and regional networks from across the globe to strengthen collective action, share strategic priorities, and shape the future direction of the Forus network. NANGO officially joined the Forus network in 2023, making this its inaugural in-person participation at the Assembly.

Key sessions covered a range of critical themes, including defending civic space amid increasing restrictions, promoting inclusive and diverse leadership within civil society, exploring



the implications of digitalization and artificial intelligence, and addressing barriers to local power and leadership. The Assembly also focused on enhancing network collaboration, strategic foresight, and planning for the future of development. Strategic working group discussions explored priorities around Agenda 2030/SDGs, financing for sustainable development, civic space, and communications. NANGO's participation reaffirmed its commitment to strengthening global civil society solidarity and informed its national advocacy on civic space, sustainable development, and inclusive governance.

To read the full report, [click here](#).





CHAPTER FOUR: ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

In 2024, the operating environment for the civil society sector in Zimbabwe remained volatile and unpredictable, largely influenced by socio-economic and political developments across the country. These conditions significantly hindered efforts by CSOs to advance their mandates and create a more enabling operating environment.

One of the key challenges was the increasing restrictiveness of legislative and administrative regulations governing CSO operations. In particular, District Development Coordinators (DDCs) issued suspension letters in January 2024 to several CSOs, requiring the submission of documentation before operations could resume. This practice was notably widespread in Beitbridge, Insiza, and Matobo districts in Matabeleland South, as well as Binga district in Matabeleland North and Bulawayo Metropolitan Province. The letters demanded that CSOs furnish specified requirements or face suspension. NANGO members cited these actions as symptomatic of broader bureaucratic hurdles, including difficulties in securing local-level clearances such as Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) and operational letters—key requirements for compliance.

The suspension letters introduced additional administrative burdens on CSOs, particularly CBOs, many of which operate with limited resources. These demands were issued in the absence of formal legal backing or policy support, making compliance both confusing and costly. As a result, some CSOs were forced to suspend operations, while others continued under

close state scrutiny. These practices were most prevalent in NANGO's Western Region (Matabeleland and Bulawayo Provinces), although in some areas the directives were presented in different forms.

In response to the shrinking civic space, NANGO initiated direct engagement efforts. Meetings were convened between NANGO representatives and officials from Bulawayo and Insiza DDC offices to seek clarity on the suspension notices. Following these engagements, it was confirmed that all NGOs operating in these areas had complied with the directives and were continuing their work without any formal bans. NANGO played a pivotal role in updating affected members, helping to maintain continuity and minimize confusion.

To promote long-term solutions, NANGO pursued a collaborative approach, engaging key stakeholders to advocate for a more standardized and cost-effective process for obtaining operational clearances. The objective was to establish a consistent framework for local-level engagement with authorities and community gatekeepers.

In addition, NANGO partnered with the Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum and LRF to convene consultative meetings in Gweru and Gwanda. These meetings addressed the implications of inconsistent DDC directives and the broader policy environment. As a result of sustained advocacy and pressure from CSO networks, the Beitbridge DDC withdrew its suspension directive through a formal letter addressed to the NGO Forum. NANGO also received unconfirmed reports of other DDCs issuing revised, less stringent letters, although official communications were not shared directly with the Association. Despite these challenges, the majority of CSOs were able to resume operations, though concerns over potential closures persisted.

Another significant development was the ongoing debate and eventual recommittal of the PVO Amendment Bill to the Senate on 26 November 2024. This legislative process contributed to further contraction of civic space. Many NANGO members expressed uncertainty and concern over the implications of the Bill, particularly for Trusts and Universitas organisations, which faced the risk of deregistration if the Bill was enacted into law. Additionally, members raised concerns about regulators enforcing certain provisions of the PVO Amendment Bill before it has been enacted into law. Notably, during the year, there were no new registrations of PVOs, reportedly due to the PVO Board's failure to convene. This development is widely believed to be linked to uncertainties surrounding the pending legislation.

To address these concerns, NANGO spearheaded movement-building initiatives and policy engagement efforts. These platforms aimed to equip members with the knowledge and tools to understand and respond to the Bill's provisions. They also served as coordinated spaces for

CSOs to develop unified positions and report back on collective advocacy efforts.



Source: Govt, NGOs angle for consensus on PVO Bill | The Sunday Mail

In the same spirit, NANGO and its partners engaged government stakeholders to promote dialogue on the Bill and the broader CSO operating environment. In June 2024, NANGO, with like-minded organisations, facilitated a pivotal engagement between CSOs and the Minister of Justice, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs, Honourable Ziyambi Ziyambi, to deliberate on the PVO Amendment Bill. This meeting provided a crucial platform for CSO representatives to articulate their concerns regarding the Bill's potential impact on civic space, operational independence, and the sustainability of development initiatives in Zimbabwe. Key issues raised included apprehensions about certain provisions being implemented prior to the Bill's enactment and the perceived lack of transparency in the legislative process. Minister Ziyambi acknowledged these concerns and emphasized the government's commitment to refining the Bill to address them. He highlighted that the primary objective of the amendments was to enhance the regulatory framework governing PVOs, ensuring accountability and preventing misuse of charitable funds, rather than restricting the legitimate activities of NGOs. The Minister also expressed satisfaction with the constructive nature of the dialogue, noting that such engagements are instrumental in fostering mutual understanding between the government and civil society. Read more here: <https://www.zimbabwesituation.com/news/govt-ngos-angle-for-consensus-on-pvo-bill/>

CSO - Government Engagement Planning Meeting

In a quest to find lasting solutions to challenges bedeviling the CSO operating environment, NANGO engaged the PVO regulators, MoPSLSW, to deliberate on some of the challenges faced by NGOs in the areas they operate in. Both parties agreed that there were issues that needed all key stakeholders to put their heads together and resolve the challenges. They agreed to meet every quarter for updates. Responsibility to mobilize stakeholders was given to MoPSLSW, responsible for mobilizing government institutions, and NANGO was tasked with mobilizing CSOs. However, the first meeting that was supposed to be held last year was rescheduled to this year.



CHAPTER FIVE: SPOTLIGHTING FLAGSHIP PROGRAMS

The year 2024 was marked by a series of high-impact flagship events that reinforced NANGO's role as a leading convenor, coordinator, and advocate for civil society in Zimbabwe. These strategic engagements provided critical platforms for networking, knowledge exchange, capacity building, and sector visibility, ensuring that CSOs remained at the forefront of national development discussions. Among the key events successfully hosted by NANGO were the Inaugural CSO Symposium commemorating World NGO Day, the Northern Region NGO Expo & Winter School, the 14th NGO Directors Summer Retreat, and the 12th NANGO Annual NGO Awards. These events were instrumental in strengthening collaboration, fostering policy engagement, and celebrating excellence within the sector.



Inaugural CSO Symposium Commemorating World NGO Day

NANGO, in partnership with the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom in Zimbabwe (FNF) and Nedbank Zimbabwe, hosted the inaugural CSO Symposium to commemorate World NGO Day, observed annually on February 27th. The event served as a strategic platform to celebrate the role of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in advancing social, economic, and humanitarian development in Zimbabwe. Aligned with the global theme “Building a Sustainable Future: The Role of NGOs in Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals,” the symposium highlighted the vital contributions of NGOs in complementing government efforts towards the 2030 Agenda.

The event featured a keynote address by Deputy Minister Mercy Dinha from the MoPSLSW, who reaffirmed the government's commitment to supporting a legal and enabling environment for NGOs. She emphasized the need for year-round recognition of CSO efforts in service delivery and advocacy, and rebuilding of trust between the civil society sector and the state.

The symposium also included a panel discussion focused on NANGO's thematic clusters, with contributions from organisations such as Population Services Zimbabwe (PSZ), Shamwari Yemwanasikana, NAYO, and LRF. These discussions showcased innovative approaches to policy advocacy and community empowerment, reinforcing the value of coordinated action within thematic areas.

An interactive plenary session explored the theme “[The Quest for an Enabling Operating Environment for CSOs in Zimbabwe](#),” addressing policy, regulatory, and funding challenges. Solidarity remarks from key stakeholders—including FNF, ZCC, Zimbabwe National Chamber of Commerce (ZNCC), and the Voluntary Media Commission of Zimbabwe (VMCZ)—further underscored the importance of cross-sector collaboration.

The successful launch of the CSO Symposium laid the groundwork for its institutionalization as an annual convening space for civil society, government, and development actors. Looking ahead, NANGO plans to scale up the initiative to strengthen sector visibility, facilitate policy dialogue, and reinforce partnerships for inclusive and sustainable development in Zimbabwe.



The event marked a key milestone in NANGO's efforts to enhance the visibility, engagement, and influence of CSOs across Zimbabwe. Reintroduced after a five-year break due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the event was successfully rebranded and decentralized to promote regional accessibility and representation. The Northern Region led the way as the first and only region to pilot this new format, laying the foundation for future regional expos.

Held from 19 to 21 September 2024 at Harare Gardens at the Zimbabwe International Book Fair (ZIBF) grounds, the Expo was convened under the theme “Showcasing the Role, Impact, and Contributions of NGOs Towards Inclusive and Sustainable Development in Zimbabwe.” It attracted 61 exhibitors and over 185 participants, including representatives from government, donor agencies, the private sector, and the media. The event provided a valuable platform for NGOs to showcase their work, engage with key stakeholders, and strengthen sector-wide collaboration.



The official opening featured statements from the MoPSLSW representative, as well as key development partners including USAID and the European Union, all of whom emphasized the critical role of civil society in national development and the need for an enabling operating environment. Another highlight of the event was the Winter School, which hosted high-level panel discussions on governance, climate change, fiscal policy, civil society narratives, and the regulatory landscape. Particular attention was given to the implications of the pending PVO Amendment Bill, with participants expressing concern over increasing restrictions and their potential to undermine NGO service delivery and advocacy work.

The Expo also served as a dynamic networking space, fostering new partnerships among CSOs, donors, and private sector actors. Several businesses expressed interest in exploring Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) collaborations, reflecting growing interest in multi-sectoral development approaches. The success of the Northern Region Expo demonstrated the effectiveness of localized platforms in amplifying civil society voices, strengthening sector coordination, and deepening stakeholder engagement. NANGO plans to roll out similar initiatives in all five regions, building on lessons learnt to ensure equitable access, stronger alliances, and sustained sector impact in the coming years.



14th NGO Directors Summer Retreat

Hosted annually by NANGO, the NGO Directors Summer Retreat has established itself as a premier convening platform for civil society leaders, development partners, private sector representatives, and state actors. This flagship event fosters experience-sharing, collective reflection, and the co-creation of innovative solutions to address the evolving challenges facing civil society, non-state actors, and the public in Zimbabwe. It serves as a strategic space for dialogue and collaboration, enabling participants to explore emerging trends, share best practices, and strengthen multi-stakeholder partnerships that drive sustainable development and good corporate governance.

The 14th edition of the summer retreat, held under the theme “Empowering Civil Society to Navigate an Evolving Landscape for Collective Impact,” convened 143 delegates, including local and international CSO leaders, representatives from government ministries and agencies, development partners, private sector actors, and other key stakeholders. The retreat was structured to provide an engaging, forward-looking platform, equipping participants with the insights, strategies, and tools needed to navigate complex operational landscapes and advance their collective impact.

The retreat commenced with a conference foresight session, designed to set the tone for discussions and establish a shared understanding of engagement protocols. This opening session laid a strong foundation for the subsequent two-and-a-half days of dynamic dialogue, enabling participants to align on expectations, objectives, and key focus areas. The first day focused on two critical sub-themes: "Reflection on the State of CSOs Operating Environment in 2024" and "Shifting Spaces for Strengthening Civic Voice and Participation." These sessions provided an in-depth analysis of Zimbabwe's civic space, highlighting both challenges and opportunities for CSOs. Participants explored innovative approaches to amplifying civil society's voice, particularly in the face of growing regulatory pressures, funding uncertainties, and shifts

in civic engagement dynamics.

The second day delved into practical strategies for enhancing organizational efficiency and impact, centring on four transformative sub-themes. The session on "Rethinking Funding Strategies Beyond Traditional Grants" explored alternative financing mechanisms, including social enterprise models, impact investments, and domestic resource mobilization strategies. Discussions on the "Zimbabwe Social Impact Investment Exchange (ZIMSIIIX) Platform" provided critical updates on the development of this initiative, which aims to enhance transparency, accountability, and access to funding for CSOs. Another key discussion, "Bridging the Gap: Strengthening CSO-Regulator Engagement for Compliance and Civic Space Protection," examined ways to improve relationships between civil society and regulatory bodies, ensuring a more predictable and enabling operating environment. Finally, the session on "Visionary Leadership: Navigating Organizational Changes and Shifts" provided leadership insights on resilience, adaptability, and strategic foresight, helping CSOs respond effectively to emerging challenges.

The final day of the retreat focused on strengthening advocacy and celebrating innovation within the sector. Participants engaged in critical discussions on legislative engagement, with a key sub-theme titled "Navigating Zimbabwe's Law-Making Process: Institutional Roles, Legal Reforms, and Opportunities for CSO Advocacy." This session provided an in-depth look at Zimbabwe's policy and legislative landscape, equipping CSOs with the knowledge and tools to engage effectively in law-making processes and advocate for inclusive and progressive policies. Another sub-theme, "Promoting and Recognizing Best Practices and Innovation within CSOs," highlighted successful models, cutting-edge interventions, and groundbreaking initiatives being implemented by CSOs to drive positive social change.

A major outcome of the retreat was the presentation of the Troutbeck Resort Action Agenda and Resolutions Outcome Document. This document, developed through collaborative input from delegates, will serve as a guiding framework for NANGO and CSO leaders in addressing pressing sector challenges, shaping advocacy priorities, and advancing collective impact over the coming year and beyond. The strategic resolutions outlined in the document provide actionable commitments to enhance sector coordination, sustainability, and influence.

The Summer Retreat was not only a resounding success but also a testament to NANGO's role as a catalyst for strengthening civil society leadership and fostering sector resilience. The retreat reaffirmed the need for adaptive strategies, stronger multi-sector partnerships, and increased investment in civil society capacity-building. Looking ahead, the insights and resolutions from this convening will be instrumental in shaping the sector's trajectory, ensuring that CSOs in Zimbabwe remain agile, impactful, and strategically positioned to contribute

meaningfully to national development. The full program of the event is accessible online, providing a detailed reference for stakeholders seeking to engage with the outcomes of the retreat.



12th NANGO Annual NGO Awards

The 12th edition of the NANGO Annual NGO Awards was a landmark event celebrating excellence, dedication, and transformative impact within Zimbabwe's civil society sector. Held on 25 October 2024 at Troutbeck Resort in Nyanga, the awards ceremony brought together leaders, activists, development partners, and stakeholders from across the country to honour outstanding achievements in human rights, community development, gender equality, youth empowerment, and CSR. The event was hosted by Marisa Marinda, presenter of Zimbabwe Television Network (ZTN's) Morning Rush, and was made possible through the generous sponsorship of Ecobank Zimbabwe, the Southern Africa Youth Forum (SAYoF), and VTU Platinum Lodge.

As a flagship initiative of NANGO's commitment to recognising and amplifying the role of NGOs in Zimbabwe, the awards acknowledged exceptional individuals and institutions whose work has significantly contributed to national development and social justice. A total of ten award categories were presented, each reflecting a distinct area of impact and commitment to advancing civil society's mission.

The Human Rights Defender of the Year Award was presented to Amnesty International Zimbabwe in recognition of its tireless advocacy for justice, fundamental freedoms, and human dignity. The Community Development Award was awarded to 4-H Zimbabwe Foundation, whose innovative and inclusive community engagement initiatives have empowered local populations and strengthened grassroots development efforts. The Gender Equality Award went to the Musasa Project, celebrated for its pioneering work in supporting survivors of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and championing women's rights across Zimbabwe.

The Disability Rights Award was conferred upon the Tariro Foundation of Zimbabwe Trust, honouring its commitment to accessibility, inclusivity, and advocacy for the rights of persons with disabilities. The EmpowerYouth Excellence Award recognized WeLead Trust for its groundbreaking efforts in youth leadership development, skills training, and active participation in governance and decision-making processes. Demonstrating the importance of strategic communication and public engagement, Mwanasikana Wanhasi received the NGO Communicator of the Year Award for its effective advocacy, storytelling, and outreach campaigns that have elevated public awareness on critical social issues.



The prestigious NGO Director of the Year Award was presented to Dzikamai Bere, Team Leader of the Zimbabwe Human Rights Association (ZimRights), acknowledging his exceptional leadership, advocacy, and unwavering dedication to human rights protection in Zimbabwe. Recognizing the vital role of development partners in supporting civil society initiatives, the Embassy of Sweden in Zimbabwe was honoured as Donor/Development Partner of the Year,

highlighting its consistent and impactful contributions to strengthening Zimbabwe's civil society sector.

The Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Excellence Award was awarded to Stanbic Bank Zimbabwe, celebrating its outstanding commitment to CSR through sustainable development programs, community investments, and philanthropic initiatives. Lastly, the Outstanding NGO Reporting Award was presented to the Centre for Innovation & Technology (CITE) for its dedication to journalistic integrity, independent reporting, and amplifying the voices of marginalized communities through media innovation.



The awards ceremony served as a powerful reminder of the critical role NGOs play in shaping a more just, inclusive, and resilient Zimbabwe. It provided a platform for visibility and inspiration, encouraging civil society actors to remain steadfast in their commitment to social justice, advocacy, and sustainable development. Each awardee's journey exemplified the resilience, passion, and dedication of Zimbabwe's NGO sector, reinforcing the transformative power of collective action in addressing societal challenges.

Beyond recognizing excellence, the event also strengthened sector-wide collaboration, fostered knowledge-sharing, and reinforced NANGO's commitment to elevating the voices of CSOs. Moving forward, these awards will continue to serve as a beacon of motivation and recognition for civil society, ensuring that their contributions to Zimbabwe's development agenda are valued, celebrated, and sustained. The 12th NANGO Annual NGO Awards thus marked a celebration of past achievements and a call to action for continued innovation, advocacy, and sector-wide solidarity in pursuing a more equitable and progressive society.

Collectively, these flagship events played a pivotal role in shaping the narrative around civil society's contributions to Zimbabwe's development agenda. They provided visibility, engagement, and learning opportunities for organisations while reinforcing NANGO's strategic leadership in convening meaningful dialogues and fostering multi-sectoral partnerships. Moving forward, NANGO will continue to scale up these engagements, expand regional participation, and enhance stakeholder collaboration, ensuring that civil society remains a key driver of national development and social transformation.

CHAPTER SIX: COMMUNICATION AND VISIBILITY STATUS REVIEW



With misinformation and disinformation campaigns against NGOs increasing at local, regional, and international levels, NANGO's communications strategy in 2024 was anchored on the #ChangingTheNarrative campaign. This initiative sought to demystify and counter negative narratives surrounding civil society's role, work, and impact, particularly within Zimbabwe. Over the years, disinformation efforts have contributed to the shrinking of civic space, eroding public trust in NGOs, and creating additional regulatory and operational challenges. These trends have been observed not only within Zimbabwe but across the global civil society landscape, prompting apex organisations and advocacy groups to develop sustainable strategies for responding to these threats.

Recognising that 2024 marked the second year of NANGO's Strategic Plan (2023–2025)—which is centred on making NANGO fit for purpose—communication remained a critical tool in advancing the organisation's Key Result Areas (KRAs). Effective communication was prioritized to enhance transparency, accountability, and engagement with stakeholders, particularly beneficiaries of NANGO programming, member organisations, development partners, the private sector, and policymakers. This commitment to proactive and strategic communication was aimed at ensuring that members, partners, and key stakeholders were not only informed but also actively involved in shaping NANGO's initiatives. In line with this, the organisation enhanced two-way communication mechanisms, allowing stakeholders to share feedback, express concerns, and contribute to NANGO's programming direction.

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) continued to serve as the highest platform for stakeholder engagement and feedback collection, complemented by quarterly board meetings at both regional and national levels. These governance structures provided a crucial space for members to express their views on NANGO's programming, advocacy priorities, and strategic direction. Additionally, the Secretariat incorporated feedback mechanisms into flagship events, utilizing post-event surveys and structured stakeholder consultations to assess the effectiveness of programs and refine future activities. This ongoing commitment to continuous improvement ensured that NANGO remained responsive to the needs of its members and aligned with the evolving challenges facing the sector.



Digital Media and Strategic Online Engagement

2024 saw significant advancements in NANGO's digital communication efforts, with a strong focus on leveraging digital platforms to improve outreach, engagement, and information dissemination. One of the key milestones was NANGO's adoption of Mailchimp for email marketing and stakeholder engagement. By December 31, 2024, the platform had 878 subscribed contacts, segmented into development partners, member organisations, media professionals, private sector representatives, and the general public. Contacts were collected via the NANGO website signup form and manually during key events, ensuring a diverse and engaged audience. Mailchimp enabled targeted and streamlined communication, ensuring that relevant information reached the appropriate stakeholders without unnecessary overlap. Over the year, 16 email updates were sent out through Mailchimp, covering various thematic areas, with a strong emphasis on civic space issues and monitoring developments surrounding the PVO Amendment Bill.

Social Media Advocacy and Campaigns

NANGO actively utilized social media campaigns to amplify key advocacy issues, increase public awareness, and engage diverse audiences on critical policy and governance matters. One of the major campaigns of the year focused on Zimbabwe's 2024 Voluntary National Review (VNR) process. As NANGO implemented the "Strengthening Civil Society Engagement and Influence in Zimbabwe's VNR Process" project—supported by Forus and co-funded by the European Union (EU)—a robust digital campaign was rolled out to raise public awareness of the VNR process. The campaign provided comprehensive insights into what the VNR entails, why it matters for Zimbabwe's development trajectory, and how CSOs and individuals could actively participate in shaping the country's development report.

Another key campaign revolved around civic space advocacy, particularly in response to the legislative amendments proposed under the PVO Amendment Bill. NANGO closely monitored the legislative process, analysed the bill's potential impact, and engaged stakeholders through targeted social media messaging. The campaign focused on raising awareness of specific clauses in the bill that posed risks to CSO autonomy and operations, emphasizing the need for an enabling regulatory environment that upholds freedom of association and civil society independence.

To address emerging financial regulations affecting NGOs, NANGO also conducted a campaign on money laundering risks within the sector. The campaign provided practical guidelines on financial compliance, equipping NGOs with knowledge on best practices for safeguarding their operations against financial misconduct allegations. This effort was particularly crucial as global financial regulations tightened, increasing scrutiny on CSOs' financial transactions and funding sources.

In addition to governance and financial compliance campaigns, NANGO actively participated in advocacy around the Open Budget Survey (OBS) 2023 Report for Zimbabwe. The social media campaign focused on Zimbabwe's ranking in budget transparency and public financial management, highlighting key findings and recommendations from the report. The campaign advocated for greater budget transparency, citizen participation in fiscal governance, and improved public finance accountability mechanisms.

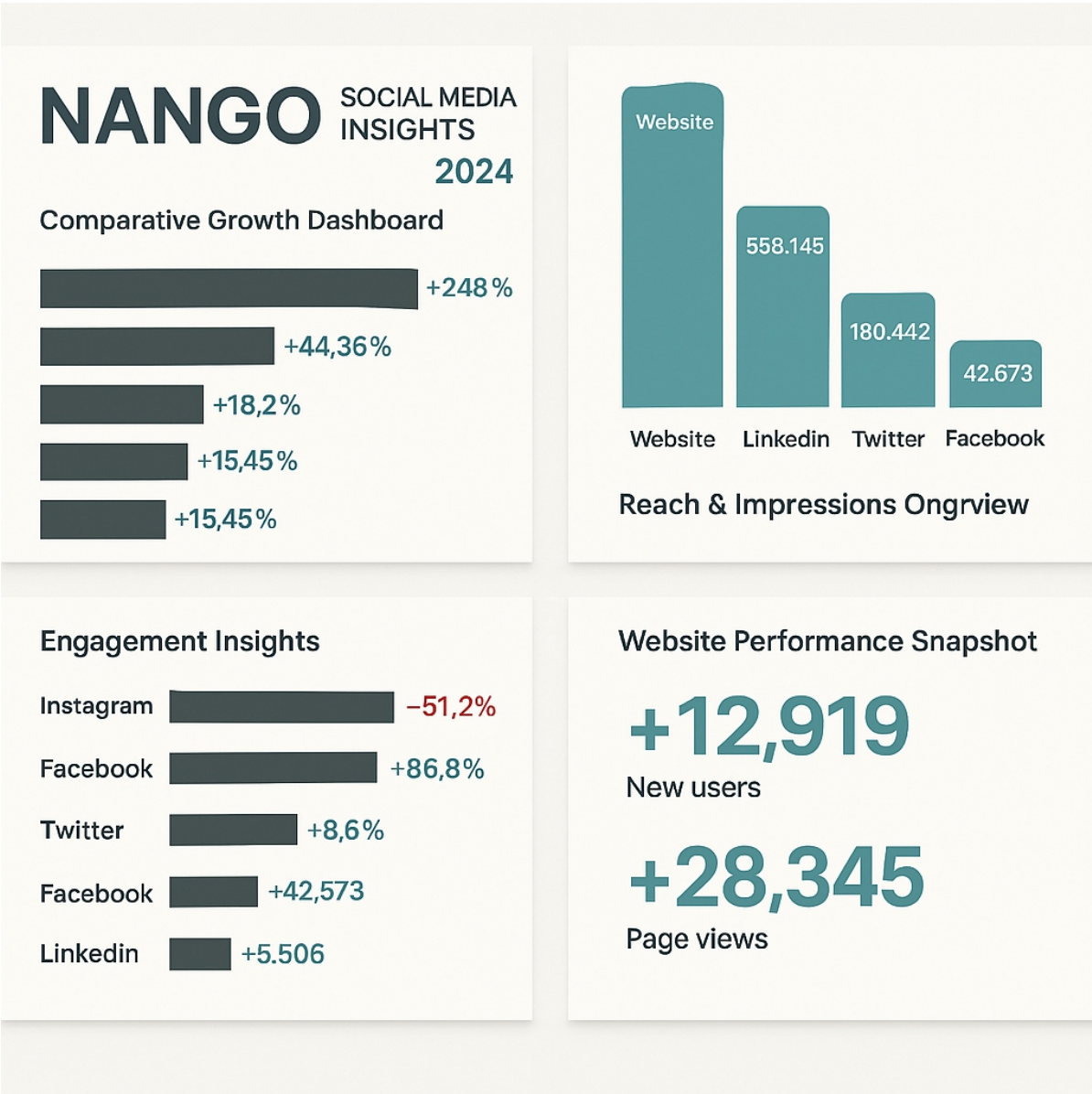
Throughout November and December 2024, NANGO took part in the global 16 Days of Activism Against GBV campaign, aligning with international efforts to combat violence against women and girls. This initiative was coupled with Human Rights Day activities, during which NANGO joined the United Nations Human Rights (UNHR) campaign to promote awareness on fundamental freedoms, human rights protection, and civil liberties. Through targeted messaging, infographics, and virtual discussions, NANGO reinforced its commitment to advancing gender equality and human rights advocacy in Zimbabwe.

Impact of Digital Engagement and Looking Ahead

The #ChangingTheNarrative campaign served as a unifying theme for NANGO's communication efforts throughout the year, countering misinformation and repositioning civil society as a legitimate and essential development actor. The digital campaigns strengthened stakeholder engagement, improved public awareness on key issues, and enhanced NANGO's visibility in advocacy spaces. Looking ahead, NANGO plans to scale up its digital strategy, incorporating data-driven analytics, multimedia content creation, and interactive digital dialogues to further expand its reach and influence.

As digital platforms continue to reshape communication landscapes, NANGO remains committed to leveraging technology to foster informed public discourse, strengthen civil society collaboration, and build public trust in NGO activities. The communication strategy for 2025 and beyond will focus on deepening audience engagement, strengthening media partnerships, and ensuring that Zimbabwe's civil society sector remains visible, credible, and impactful in the national and global development space.

The following table provides a detailed breakdown of NANGO's digital media performance in 2024, showcasing growth trends, engagement metrics, and campaign reach across various platforms.



NANGO in the Media

1. [The struggle for human rights is real: Bere](#)
2. [Zimbabwe makes significant budgetary transparency strides](#)
3. [PVO bill hearings abandoned as rowdy ZANU PF elements heckle participant opposed to proposed law](#)
4. [Govt, NGOs angle for consensus on PVO Bill](#)
5. [–World NGO Day Overview and Profiles of 14 National and Regional NGO Umbrella Organisations in Africa.](#)

Resources

1. [Open Budget Survey Zimbabwe Report 2023](#)
2. [CSOs Consolidated Report for the Zimbabwe Voluntary National Review 2024](#)
3. [Troutbeck Action Agenda and Resolutions Document](#)
4. [14th NGO Directors Summer Retreat Consolidated Report](#)
5. [Amplifying CSOs Voice for the Summit of the Future \(Blog\)](#)
6. [12th NANGO Annual NGO Awards Winners](#)
7. [NANGO Annual Board Chairpersons Report 2024](#)
8. [NANGO Northern Region NGO Expo & Winter School 2024](#)
9. [Empowering CSOs for Stronger Health Systems: NANGOs Journey with BACKUP Health](#)
10. [A Space for Us Podcast with Ernest Nyimai, NANGO Executive Director](#)



CHAPTER SEVEN: PARTNERS APPRECIATION

As we reflect on the journey through 2024, we take a moment to express our profound gratitude and heartfelt appreciation for the unwavering support, generosity, and commitment demonstrated by our esteemed partners and sponsors. Your contributions—both financial and technical—have been instrumental in driving our mission forward, strengthening our impact, and enhancing the value we deliver to our members and key stakeholders.

Your steadfast belief in NANGO's vision and mandate has emboldened us, instilling renewed vigour and determination to champion the causes of civil society. Through your strategic partnerships and generous contributions, we have successfully executed essential programs, provided critical resources, and extended vital assistance to stakeholders navigating complex challenges. Your support has not only empowered organisations within our network but also amplified the collective voice of civil society in Zimbabwe.

Beyond financial contributions, we are profoundly grateful for the partnerships, trust, and collaboration you have extended to us. Your guidance, expertise, and constructive feedback have played a pivotal role in refining our strategies and ensuring our interventions are responsive, impactful, and sustainable. The strength of our shared commitment has fostered an ecosystem of innovation, resilience, and solidarity—qualities that remain fundamental to the continued growth of Zimbabwe's civil society sector.

As we celebrate the milestones achieved in 2024, we acknowledge that these successes would not have been possible without the unwavering support of our partners and sponsors. Your belief in our vision and dedication to fostering a thriving civic space has served as an enduring source of inspiration and motivation for the NANGO Secretariat, our members, and the broader development community.

We extend our deepest gratitude to the following organisations and institutions for their invaluable sponsorship and partnership throughout the year:



Together, we look forward to deepening our collaboration in the years ahead, united in our mission to empower civil society, amplify impact, and build a more just and resilient Zimbabwe.



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