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Humanitarian Aid
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The NGOs and Humanitarian Reform Project II

A chance to influence
the humanitarian system

ASSESSING THE CAPACITY OF NANGO TO COORDINATE NGOs IN HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE IN ZIMBABWE



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EUROPEAN COMMISSION



Humanitarian Aid

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Abbreviations

AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
ERF	Emergency Response Fund
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HoA	Heads of Agencies
HCT	Humanitarian Country Team
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
INGOs	International non-government organizations
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NANGO	National Association of Non-Government Organization
NGOs	Non-governmental organizations
NHRP	NGO and Humanitarian Reform Project Phase II
OVC	Office of Victims of Crimes
UN	United Nations
UNOCHA	United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
WASH	Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene

Executive Summary

Zimbabwe has been facing a humanitarian crisis in the last decade especially in relation to food security, WASH, health, and protection issues. Furthermore, this is the same period that the economy of the country has deteriorated to near-collapse levels. The humanitarian crisis became critical in 2008 when 4,000 people died of the disease and an additional 10,000 people were affected by cholera. Together the UN, NGOs, donors and the government of Zimbabwe met the immediate needs of the affected and addressed the root causes of the problem. Under these circumstances, coordination of humanitarian NGOs was therefore critical to ensure that humanitarian assistance provided by NGOs was targeted, effective and that NGOs remained accountable as part of the humanitarian reform system.

As the major coordinating body for national NGOs in Zimbabwe, NANGO is strategically positioned to influence and lead humanitarian and development coordination processes especially as Zimbabwe's situation shifts from a humanitarian mode to recovery and development. The review was aimed at assessing the capacity of NANGO to coordinate humanitarian assistance in Zimbabwe targeting representation, leadership and participation in humanitarian coordination forums.

A total of 24 randomly sampled humanitarian and development sector NGOs participated in the assessment divided in the following way: 10 in the Western region (Bulawayo), 4 in the southern region (2 in Chiredzi and 2 in Masvingo), 5 in the Eastern region (Mutare) and 5 in the Northern region (Harare). The methodology for the study included two main methods: (i) in depth interviews with key informants (ii) a survey questionnaire given to a sample of NGOs from the NANGO database.

The following were the main findings of the assessment:

Leadership

- NANGO had succeeded in leading national processes and engaging with the government but failed in its internal coordination.
- It was generally agreed by national NGOs that affiliation to NANGO was important and necessary.
- The majority of the humanitarian sector organizations interviewed indicated that NANGO was not effective in its coordination role (14 out of 16 organizations that responded to the question).
- It was argued that NANGO had not succeeded in effectively bringing together organizations with diverse needs and objectives, particularly NGOs working in the humanitarian sector.

Representation

- NANGO secretariat and national NGOs were consistently underrepresented in humanitarian coordination forums such as the Heads of Agencies, HCT, ERF Board, Transition Fund Steering Committee, and cluster meetings.
- Several NGOs indicated that NANGO was strategically positioned to represent them but was currently not doing an adequate job, as they had never visited them and therefore did not understand their needs. Given the growing numbers of NGOs and limited capacity of the NANGO secretariat, they argued that it was ambitious to expect NANGO to adequately represent their various needs.
- NGOs had developed other networks and working groups to coordinate their activities in the absence of NANGO's coordination and representation.

Participation

- Communication systems and flow of information within NANGO were weak, hampering information flow from the members and feedback from NANGO.
- Local NGOs did not participate in national coordination forums such as HoA and HCT. A number of constraints were cited as affecting their participation including time, money, human resources and reluctance to face their financiers.
- Participation and representation through regional offices were also not effective due to regional offices that were too poorly resourced in terms of equipment, transport, and funds to effectively run operations and coordinate NGO activities. The only regional coordination forum in the country is the Matabeleland NGO Forum in Bulawayo.

Some of the following practical recommendations have been proposed:

1. In light of the growing number of NGOs, NANGO should coordinate NGOs through the sectors, networks, or associations. For example, each sector should become an Association that is affiliated to NANGO rather than each NGO having an affiliation.
2. NANGO should have specific delegated representatives in all of the regional, national, and global humanitarian coordination structures.
3. Representatives in coordination structures should have clear terms of reference, which outline their role and lines of accountability on how the organization receives input from other NGOs and provides feedback to the NGOs.
4. Regional offices and plans should reflect regional priorities and focus on building the capacity of sector leads.
5. NANGO should prioritize and improve their communication systems such as having internet for emails and a functional website to enhance coordination.
6. An M&E system should be put in place that allows for internal checks and evidence based decision-making.

To ensure implementation of these recommendations, NANGO needs to be supported in addressing some capacity needs:

- A mid-term strategy review
- Restructuring from the current to the proposed structure of affiliation with NGOs
- Developing a M&E system
- Capacity building of sector leads to strengthen sector coordination
- Developing clear terms of reference for the sector leads and delegated representative organizations
- Mentorship of national NGOs either by other INGOs or the UN to support national NGOs who are unwilling or unable to take leadership roles as representatives of other NGOs
- Database development

I. Introduction

Zimbabwe has been facing a humanitarian crisis in the last decade, especially in relation to food security, health, WASH and protection issues. Social service delivery in Zimbabwe was weakened by collapsing health, housing, water, sanitation, and education systems; strained social protection mechanisms; deteriorating infrastructure; and many other forms of humanitarian crises compounded by weak governance, poverty, HIV/AIDS, and droughts. Humanitarian coordination was critical because the situation exceeded the capacity of any national institutions. Efficiency in terms of cost, labor, and resources is a significant impetus behind calls for humanitarian coordination, as is the recognition of the importance of coherence, efficacy, quality and responsiveness in terms of humanitarian assistance.¹ The review was aimed at assessing the capacity of NANGO to coordinate humanitarian assistance in Zimbabwe targeting representation, leadership, and participation in humanitarian coordination forums.

Coordination, for the purposes of this assessment, has been defined as the systematic utilization of policy instruments to deliver humanitarian assistance in a cohesive and effective manner. Such instruments include (1) strategic planning; (2) gathering data and managing information; (3) mobilizing resources and assuring accountability; (4) orchestrating a functional division of labor in the field; (5) negotiation and maintaining a serviceable framework with host political authorities; and (6) providing leadership.²

¹ ATHA Thematic Brief Series: outlining basic tenets of humanitarian action; Humanitarian Coordination: An Overview January 2008

² Larry Minear et al. "United Nations Coordination of the International Humanitarian Response to the Gulf Crisis, 1990-1992" Occasional Paper #13 (Providence R.I.: Watson Institute for International Studies, 1992):

II. Background

1. The Humanitarian Reform Project

The NGO and Humanitarian Reform Project Phase II (NHRP II) aims to enhance the leadership, participation, and representation of NGOs in humanitarian reform structures through support for capacity and consensus building. To do so, the NHRP II will strengthen the capacity of NGOs to assume active membership and leadership roles in humanitarian reform forums and ensure that country-level challenges and good practices inform and advance global policy discussions on humanitarian reform. To this end, the project engages both international and national NGOs in their consortia and coordination forums to enhance their ability and opportunities for improved humanitarian coordination. As the major coordination body for NGOs in Zimbabwe, NANGO is strategically positioned to influence and lead on coordination processes especially as Zimbabwe's situation shifts from a humanitarian mode to recovery and development.

2. National Association of Non-governmental Organizations (NANGO)

The National Association of Non-Governmental Organizations (NANGO) was founded in 1962 as a social welfare organization under the name of "Southern Rhodesia Council of Social Services." In 1980 it was renamed "Voluntary Organizations in Community Enterprise (VOICE)" to reflect the increasing diverse base of organizations. The organization was renamed to NANGO in 1990 as the official coordinating body of NGOs in Zimbabwe, which is non-partisan and non-denominational. Its mandate is to coordinate the activities of NGOs, represent the NGO sector, and strengthen the voice of NGOs in Zimbabwe.

NANGO's mission is: **"We the community of NGOs, are committed to strengthen, represent and coordinate the work of NGOs in Zimbabwe by creating space, promoting networking, dialogue and engagement to enable the fulfillment of member's visions and missions."**

According to NANGO's strategic plan for the period of 2010 to 2013,³ the organization exists to fulfill the following organizational objectives:

1. To promote, coordinate, and organize, where necessary, the participation and contributions of NGOs in Zimbabwe in the social, economic, and political development of the Zimbabwean people.
2. To promote and support all social, political, and economic activities of organizations aiming to benefit a substantial or significant part of the Zimbabwean community. This includes a special focus on activities that are meant to promote, directly or indirectly, the wellbeing of the disadvantaged groups of the community including those with disabilities.
3. To provide such services as may be required by NGOs and other institutions involved, directly or indirectly, in the promotion of social, economic, and political development of the Zimbabwean community with a focus on the disadvantaged members of the community.
4. To affiliate to any international, regional, or bi-lateral bodies, as the National Executive Committee may decide and which affiliation is consistent with and for the purpose of furthering the above objectives.
5. To promote and facilitate the interaction, consultations, and exchange of information and experiences among all local NGOs and relevant institutions, including governments. Also to promote the linking up of local organizations with any regional, national, international, and bilateral bodies for the purposes of furthering the above objectives.

³NANGO Strategic Plan 2010-2013

6. To promote and support, directly or indirectly, the provision of education and economic opportunities for the disadvantaged groups of the community including the disabled.

In order to fulfill its mission, NANGO has developed several strategies and programs that address the above objectives. One key strategy is decentralization; it has opened five regional offices across the country since 2007. Regional coordinators are based in these offices to facilitate direct interface with members around the country. Table 1 shows the membership of NANGO, based on the current database.

Table 1: Membership of NANGO⁴

Region	Number	Comments
Northern Region	190	
Southern Region	75	Only 45 are active
Eastern region	76	
Western region	123	Based on 2009 database
Total	464	

In addition to the organizational objectives, NANGO has set out strategic objectives or priority focus areas for the period 2010 to 2013. These include:

- To advocate for and safeguard space for civil society organizations in Zimbabwe to operate effectively.
- To facilitate the building of members' capacities and resource bases so that they effectively respond to development challenges in their various areas of operations.
- To mobilize, catalyze, and coordinate NGOs' responses to local, regional, and international issues and other development initiatives with a bearing on the eradication of poverty and enjoyment of human rights by people in Zimbabwe.
- To promote coordination, strategic networking, collaboration, and partnership development between and amongst NGOs and with other key stakeholders including private sector, governments, and legislators locally and internationally,

The regional coordinators, whose main role is to ensure they provide these services to the NGOs in their region, confirmed these focus areas. Most prominent was NANGO's role in coordinating civil society organizations to participate in national processes such as the electoral and budget processes. In principle, coordination meetings are conducted once a quarter depending on availability of resources through the NANGO sectors. They also conduct trainings and capacity building programs, notably the corporate governance program, aimed at capacity building of organizations. According to the coordinators, an average of 70% of the organizations in the regions are trained in any given year. For example, in the southern region, a total of 35 NGOs were offered different kinds of trainings in 2012. Half of the organizations interviewed in this assessment had received some kind of support from NANGO in 2012 such as a training, information or links to other NGOs.

⁴ Membership to NANGO is voluntary and organizations pay a joining fee depending on the type of organization, as well as membership type. Any organization that has objectives, purpose, and activities consistent with the objectives of NANGO, locally based in Zimbabwe, properly constituted and registered under the Private Voluntary Organizations Act (Chapter 17), or as a Trust is eligible for ordinary membership. INGOs that are not Zimbabwean with respect to the final governing body but have branches or agencies constituted internally in Zimbabwe are eligible for associate membership. Honorary members are elected by the National Executive Committee due to their notable service and standing in the community in line with NANGO's objectives. NANGO categorizes NGOs according to 9 sectors, which are loosely defined, as follows: Agriculture and Environment; Children; Disability; Economic; Health and HIV/AIDS; Humanitarian; Human Rights; Women; and Youth.

III. Purpose and Objectives of the assessment

This review was aimed at assessing the capacity of NANGO to coordinate NGOs in humanitarian Assistance in Zimbabwe.

1. Overall objective

- To assess the capacity of NANGO to coordinate NGOs in humanitarian assistance in Zimbabwe.

2. Specific Objectives

- To review NANGO's coordination mandate given the increased number of NANGO's members.
- To assess the coordination capacity of NANGO targeting representation, leadership, and participation in humanitarian coordination forums such as HCT, HoA, and Clusters.
- To identify coordination and strategic constraints of NANGO.
- To provide recommendations for the improvement of NANGO's strategic position as a humanitarian coordination body in Zimbabwe

IV. Methodology

1. Overall Approach

The assessment was formative in theory, with the aim of drawing out key lessons that would inform and support NANGO's function as a coordinating body for NGOs in Zimbabwe. The methodology for the study included two main methods namely: (i) in depth interviews with NGO leaders and key informants such as officers at UNOCHA and members of Head of Agencies (HoA) and NANGO coordinators, (ii) a survey questionnaire given to a sample of NGOs from the NANGO database through email and organization visits. The questionnaire focused on the key assessment questions around representation, leadership, and participation in humanitarian coordination forums.

2. Sampling

A sample of 40 NGOs was selected for the survey, with 10 representatives from each region, with the exception of the Midlands region, whose database was not available at the time of data collection. A total of 24 NGOs participated in the assessment divided as follows: 10 in the Western region (Bulawayo), 4 in the southern region (2 in Chiredzi and 2 in Masvingo), 5 in the Eastern region (Mutare), and 5 in the Northern region (Harare). *See Annex 1 for a list of NGOs that participated in the study.* The remaining 13 were either unavailable or could not to take part in the study for various reasons.

3. Limitations

The assessment faced a number of limitations related to data issues as well as capacity and time constraints. The updated databases for NANGO regions were not readily available and as such the Midlands database was not included in the study. Some of the selected NGOs were unavailable for the study or had busy schedules and could not take part in the study as planned. It should also be noted that this assessment focused only on those NGOs involved in the humanitarian sector. NGOs in other sectors may have different views and experiences with NANGO.

V. Key Findings

The findings for this assessment have been categorized according to key study questions on leadership, representation, and participation. The relevance/role of NANGO was also addressed and a SWOT analysis⁵ was conducted.

1. Role of NANGO

It was generally agreed by all organizations that participated in the study that NANGO has an important and valid role to play as an umbrella body and voice for national NGOs in Zimbabwe. Other roles suggested for NANGO included regulation and accreditation of NGOs. In addition, it was stated that NANGO should be able to coordinate and lobby for policies and priority issues that will enhance the functions of NGOs. It was acknowledged that it was difficult for small or community based organizations to create space for themselves. A number of NGOs indicated that it was important and necessary to have a relationship with NANGO for capacity building purposes. One NGO indicated that NANGO has been able to represent the voice of NGOs. Another NGO suggested that NANGO could be an effective conduit to funding opportunities. Nevertheless, a significant number were not able to point to practical benefits they had received and examples of relevance of NANGO to their institutions, aside from being in the database.

“I think it’s important to be part of NANGO, but I don’t know why. It’s like being in a big family; you never know when you will need them, even if you have never really needed them in the past” *comment from a local NGO director*

2. Leadership

Leadership is critical in ensuring successful humanitarian coordination. Leadership in the context of humanitarian assistance is about effective visioning and leading processes of change. It also includes attention to differentiated needs of the organizations represented and ensuring they are fully participating in the processes. As such, while leadership can be a standalone concept, leadership is also a critical component in ensuring effective representation and participation as strategic elements of humanitarian assistance.

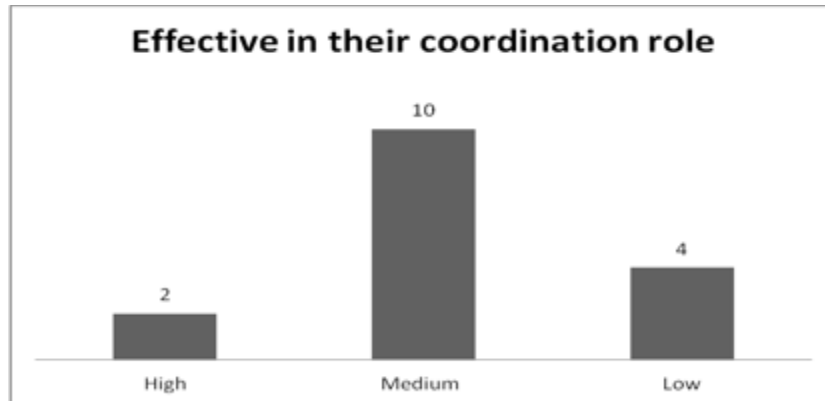
According to one regional coordinator, NANGO coordinates by consensus, which views leadership as important for formulating a coherent response and mobilizing key actors around common objectives. This type of coordination recognizes that coordination should be gained through consensus, rather than via direct authoritative assertion⁶. As such, NANGO tries to ensure that the members take ownership of the process through elected representatives who are the sector leads in the different thematic areas. These are expected to convene sector meetings and lead processes in their sector. Nevertheless, this approach has not worked as well as it should, because the sector heads are busy and have multiple other roles to play and this role often gets neglected. For instance, no sector meetings were held in most regions in 2012.

⁵ Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats

⁶ATHA Thematic Brief Series: outlining basic tenets of humanitarian action; Humanitarian Coordination: An Overview January 2008

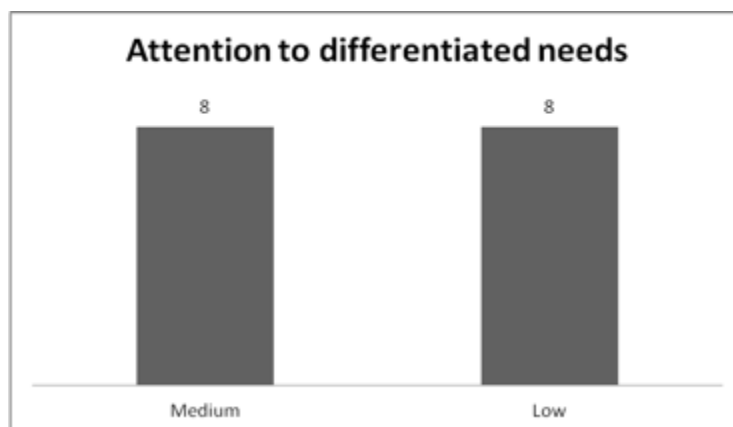
Representatives from organizations were asked to rank NANGO in a number of leadership areas. Sixteen NGOs responded to this question that addressed the capacity of NANGO as an effective leader in coordinating efforts and championing their needs in various forums such as the UN cluster.

Figure 1: Effectiveness in their coordination role



The two that ranked it high explained that NANGO was doing its best given the restrictive political and economic environment. The majority felt it could do better and improve its performance. The four that ranked it low, explained that NANGO had diverted from its mandate and due to the political landscape it had refocused on human rights while other sectors were neglected. This aspect was substantiated in other leadership areas that NANGO was ranked overall low such as accountability to members, attention to differentiated needs, and NANGO's role in advocating for leadership in the UN cluster. Most NGOs indicated that they had facilitated their own representation in the UN structure or through other coordinating bodies.

Figure 2: Attention to differentiated needs

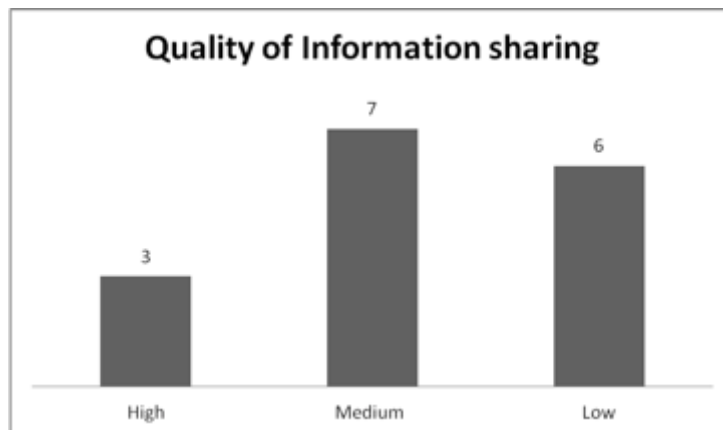


Some concerns were raised that NANGO did not seem to have any real/relevant issues to lead on, which was compounded by the fact that they had no real authority to mobilize or bring people together. On the contrary, for funding partnerships, the funder had the authority to effectively call for a meeting. The organizations interviewed argued that NANGO had not succeeded in effectively bringing together organizations with diverse needs and objectives. This was especially for the humanitarian sector where the NGOs felt NANGO was weak in

representing and championing their needs and had progressively been leaning more on human rights and civil society issues.

Communication was indicated to be one of the major weakness of NANGO. Most respondents raised concerns regarding the lack of information rather than the quality of information that they received. One Director pointed out that, *“as a member I should be clear on what advocacy issues are being tackled by NANGO at any given time, which is not the case. They should improve the general flow of information to members.”*

Figure 3: Quality of Information Sharing



Information about sector coordination meetings was not circulated and some said they heard about meetings through informal channels. There were also reports of invitations for meetings that never happened or failure to start meetings on time, which demoralized some senior staff members from attending future the meetings. The lack of feedback and exchange of information between NANGO and NGOs negatively impacted on the perception of NANGO by the NGOs.

Some cited the inability by NANGO to embrace and make use of new technologies as a factor in the lack of effective coordination by NANGO. This is reflected by the non-functional website, as well as emails that frequently bounced back or went unanswered. This hampered effective communication with partners. Some had not received feedback on their registration status although they were in the database.

None of the organizations interviewed mentioned NANGO as a major source of information about the humanitarian sector, or resources, materials, trainings, and funding opportunities. Information sources that were most frequently mentioned include websites for organizations including those for Kubatana, Partners Zimbabwe, Funds for NGOs, Funds for Non State Actors as well as international links through their current or past partners. The National AIDS Council and the Zimbabwe AIDS Network were also frequently mentioned by HIV and AIDS organizations. This could pose a threat to NANGO's coordination role as the other players are playing the role that NANGO would normally play.

In the absence of NANGO, other coordination forums have taken on an active role in some regions in Zimbabwe. A good example is the Matabeleland NGO Forum, which started in 1998, during a localized drought in Matabeleland that required NGOs to coordinate efforts, at a time when NANGO was not active. Despite being set up as a sector/part of the NANGO in the western region, the forum is the one driving the process while keeping NANGO still in the loop. The forum conducts similar functions to those that NANGO should be doing such as providing

networks and information. They have also actively promoted the participation and representation of local NGOs in the UN system and networks. These include the Organization of Rural Associations for Progress (ORAP) and Dabane Trust, which now receive funding directly from the UN as implementing partners.

3. Representation

Most of the NGOs felt confident that NANGO had the potential to adequately represent NGOs and coordinate this process in Zimbabwe. They indicated that given support and the right structure, NANGO could revolutionize the NGO operations. However, only two NGOs had an experience of an instance when NANGO had actually represented them on an issue pertinent to them. As one director put it, "How can [NANGO] adequately represent us when they have never asked us what we want?" The perception is that NANGO is slowly losing its credibility as a representative of local NGOs especially in the humanitarian and development sectors. This scenario is also reflected at a regional level. This can also be inferred from their current database where more organizations are choosing not to register with them. The current NANGO database shows less than 1,000 NGOs and fewer are subscribed members, whilst records from the Ministry of Social Welfare reflect that there are more than 2,000 NGOs in the country.

Other NGOs felt somewhat represented and it depended on the issue but added that NANGO needed to improve its capacity, visibility, and advocacy. There were organizations that indicated that NANGO had never visited them to ensure authenticity of the organization, which affected their image and that NANGO was not in touch with the organizations it represented. This meant that they failed to relate relevant information to their members.

The NGOs indicated that they felt more represented in other networks that they were a part of. The HIV and AIDS organizations, for example, felt more connected and represented by the National AIDS Council or the Zimbabwe AIDS Network. They felt those networks and associations were more relevant and closer to their issues than NANGO. There was a noted discrepancy between NANGO's internal communication with their members and their external communication on policy issues. On one hand, the internal communication is considered weak, which left many members feeling unrepresented, while on another hand, NANGO was commended for releasing policy statements and opinions in the media.

NANGO's representation in other coordination forums such as the HoA, pooled funds boards, and HCT is also very weak and inconsistent. In the last six months, it had been represented at the HoA once. NANGO's attendance in UNOCHA coordination meetings and the ERF has also been inconsistent. NANGO staff recognizes that this is due to lack of capacity within NANGO secretariat for representation at these meetings. However, this has a negative impact on access to important financing and information-exchange opportunities that rely on NANGO for representation. Suggested reasons for NANGO's lack of participation and representation in such spaces include that NANGO is busy with other sector commitments and cannot afford time to engage on the humanitarian agenda.⁷

⁷Minutes of the Inter Cluster capacity Building workshop held on 21 January 2010

Other NGO coordination bodies listed:

HIV & AIDS sector

- National AIDS council and district offices e.g., DAAC, PAAC, Young People's Network
- Ministry of Social services
- Zimbabwe AIDS Network
- HIV prevention/BC mitigation task force in Bulawayo

Humanitarian sector

- Humanitarian Country Team (UNOCHA and clusters under it)
- Heads of Agencies
- Matabeleland NGO Forum
- Food Assistance Working Group
- Child Protection Working Group

4. Participation

As a membership driven organization, one of its guiding core principles is participation. Participation includes active involvement and relating information and evidence from their organizations. This also entails that effective feedback is taken back to the constituencies and feed into future learning processes.

Many of the NGOs interviewed were very active participants in their own working groups such as the Food Assistance Working Group, orphan and vulnerable children's groups in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe AIDS Network quarterly meetings, and the behavior change mitigation taskforce and child protection coordination meetings in Chiredzi. None could describe a recent NANGO coordination meeting they had attended. In Mutare, for example, there was no humanitarian sector meetings held in 2012. This was also similar in other provinces except in Bulawayo where the Matabeleland NGO Forum was considered under the humanitarian sector on NANGO. The Director's summer school and the NANGO annual general meeting, which take place once a year, were referred to as more effective coordination forums than the sector meetings, but their frequency point to the contrary. None of the NGOs interviewed attended the HoA meetings. According to the HoA current chair, about 30% (6-8) of all participants are local NGO directors that attend these monthly meetings

Most of the NGOs felt somewhat excluded from other coordination mechanisms especially where INGOs were active such as the HoA and HCT. This was in some instances not deliberate from the INGOs, for example, it was stated that the MOU for the HoA is clear on being inclusive of all NGOs in the country. However, they admitted to not actively inviting their own local partner NGO heads and may have in some instances unintentionally acted in a way that disempowered or intimidated national NGOs. Invitations for meetings coordinated by UNOCHA under the HCT were based on a mailing list. Inclusion into this mailing list is free and open to all willing NGOs. According to UNOCHA, they sent invitations to NANGO who are part of their mailing list, so that they can also forward to their member organizations that may not be part of their list. It therefore falls upon NANGO to forward these invitations to their respective members. There may have been a communication breakdown between NANGO and the member organizations since the organizations interviewed indicated that they had not received any meeting invitations by the HCT and HoA.

Anecdotal evidence gathered during the assessment suggested that NANGO regional offices have no real convening power or authority to mobilize other organizations for meetings or to manage sector leads. This was because the officers in the regions were relatively young, inexperienced and at different positions/levels in the organization, compared to the people they wanted to mobilize. As such they had no credibility or real authority with their constituency. This could be a threat to the role and credibility of NANGO, especially at a regional level.

Among INGO and UN representatives interviewed in a 2009 mapping study of the humanitarian sector⁸, there are no specific reasons offered for national NGOs' lack of participation in coordination meetings. Some possible reasons cited include: irrelevance of issues discussed, power differentials, capacity, and language constraints. In the current assessment, the following factors were cited by national NGOs as constraints in their effective participation in coordination forums. The reasons are general and relate to different kinds of meetings.

- No communication i.e., no invitations for the meetings received.
- Time/busy schedules.
- High costs of participation e.g., The NANGO director's summer school was too expensive for some small NGOs.
- Financial constraints in small NGOs, wherein most cases the staff was volunteers and could not afford transport fares to the meeting venues.
- Fear of volunteering for responsibilities that ensure their active participation e.g., the local NGOs directors that have attended the HoA monthly meeting rarely volunteer for tasks that need to be done, which relegates them to the back seat.
- Inherent power differentials as local NGOs are dependent on INGOs and the UN system for funding. This relates to INGO-national NGOs interfaced meetings.
- Fear of intimidation – in a sensitive and polarized political environment, national NGOs leaders prefer to remain under the radar.

⁸Rolf Otto 2009 NGOs and Humanitarian Reform: Mapping Study Zimbabwe Report

VI. Summary of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats

1. Strengths

- Recognized by members as an important and valid umbrella body of NGOs.
- Decentralized structure with functional offices in five regions.
- Supportive and large membership base for advocacy and collective action.
- Officially/legally registered to coordinate and to represent NGOs in Zimbabwe.
- Availability of organizational policies and constitutional frameworks.
- Diverse funding partners.

2. Weaknesses

- Weak M&E system – and no focal person for it, the function rests with heads of units who are not effectively implementing it.
- No proper information and knowledge management systems e.g., Internet is unreliable and the website is regularly down.
- Poor internal communication structure to members and among staff.
- There are no membership management or follow up systems.
- Poorly resourced regional offices in terms of equipment, transport, and funds to effectively run operations and coordinate NGO activities.
- No real convening power and authority e.g., to mobilize people for meetings especially in the regions and to manage sector leads for not doing their work.
- Though structure is decentralized, most activities happen at the head office, and plans and decision-making are centralized, which can slow the pace of response.
- Leadership responsibilities are not sufficiently mainstreamed in sector lead organizations.
- Sector leads often lack the capacity to engage actively because they fulfill multiple roles, including being leaders in their own organizations as well as other cluster/working groups.
- The absence of NANGO capacity to coordinate its members given the growing number of NGOs.

3. Opportunities

- Increased use of ICTs for easy communication, lobbying, and advocacy.
- Willingness and recognition by members of NANGO as the main umbrella coordinating body of NGOs in Zimbabwe.
- Supportive donor community.
- Willingness by the government to dialogue with NANGO.
- NANGO has well defined sectors which should drive the coordination process Transformation which is based on NANGO structure.

4. Threats

- Funding environment is challenging for local NGOs causing many to close or scale down making representation of activities challenging.
- NANGO is facing threats of extinction because other coordination forums are coming up to take their place.
- Members are not satisfied with the coordination capacity of NANGO.

VII. Recommendations

Humanitarian coordination requires timeliness in terms of decision-making, cooperation of NGOs or humanitarian actors, and commitment by NGOs to participate in coordination meetings. It requires clear representation frameworks, good leadership, and participation of NGOs. Humanitarian coordination is an interlinked process – from global, national, and regional networks that communicate well. At a regional level, in Zimbabwe, we have forums and networks such as the Matabeleland (humanitarian) NGO forum and other sub clusters; and at a national level we have the HoA, HCT, and clusters. Leadership, representation, and participation are all intertwining aspects, which require a holistic approach to ensure each element is fully realized. Therefore addressing one element cannot be done in isolation without dealing with the other.

1. Leadership

National NGOs in Zimbabwe have no agreed leadership strategy in terms of humanitarian coordination. Membership to NANGO is voluntary and less than a quarter of the registered NGOs in Zimbabwe are active and fully paid members. Despite this, NANGO in its leadership role has managed to engage and represent NGOs in national processes as well as in developing advocacy strategies and external communications with the government.

However, NANGO has been weak in its coordination mandate and has been rated low in this area, in particular by those NGOs in the humanitarian sector. In light of this, the following practical recommendations are proposed to improve its leadership role:

1. Develop an agreed leadership strategy and strategic priority areas in consultation with sector leads.
2. Establish closer links to donors and governments to stay abreast of global, regional, and national information and trends in the humanitarian and NGO sector so that they can also relate relevant information. This can be done through active participation in various networking and coordination forums such as the HCT, ERF, HoA and cluster meetings.
3. An internal M&E system should be put in place that allows for internal checks and evidence based decision making within NANGO to improve the efficiency of its coordination mandate.

Areas of capacity development for NANGO:

- Support in a mid-term review of NANGO strategy as it enters its final year, 2013.
- Design and develop of an M&E system.
- Provide leadership capacities to sector leads and organizations that represent NANGO in different coordination forums.

2. Representation

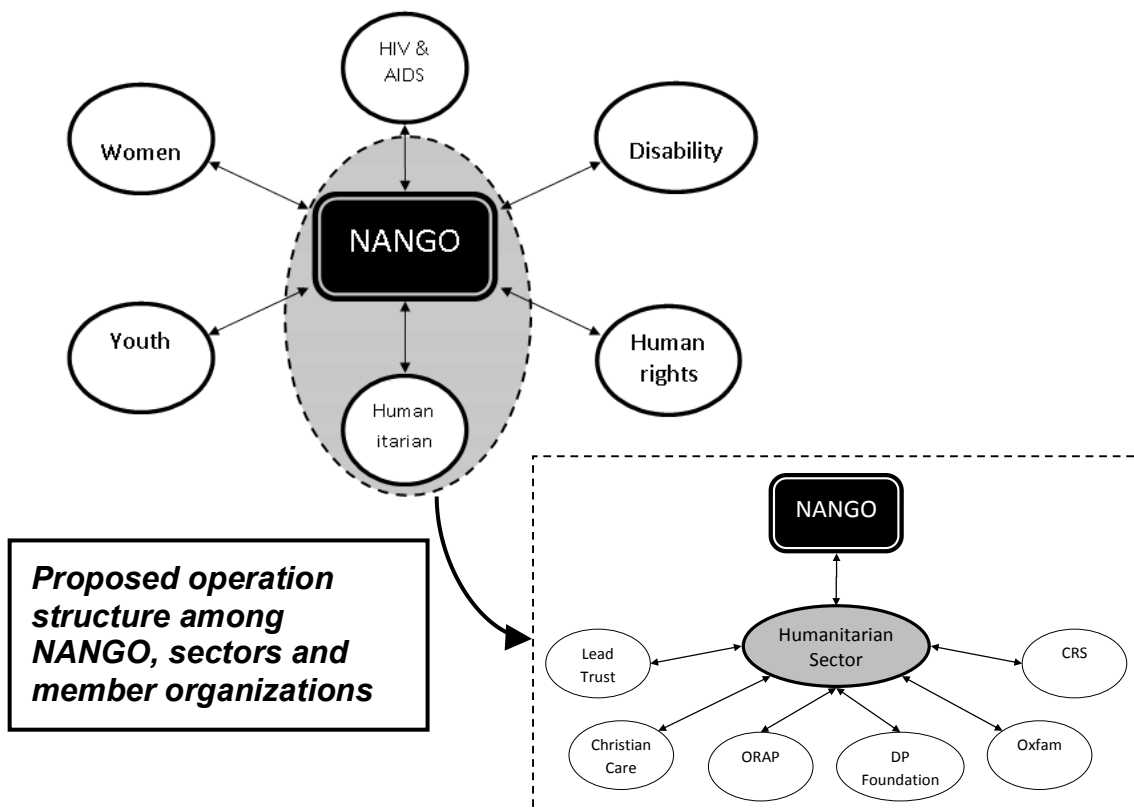
In order to ensure effective representation, there is need to develop systems and structures that facilitate representation of NGOs. To this end, NANGO has managed to institute a decentralized system through its five regional offices, which provide coordination support across the country. NANGO has also developed nine thematic sectors in which the NGOs are grouped, that help to coordinate and support all the NGOs affiliated to them. These sectors

have sector leads that represent the additional NGOs in other coordination structures. However, NANGO needs to improve on the efficiency and effectiveness of these structures and systems to ensure proper representation.

In light of this, the following practical recommendations are proposed to improve representation:

1. **Affiliation to NANGO through networks/sectors** – Given the growing number of NGOs in Zimbabwe and related capacity constraints of the NANGO secretariat, it is challenging for NANGO to directly support all NGOs. NANGO should coordinate NGOs through the sectors, networks, or associations. For example, each sector should become an Association that is affiliated to NANGO rather than each NGO having an affiliation. The advantage of taking this route is that NANGO would focus on strategic issues of coordination and advocacy for NGO engagement rather than working on thematic areas such as human rights, child protection, etc. NANGO should therefore set up sector associations whose members would register with them and then the association will affiliate to NANGO and automatically all members within the association will be affiliated to NANGO. Coordination responsibilities for each sector should remain the responsibility of the sector associations. The diagram below shows a graphic presentation of this proposed structure.

Figure 4: Proposed operation structure among NANGO, sectors and member organizations



2. **Appoint representatives to each coordination forum** – In the current state, NANGO has sector leads chosen to lead and coordinate other organizations within thematic groups. However, these sector leads often lack the capacity to engage actively because they fulfill multiple roles, including being leaders in their own organizations as well as in other cluster/working groups. To ensure follow-through by the sector leads, the responsibilities

of the leads should be clearly laid out and monitored. Representatives should be able to seek input from members before going to meetings and then provide feedback to members with outcomes of the meetings.

3. **Effective delegation** – Representation by NGOs in coordination structures is critical to successful humanitarian coordination. As such, the NANGO secretariat should delegate responsibility for representation to specific NGOs in all of the regional, national, and global humanitarian coordination structures. These NGOs will be responsible for attending coordination meetings as well as other duties in relation to their participation and representation in the given structure. In practice, this would mean, for example, coordination meeting invitations are sent both to the delegated NGOs and the NANGO secretariat.

These delegated representative organizations should be able to fulfill the following criteria for effective representation:

- They should be selected by both NANGO members and secretariat based on clear terms of reference on their purpose and role in the sector.
- The organization should have the requisite capacity to participate in the various forums where representation is needed e.g., staff and transport.
- Clear lines of accountability should be established on how the organization receives input from other NGOs and how the organization provides feedback back to the NGOs. The organization should be prepared and able to explain decisions and actions taken on behalf of others.

To ensure implementation of these recommendations, NANGO needs to be supported in the following ways:

- Support in restructuring NANGO from the current to the proposed structure.
- Training and capacity building of leading organizations in a sector at a regional level to strengthen coordination within that sector, especially where the sector is not active or functional.
- Developing clear terms of reference for the sector leads and delegated representative organizations.
- Mentorship of national NGOs either by other INGOs or the UN to support national NGOs who are unwilling or unable to take leadership roles as representatives of other NGOs.

3. Participation

It is commendable that NANGO has a decentralized structure that allows for organizations to participate in their regions. NANGO also has plans for sector meetings where NGOs can participate, share their input, and provide their feedback. However these sector meetings have been inconsistent and organizations have not been effectively participating in the strategic priorities of NANGO.

In light of this, the following practical recommendations are proposed to improve participation:

1. Regional offices and plans should reflect regional priorities and focus on building the capacity of sector leads. To ensure this is done effectively, regional budgets should be developed that allow the regions to manage their own resources, for example,

subscriptions by organizations in the region can support their region and regions can fundraise for their own resources.

2. Improve their communication systems to allow organizations to be able to share their input and receive feedback. This includes ensuring reliable internet and a functional website to enhance coordination. A staff member should be responsible for maintaining this website as well as communicating with the members.
3. One of the constraints mentioned by NGOs that affected their participation is lack of information of the coordination platforms and current information on the humanitarian sector. Monthly information newsletters can be instituted that capture key information and feedback from the various coordination forums. In addition, NANGO should maintain an updated membership database of NGOs to ensure information is sent out to all members.
4. Participation in humanitarian coordination meetings is also important for national NGOs to have information on the sector including funding opportunities. Chosen representatives should be added on emailing lists to ensure invitations are sent to all the appropriate people. NANGO can follow up with these invited members by phone to ensure the information is received. Representatives should show commitment and be able to provide feedback from meetings through timely circulation of minutes and action points from meetings.

To ensure implementation of these recommendations, NANGO needs to be supported in the following ways:

- Funding to support investment in information, communication, and technology (ICT) that allows for improved communication systems.
- Database development
- Staff development at NANGO secretariat to ensure officers are competent and capable of building the capacity of sector leads as well as communicating with members (e.g., receiving information and providing feedback).

VIII. Conclusion

The humanitarian situation in Zimbabwe has called for cooperation among various humanitarian actors. Humanitarian coordination requires timeliness in terms of decision-making, cooperation of NGOs or humanitarian actors, and commitment by NGOs to participate in coordination meetings. It requires clear representation frameworks, good leadership, and participation of NGOs. It is an interlinked process-from global, national, and regional networks that communicate well.

NANGO as an umbrella body for national NGOs needs to reactivate and strengthen its role, particularly for humanitarian transition as the country shifts from a humanitarian mode to that of recovery and development. There is need to restructure the way NANGO operates in order to respond and cope with the growing number of NGOs as well as ensure effective coordination. Other support functions and systems such as communications, staff capacity, and delegation of responsibility and authority need to be instituted to improve humanitarian coordination in Zimbabwe.

IX. Annexes

Annex 1: Organizations that were represented and participated in the study

No.	Name	Region	Sector
1.	HOCIC	Bulawayo	OVC
2.	Matabeleland AIDS Council	Bulawayo	HIV and AIDS
3.	Bekezela Home Based Care	Bulawayo	HIV and AIDS
4.	Caring Smile	Bulawayo	OVC
5.	Queen Elizabeth Adventist Children's Home	Bulawayo	OVC
6.	Catholic Relief Services	Bulawayo	Humanitarian
7.	Oxfam Canada	Bulawayo	Humanitarian
8.	Sesithule Vamanani Caring Association	Chiredzi	HIV and AIDS
9.	DP Foundation	Bulawayo	Humanitarian
10.	Organization of Rural Associations for Progress (ORAP)	Bulawayo	Rural Development
11.	Living Way Capacity Development Organization	Chiredzi	OVC
12.	Rural Unity for Development Organization	Masvingo	Humanitarian
13.	Batanai HIV and AIDS Service Organization	Masvingo	HIV and AIDS
14.	Tamuka Foundation	Harare	HIV and AIDS
15.	Tashinga Trust	Harare	Livelihoods
16.	Capernaum Trust	Harare	Humanitarian
17.	DOMCCP	Mutare	HIV and AIDS
18.	Family in Need Trust	Mutare	Humanitarian
19.	Family AIDS Support Group (FASO)	Mutare	HIV
20.	Simukai Child Protection Program	Mutare	OVC
21.	NANGO Northern Region coordinator	Harare	
22.	NANGO Southern Region coordinator	Masvingo	
23.	NANGO Eastern Region Coordinator	Mutare	
24.	Trócaire	Harare	Heads of Agencies Current chair
25.	Restless Development	Harare	Humanitarian
26.	Family AIDS Caring Trust (FACT)	Mutare	Health
27.	UNOCHA	Harare	Humanitarian

Annex 2: NANGO Humanitarian Capacity Assessment Report Presentation meeting Report

Date: 14 February 2013

Venue: Jameson Hotel

Introduction

As part of the Humanitarian Reform Project Phase II, ActionAid commissioned a consultancy to assess the capacity of NANGO in humanitarian coordination. This exercise was conducted in November and December of 2012. A report was drafted and presented to ActionAid and NANGO for comments. On 14 February 2013, a half day meeting was held at Jameson Hotel in Harare to share the findings of the assessment.

Participants were drawn from different parts of the country representing the NANGO membership. A full list of participants is attached.

The facilitators for the meeting were Joram Chikwanya from ActionAid and Gamuchirai Chituri, the consultant. The meeting was structured in the following way: report presentations, questions and answers, and group work and plenary.

Report presentation

The consultant shared a PowerPoint presentation of the main findings of the assessment. These were divided into the key study questions of representation, participation, and leadership. A set of practical recommendations and areas of capacity building were also shared. The presentation is attached.

Question and Answers

After the presentation, the floor was opened for general comments on the report and presentation. The participants appreciated the clear structure of the presentation and the effort that had been made to commission such a useful study. It was clarified that the report related to NANGO as the membership and not just the secretariat. A number of questions were raised on the sampling frame and methodology. Some felt that the sample could have been expanded and also included the midlands region. The sampling methodology and limitations of the assessment were explained. Some participants commented on the need to have seen the report in advance so that they would be better prepared with comments from their region. Some participants echoed similar sentiments to the findings of the assessment in terms of the challenges faced by NANGO. Other questions were raised relating to NANGO as a whole, which were not adequately addressed such as needing clarity on NANGO's policies, positions in terms of competition with members, and partnering with other coalitions and nominations for awards for directors at the summer school.

Group work and Plenary

The participants were randomly divided into 3 groups to focus on two questions:

1. What are the gaps in the report and recommendations for improvement?
2. Based on the recommended areas of capacity building, which top three, would you prioritize in the limited project life going forward? What steps would you take to implement that?

The 3 groups worked for 30 minutes and shared their findings. A number of different areas were suggested, which covered improvements in the whole of NANGO. The facilitators guided the participants to narrow down their focus to the scope of the Humanitarian Reform Project and what they could feasibly do. The following is the list of prioritized areas.

No.	Priority areas	Steps to implementation/comment
1	Improving communication systems to enhance participation of members	A communications officer within NANGO would need to work on this to ensure input and feedback are relayed to members. This would entail ensuring the internet is working.
2	Capacity building of sector leads	This could be done through a training of the sector leads.
3	Appointment of representatives to coordination forums with clear terms of reference	The process has already started with organizations being nominated to be representatives in different coordination forums. Clear terms of reference would need to be developed.
4	Mentorship of national NGOs with INGOs	This could be started with INGOs inviting their local partner NGOs to meetings they attended, giving opportunities for their local partners to chair meetings on their behalf and passing on any relevant information to partner NGOs on opportunities in the humanitarian sector.
5	Humanitarian financing	A position paper on humanitarian financing by local NGOs can be prepared.
6	Strategic position of NANGO	<p>A number of issues that affected NANGO as an organization and urgently needed improving were also mentioned and recommendations provided in terms of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Functional database development • M&E framework designed • Fundraising for members as a service to struggling local NGOs • Restructuring to strengthen affiliation through networks vs. individuals • Strengthening regional offices

Annex 3: Meeting Participants List

Name	Organization
Joram Chikwanya	ActionAid
Geofrey Kuserera	FACT Rusape
Taitos Mangoma	NANGO
David Tauyanago	JAPA Trust
Casper Pound	FASO
Titos Mangana	ZNNP+ Midlands
Benjamin Gumbo	DP Foundation/Mat NGO Forum
Tobias Chipare	ZimPro
Edson Chiota	ZACRO
Ephraim Murenda	LGDA
Blazio Manobo	Caritas
Benias Tirivaviri	NANGO
Sylvester Chin'anga	RUDO
Nosihle Ndlovu	Revival of Hope
Martin Maphosa	DRESS
Justice Zvaita	Emmaus International/Mat NGO Forum
Gamuchirai Chituri	Consultant