

Development Watch Newsletter

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Designed By: Chris Katsaura



Letter from the Editor

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the first edition of the NANGO Development Watch Newsletter for 2025 — a year that has begun with both promise and profound shifts in Zimbabwe's civil society landscape. This issue comes at a critical time when the sector is adjusting to the realities of the Private Voluntary Organisations (PVO) Amendment Act, 2025, while also grappling with the recent funding cuts by the United States Government (USG), one of Zimbabwe's long-standing development partners.

These developments mark a defining moment for the civil society sector. The reduction in donor support has far-reaching implications for programme sustainability, community outreach, and advocacy efforts, especially for local organisations that rely heavily on external funding. At the same time, the implementation of the PVO Amendment Act calls for greater adaptability and resilience as organisations re-evaluate their governance, accountability, and operational frameworks to align with the new legal environment. Together, these twin challenges demand strategic foresight, collaboration, and innovation from all stakeholders within the civic space. Despite these challenges, we are encouraged by the determination of our members and partners who continue to champion human rights, social justice, and inclusive development even in constrained environments.

As we move deeper into 2025, NANGO remains committed to amplifying the voice of civil society, promoting constructive dialogue, and facilitating partnerships that ensure the sector not only survives but thrives. Our collective strength lies in unity and innovation — in finding new pathways to mobilise resources, enhance collaboration, and uphold the principles of accountability and participation that define our work.

We invite you to engage with the reflections, analyses, and stories shared in this edition. Let them serve as a reminder that while the context may be shifting, the spirit of Zimbabwe's civil society remains strong, resilient, and unwavering in its pursuit of sustainable and inclusive development.

Warm regards,
Editor, Development Watch Newsletter



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Successful Launch of the ENERGIZE Project: Strengthening Civil Society in Zimbabwe.

The **National Association of Non-Governmental Organisations (NANGO)**, in partnership with the **National Association of Youth Organisations (NAYO)**, successfully launched the **Action to Empower NGOs for Effective and Inclusive Governance and Development in Zimbabwe (ENERGIZE)** project through a two-day inception meeting. This meeting brought together 16 participants (7 females and 9 males) from both organisations to establish a shared understanding of the project and create an effective implementation framework. The ENERGIZE project, funded by the [European Union \(EU\)](#), aims to strengthen Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in Zimbabwe by improving governance, transparency, and inclusive development.

During the meeting, participants discussed the project's key focus areas, which include creating an enabling environment for CSOs, strengthening coordination and capacity, facilitating policy dialogues, and increasing citizen participation. The session also covered donor priorities, such as the Multi-Annual Indicative Program (MIP) and the EU Roadmap for Engagement with Civil Society in Zimbabwe. These discussions helped align project goals with broader development priorities.

The meeting also focused on ensuring smooth project implementation by defining responsibilities, financial reporting requirements, and grant compliance standards. Both organisations agreed to co-implement the project and set up a project board and technical team to oversee progress.





A strong M&E framework was also discussed as a crucial part of the project. The team agreed to use outcome harvesting and results-based reporting to measure the impact of project activities. Aligning with the logical framework will help track progress, identify challenges in real-time, and make informed decisions for better project outcomes. This approach will enhance accountability and ensure that project goals are met effectively.

The successful inception meeting set a solid foundation for the ENERGIZE project, marking an important step toward strengthening CSOs in Zimbabwe. Through strategic planning, financial accountability, and continuous monitoring, NANGO and NAYO are committed to implementing this project effectively. Their collaboration will empower civil society to promote good governance, transparency, and participation, ensuring long-term benefits for communities across Zimbabwe.





Zimbabwe's Youth at the Forefront of Empowerment Strategy Development.

Young people are at the centre of Zimbabwe's development agenda, and efforts to shape a clear roadmap for their empowerment are gaining momentum. The National Association of Youth Organisations (NAYO) joined key stakeholders at the Youth Empowerment Strategy Workshop on 18 February 2025, an initiative led by the Ministry of Youth Development, Empowerment, and Vocational Skills Training. The workshop brought together youth representatives, government officials, and development partners to develop a strategy aimed at addressing challenges young people face while creating opportunities for them to actively contribute to national development.

The discussions highlighted the need for inclusive participation, ensuring that young people from diverse backgrounds are part of decision-making processes that directly impact their lives. A key moment of the workshop was an interactive engagement between NAYO and the Permanent Secretary, Mr. S Mhlanga, where youth leaders shared their concerns, aspirations, and recommendations for the strategy. The proposed Youth Empowerment Strategy is designed to align youth development efforts with national and international frameworks, including Zimbabwe's Vision 2030, the African Youth Charter, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

At the core of the strategy is a strong commitment to reducing the number of young people who are Not in Education, Employment, or Training (NEET). The strategy aims to create structured pathways for skills development, entrepreneurship, and access to meaningful employment opportunities. It also seeks to strengthen collaboration between the government, civil society, and the private sector to enhance youth participation in economic growth and governance.

Recognizing that policies must translate into action; NAYO partnered with the Ministry of Youth to ensure that youth voices are meaningfully included in the strategy's development. This partnership included a nationwide consultation process across all ten provinces of Zimbabwe,



ensuring that young people in rural and urban areas contribute to shaping a strategy that reflects their needs and aspirations.

As Zimbabwe moves forward with this critical initiative, NAYO remains committed to amplifying young voices and advocating for policies that drive real transformation. The Youth Empowerment Strategy must not be just another policy document but a transformative framework that creates real opportunities and unlocks the potential of Zimbabwean youth. The journey towards a more inclusive and youth-driven future has begun, and now is the time for collective action.

This initiative aligns with the objectives of the ENERGIZE project, a collaborative effort by NANGO and NAYO aimed at strengthening youth participation in governance, economic empowerment, and social development. Through this project, young people are equipped with the necessary skills, resources, and platforms to engage meaningfully in decision-making processes at both local and national levels. By complementing the Youth Empowerment Strategy, the project fosters an enabling environment for youth-led solutions, ensuring that policies are not just formulated but effectively implemented to create tangible opportunities for Zimbabwe's young population.



HOW DOES AN NGO REGISTER ON TARMS?

Step 1

Self-Service Portal

Visit the official Self Service Portal – SSP at mytaxselfservice.zimra.co.zw



Step 2

SSP User Account

Create an SSP user account by clicking on the **"Sign Up"** hyperlink and follow the steps to get your Username and Password.

Step 3

Account Log In

Log into the system using your username and password and follow the steps as directed.

Step 4

Existing Taxpayer

If you are an existing taxpayer with BP number, click on the **"Register with an Existing BP Number"** hyperlink and follow the instructions.

Step 5

New Taxpayer

If you are a new taxpayer, choose the appropriate option from **"Register as an Individual"** or **"Register as an Organisation"** or **"Register as a Representative of a Deceased Taxpayer"** and follow the steps.

Step 6

Bank Selection

Select your preferred bank to link to the **ZIMRA Single Account** located in that bank. Note that, you should be an **account holder** in that bank to facilitate tax transactions.

All NGOs are encouraged to contact their nearest **NANGO Offices** should they face registration challenges or email us at info@nangozim.org or get in touch with the **ZIMRA Contact Center** on **585/0868800761**



NANGO is Set to Roll Out the QuAAM: Strengthening CSOs Compliance, Accountability & Legitimacy.

The National Association of Non-Governmental Organisations (NANGO), in partnership with the National Association for Youth Organisations (NAYO), successfully conducted a training session on the Quality Assurance and Accountability Mechanism (QuAAM) for its Regional Executive Committees (RECs) across five regions and the National Executive Committee (NEC). Held as part of the Action to Empower NGOs for Effective and Inclusive Governance and Development in Zimbabwe (ENERGIZE) project—funded by the European Union (EU)—the training took place to enhance accountability, transparency, and good governance within Zimbabwe's civil society sector. A total of 38 participants (21 females and 17 males) attended the training, which aimed to equip NANGO leadership with the knowledge and tools to ensure compliance, legitimacy, and responsible self-governance.

The QuAAM framework is a structured approach designed to strengthen Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) accountability by setting clear standards for governance, financial transparency, and ethical conduct. It serves as a mechanism through which organisations can assess their performance, ensure compliance with legal and operational requirements, and maintain public trust. QuAAM also promotes internal self-governance, allowing CSOs to establish policies that align with international best practices while being responsive to local needs.

During the training, NANGO introduced a data collection tool that will be distributed to its members to gather critical information necessary for implementing the QuAAM framework. The primary objectives of the training were to deepen understanding of the QuAAM framework



among REC and NEC members, reinforce accountability within NANGO leadership, and demonstrate how the framework aligns with international governance and transparency standards.

This initiative falls under the CSOs Coordination and Capacity Building pillar of the ENERGIZE project, which seeks to strengthen Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) through improved organisational systems and leadership development. By ensuring that NANGO leadership is well-equipped to uphold accountability and governance standards, the QuAAM training marks a significant step in strengthening the credibility and effectiveness of Zimbabwe's NGO sector. This training sets the foundation for a more transparent and responsible civil society that can continue advocating for sustainable development and social justice across the country.

The QuAAM will serve as a crucial tool for assessing the capacity needs of CSOs, enabling a comprehensive understanding of their strengths, gaps, and areas requiring support. By systematically evaluating these needs, the assessment will generate valuable insights that inform the design of tailored capacity-strengthening initiatives. These initiatives will be strategically developed to address the specific challenges identified, ensuring that CSOs receive targeted support that enhances their effectiveness, sustainability, and overall impact. Through this process, the QuAAM will not only provide a diagnostic framework but also pave the way for evidence-based interventions that empower CSOs to navigate the evolving landscape and drive meaningful transformation within their communities.





Opinion: Beyond the Pause: Rebuilding Resilience in Zimbabwe's Civil Society

The recent pause in United States foreign aid to Zimbabwe, initiated by President Donald Trump in January 2025, has had profound implications for the country's civil society, a reality starkly observed by NANGO during January and February 2025. This 90-day suspension, part of a broader review of foreign aid programs, has left many Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) grappling with uncertainty and financial strain, mirroring NANGO's own concerns regarding the fragility of civil society's operations when over-reliant on external funding. The impact of this pause has been particularly acute in the health, agriculture, and governance sectors, which have historically relied heavily on US aid, revealing the vulnerability of critical programmes and the populations they serve.

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has been a significant contributor to Zimbabwe's development initiatives, with funding amounting to approximately US\$360 million in 2024 alone. This aid has supported a wide array of programs, including HIV/AIDS prevention, food security, and women's empowerment. The sudden halt in funding has created a crisis across multiple areas, leaving clinics scrambling, NGOs reeling, and vulnerable populations facing potential catastrophe. This abrupt nature of the aid pause has created a ripple effect, disrupting critical programs and leaving vulnerable populations exposed, as NANGO has observed.

One of the most immediate and visible impacts of the aid pause has been on Zimbabwe's health sector. The US President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), which provides antiretrovirals to millions of people worldwide, has been directly affected. Clinics in Zimbabwe are facing immediate shortages of vital supplies, and the halt in funding means that many are struggling to maintain operations. This situation has been described as "a matter of life or death" by Beatriz Grinsztejn, president of the International Aids Society. The agricultural sector has also been significantly impacted. USAID's Feed the Future program, which has supported over 200,000 smallholder farmers since 2010, has been instrumental in enhancing agricultural productivity and food security across the nation. The pause in funding has left many farmers without the resources they need to continue their work, threatening food security in a country already grappling with the effects of climate change and economic instability. These observations are also supported by [ICVA reports](#) that highlight how these types of aid cuts "have severely undermined humanitarian needs assessment, accountability, mechanisms, response planning at both global and country levels. NGOs are struggling to assess the real-time



needs of communities and deliver independently.”

In addition to the health and agricultural sectors, the pause in US aid has also affected governance and civil society programmes. USAID has been involved in improving governance structures, enhancing government accountability, and fostering a more responsive relationship between the state and its citizens. The halt in funding has disrupted these efforts, leaving many NGOs without the financial support they need to continue their work. This is a very concerning development for a nation that has historically struggled with governance issues, as noted by [ZimRights](#), highlighting the loss of support to civil society groups that work on "democracy and governance sector helped communities play a more effective role in shaping democracy and advancing constitutionalism." Furthermore, the aid pause has further eroded the trust between NGOs and the communities they serve. When programmes abruptly cease, it creates uncertainty and disillusionment, potentially undermining years of work to build community engagement and participation.

The broader implications of the aid pause are also worth considering. The sudden policy shift has raised concerns about the stability of Zimbabwe's health and education sectors, which rely heavily on US financial support. While a waiver has been granted for health-related funding to prevent system collapse, the future of other programs remains uncertain. This uncertainty has created a climate of fear and anxiety among NGOs and their beneficiaries, many of which are now facing the prospect of having to scale back or shut down their operations.

In conclusion, the pause in USA foreign aid to Zimbabwe has had far-reaching and potentially devastating impacts on the country's civil society. The health, agricultural, and governance sectors have been particularly hard hit, with many organisations struggling to maintain operations in the face of financial uncertainty. As the review of foreign aid programs continues, it is crucial that the needs of Zimbabwe's most vulnerable populations are not overlooked. The international community must work together to ensure that vital aid continues to flow to those who need it most, and that the progress made in recent years is not undone by this temporary pause in funding. NANGO emphasizes the urgent need for diversification of funding sources, strengthening local capacity, enhanced coordination, and advocacy for sustainable funding. The US foreign aid pause serves as a stark reminder of the vulnerabilities faced by civil society in Zimbabwe. It underscores the importance of building a robust and resilient civil society sector that can withstand external shocks and continue to play a vital role in the nation's development.



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The National Association of Non-Governmental Organisations (NANGO), in partnership with the National Association of Youth Organisations (NAYO) and with funding from the European Union (EU), successfully commemorated World NGO Day through the 2nd Civil Society Organisations (CSO) Symposium. The symposium took place on 27 February 2024 across NANGO's regional structures in Harare, Mutare, Gweru, and Bulawayo, covering the Northern, Eastern, Midlands, and Western regions, respectively. A total of 228 participants engaged in the discussions, with 74 in the Northern Region, 49 in the Eastern Region, 51 in the Midlands Region, and 54 in the Western Region.





The symposium, conducted under the Civil Society Organisation (CSO) Enabling Environment pillar of the Action to Empower NGOs for Effective and Inclusive Governance and Development in Zimbabwe (ENERGIZE) Project, recognized the vital contributions of NGOs in shaping a brighter future. It highlighted their role in fostering inclusive and sustainable development, aligning with the theme, "Strength in Solidarity: Celebrating NGOs' Impact and Building Financial Sustainability." The event provided a platform to highlight the impact of NGOs in community development, social justice, and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) while advocating for an enabling environment that ensures their sustainability. Additionally, it fostered networking, knowledge-sharing, and discussions on strengthening collective capacity to navigate current operational challenges.

The symposium commenced with welcome remarks from NANGO Regional Board Chairpersons, who emphasized unity, solidarity, and collaboration as key strategies in addressing the shrinking civic space and financial sustainability challenges threatening the civil society sector. Participants shared their experiences, showcased their achievements, and deliberated on ways to ensure a resilient civil society. NANGO Coordinators, delivering a keynote speech on behalf of Executive Director Mr. Ernest Nyimai, reaffirmed that World NGO Day is dedicated to recognizing the essential role of NGOs in fostering social transformation and advocating for the rights of marginalized communities. CSOs were urged to embrace financial innovation by exploring diverse funding avenues and moving from donor dependency to sustainable financing models. The speech also called for stronger CSO-Government dialogue on domestic resource mobilisation, advocating for legislative frameworks that promote local philanthropy and policy reforms supporting long-term financial sustainability.

The donor community stood in solidarity with local CSOs, acknowledging their work in promoting social justice and protecting human rights. Ms. Fungisai Sithole, Programme Manager at Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom (FNF), stressed the importance of celebrating NGO contributions amid a shrinking civic space. She highlighted that NGOs' work embodies 'Ubuntu', reinforcing the need to embrace and celebrate the gains made despite financial uncertainties. Similarly, Dr. Pedzisai Pasirayi, Programmes Manager at ActionAid Zimbabwe, emphasized that solidarity is the strength needed in challenging times, commending local NGOs for consistently being first responders during crises. However, she cautioned that the sector's financial sustainability remains under threat due to growing restrictions.

Apex organisations also shared their solidarity messages, reinforcing the need for unity. Mr. Admire Mutizwa from the Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC) highlighted the increasing challenges faced by governance, accountability, and human rights-focused NGOs, urging greater coordination between development and humanitarian actors. He stressed that the proposed Private Voluntary Organisations (PVO) Amendment Bill poses a significant threat to



civil society by restricting their ability to operate freely. His remarks echoed growing concerns that the bill could undermine democratic values and fundamental rights, emphasizing that advocating against the bill should not be misinterpreted as opposing transparency and accountability.

The labour sector also weighed in on the significance of World NGO Day in protecting human and workers' rights. Mr. Runesu Dzimiri from the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) called for increased collaboration and advocacy for fundamental freedoms. He reiterated that NGOs shape Zimbabwe's socio-economic landscape, attract foreign investment, and create jobs. To protect these gains, solidarity is crucial in countering government and corporate actions that threaten civic space. He urged NGOs to remain vigilant and committed to their responsibilities of safeguarding democratic and developmental progress.

Business sector representatives also acknowledged the role of NGOs in promoting sustainable development. Mr. Kuda Matare from the Zimbabwe National Chamber of Commerce (ZNCC) expressed gratitude for the support NGOs provide to businesses, emphasizing the importance of continued collaboration in advocating for policies that promote sustainable business practices and social equity. He encouraged CSOs to increase stakeholder engagement, adopt inclusive approaches, and strengthen dialogue with businesses to drive meaningful policy influence.

In the Northern Region, the Harare Mayor, as the keynote speaker, acknowledged the vital role NGOs play in boosting tourism and local business. He reaffirmed the city's commitment to fostering partnerships with NGOs in areas of mutual interest. The Mayor emphasized that NGOs complement government efforts by reaching marginalized communities, reinforcing that unity and solidarity are key to overcoming current challenges.

Through the 2nd CSO Symposium, NANGO successfully celebrated World NGO Day, reinforcing its commitment to defending civic space, advocating for financial sustainability, and strengthening CSO collaboration. As the sector navigates uncertain times, NANGO continues to champion a strong, resilient, and united civil society, ensuring that NGOs remain impactful in fostering development, protecting human rights, and advocating for good governance in Zimbabwe.



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Maria Jennifer Guste

NAYO Shares Zimbabwe's Perspective at Global Meeting on CSO 4th Monitoring Round

The Civil Society Organisations (CSO) Partnership for Development Effectiveness (CPDE) hosted a global webinar titled "From Information to Action: The Global Partnership (GPEDC) 4th Monitoring Round" in February 2025. The virtual meeting brought together CSOs from different continents, the Joint Support Team (JST), representatives from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and staff from the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation (GPEDC). The main objective of the webinar was to allow CSOs to share their experiences, challenges, and best practices in implementing the 4th Monitoring Round, while also strengthening momentum toward the next phases of the process.

Representing Zimbabwe in this important discussion was the National Association of Youth Organisations (NAYO), one of only two CSOs invited to present their experiences. As a CSO Focal Point for Zimbabwe in the 4th Monitoring Round, NAYO played a crucial role in ensuring the meaningful participation of local CSOs in the monitoring process. Working in collaboration with the National Association of Non-Governmental Organisations (NANGO), with the support of the European Union (EU) and the International Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL), NAYO led efforts to assess the state of the CSO enabling environment in Zimbabwe and improve development cooperation.

During the webinar, NAYO shared key achievements from Zimbabwe's engagement in the 4th Monitoring Round, which included:

- Organizing and conducting CSO consultation meetings that engaged 226 local organisations across 28 thematic areas, ensuring a diverse and inclusive representation of CSO voices.
- Developing a CSO Dissemination and Engagement Plan to strengthen CSO participation in the 4th Monitoring Round in Zimbabwe and increase awareness of the process.

- Entering key data into the JST database for Indicator Two on CSO Enabling Environment, which assesses the extent to which CSOs operate in an environment that allows them to maximize their development contributions.

The 4th Monitoring Round plays a vital role in enhancing development cooperation, improving relationships among development actors, and ensuring that commitments made in global development frameworks are met. The insights shared by NAYO provided valuable lessons on how local organisations can leverage multi-stakeholder partnerships to strengthen civic space, advocate for better policies, and enhance the effectiveness of development efforts.

Going forward, NAYO is now working closely with CSO Focal Points from Nigeria and Cameroon, who are set to collect data on Indicator Two in their respective countries. This collaboration aims to ensure a broader and more comprehensive assessment of CSO environments across the region, contributing to a more inclusive and impactful Global Partnership Monitoring process.

The participation of Zimbabwean CSOs in global platforms like this webinar demonstrates the growing recognition of local organisations in shaping global development policies. NANGO, NAYO, and other like-minded organisations remain committed to advocating for an enabling environment that empowers CSOs to contribute effectively to Zimbabwe's sustainable development.





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