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***The role of the National Association of Non-Governmental Organizations (NANGO) in the eyes of the Northern Region Women and Gender Sector members:***

**Factors inhibiting the high attendance of the Women and Gender Sector members to training workshops and workshops and conferences on the national processes in Zimbabwe which are organized by the NANGO Northern Region.**

**By**

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## **Abbreviations**

NAC	National AIDS Council
NANGO	National Association of Non-Governmental Organizations
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PGN	Practical Gender Needs
SGN	Strategic Gender Needs
W&G	Women and Gender
WCoZ	Women's Coalition of Zimbabwe
ZAN	Zimbabwe AIDS Network
CSO	Civil Society Organization

## **Abstract**

*NANGO Northern Region has been experiencing a low level attendance rate of the member organizations that form part of the Women and Gender sector to the training workshops as well as the workshops and conferences on national processes. The sector is composed of approximately forty (40) organizations but most of the members have been either totally absent at the NANGO activities or extremely inconsistent in their attendance.*

*A study has been conducted to elicit information concerning the cause of the low attendance rate of the representatives of the sector. Semi-structured interviews among eleven (11) representatives of the Women and Gender sector and observations are used in the study.*

*The major findings from the research that are affecting the attendance levels of the members include the following; poor communication between NANGO and the representatives of the sector, shame due to inability to pay the NANGO membership subscription fee, too much work on the part of the members because of low staff complement, crowding of NANGO programs in a short space of time, transport challenges, irrelevance of NANGO activities to members and inadequate gender friendly facilities(toilet and facilities for breastfeeding mothers).*

*In conclusion the major issue that is being highlighted by the members as hindering them from participating in the NANGO activities is the poor communication. Nine (9) out of the eleven(11)respondents note that they are affiliated to other networks besides NANGO and at times choose to attend the activities of the other networks instead of those of NANGO. They note that their choice of attending the activities of other networks over those of NANGO is influenced by the fact that NANGO activities are less relevant to them. From observation, one may suggest that the members appear to be more interested in other NANGO services which include provision of funds, recognition from NANGO through regular visits from the NANGO secretariat as well as invitations to the NANGO activities and protection in the event of political unrest.*

*In order for NANGO to be more effective in their service delivery to the Women and Gender Sector members, it should do the following; update their membership database for effective communication, revise the membership subscription fees, provide transport reimbursements to members, hire expert trainers, incorporate issues of gender in all their workshop programs, consult members on the training needs as well as providing adequate facilities that cater for the practical gender needs of women.*

## 1. CHAPTER ONE

### Introduction

The study is focusing on the National Association of Non-Governmental Organizations (NANGO) which is a membership based organization which only consists of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). The study will take a focus on the Northern Region which is one of four regions of the organization where there is a challenge that has been identified which concerns the low attendance of the representatives of the Women and Gender Sector. The chapter intends to give an overview of the operational situation of the Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in Zimbabwe, the background of the organization NANGO in depth. It also presents research problem, objectives of the conceptual framework and definitions of the concepts.

Zimbabwe is a country in transition and has been experiencing serious socio-economic and political challenges that have affected the relationships between government and the civil society. According to NANGO (n.d) the civil society groups have always been under threat since independence but the past decade has seen an increased and open harassment of civil society. Among the civil society groups that have been facing harassment are the Non-Governmental Organizations who focus on different areas of development. In addition to the harassment and intimidation, government has put in place restrictive legislation which includes the Public Order and Security Act and the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act. This has at times made it difficult for NGOs to administer their programs in their respective constituencies.

The women's rights organisations have alluded to the fact that the issue of security in Zimbabwe has worse implications on women compared to their male counterparts. These security issues exist in the presence of the government legislation that was put in place to protect the women in Zimbabwe. According to the Women's Charter (2000) the Domestic Violence Act which is a law that was passed in 2007 tries to address the issue of security of women, but however, there is no proper mechanisms and funding to implement this law. This then leads to the insecurity of women in Zimbabwe including those who form part of the civil society. Hence in order for these women's organisations to become more effective in their work, they have joined and formed networks.

Liebler and Ferri (2004) note that there are many benefits that are attached to being members of a network. Some of the benefits they note include increased visibility of issues, reduced isolation and an increased access to information. The Civil Society Organizations have formed networks as a way of protecting themselves since they will be less isolated from the other like-minded NGOs. One such network in Zimbabwe which has NGOs in all parts of Zimbabwe being members to it is the National Association of Non-Governmental Organizations in Zimbabwe (NANGO). This network has members who constitute NGOs who focus on different areas of development and has therefore clustered these members into different sectors according to their focus. Among the member organizations are the Women and Gender sector member organizations.

## **1.1 Background of NANGO**

The National Association of Non-Governmental Organizations (NANGO) is a non-political, non-profit making and non-denominational official coordinating body of NGOs operating in Zimbabwe which was founded in 1962. The organization was founded as a welfare organization under the name of Southern Rhodesia Council of Social Services and was predominantly for social welfare organizations. In 1980 there was an increase in the number of NGOs which were focusing on the social, economic and political development of the people of Zimbabwe mainly in the rural areas. Therefore the organization was renamed Voluntary Organizations in Community Enterprise (VOICE). The organization was again renamed ten years later to be called the National Association of Non-Governmental Organizations and has maintained the same name up to date. NANGO was formed for the purpose of strengthening, representing and coordinating the work of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in Zimbabwe. The organization carries out these functions through creating space, promoting networking, dialogue and engagement of NGOs so as to enable the fulfillment of their visions and missions.

In the last fifty years of its existence, NANGO has taken the leading role in coordinating the participation of NGOs in national processes and actively fought for the interests of the poor and marginalized in Zimbabwe through advocating for a conducive operating environment for NGOs. It has also played a critical role of creating platforms for engagement between civil society and government as well as being the centre for capacity building for its membership.

The structure of NANGO can be regarded as portraying the divisionalised configuration. According to Mintzberg (1979) It is characterized by direct supervision whereby the headquarter managers visit the divisions periodically and authorise some of their more important decisions. As such, NANGO operates in five (5) regions which include the Northern, Southern, Western, Midlands and the Eastern Region. The regional offices are located in different towns which include Harare, Bulawayo, Masvingo, Gweru and Mutare. The control of all the regions however is done at the head office in Harare where the management resides including the Chief Executive Officer. The management from the head office periodically visits all the regions. The management at the head office also authorizes the leave days of the staff members in all regions as well as the recruitment of staff.

The regions are not autonomous due to the fact that they rely on the head office for the logistical support since the finance department that services all regions is at the head office. Hence their remuneration is sorted at the head office as well as payment of third party services such as water; electricity and rent for their premises have to be done through the finance department that resides at the head office. They also have to request for money for implementation of activities from the finance department at the head office.

This research however is going to be focused on the Northern Region which is the largest of the five NANGO regions due to the fact that it operates in the capital city of Zimbabwe where there is the largest population in Zimbabwe and therefore the largest number of NGOs. The Northern Region is also housed at the head office.

## **Mission of NANGO**

To strengthen, represent and coordinate the work of NGOs in Zimbabwe by creating space, promoting networking, dialogue and engagement to enable the fulfillment of members' visions and missions.

## **Vision of NANGO**

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

### **1.2 NANGO Membership**

The organization is a membership based organization with more than one thousand (1000) members. The NANGO members are registered Non-Governmental Organizations; hence the organization does not enroll individuals to be members. These members are found in all the regions including the Northern Region which is the focus of the research. Membership to NANGO is not compulsory, as such; the different NGOs in the different regions have to apply for membership to the organization through a rigorous process of submitting different organizational documents which include the organizational constitution, curriculum vitae of board members, NGO registration certificates, audited financial statements of the last three years and proof of residence. These documents will be analyzed by the NANGO board members who will then grant the approval of the NGOs to be members of NANGO. In addition to the approval of the membership, the member organizations have to pay an annual subscription of one hundred dollars (100USD) so that they can access the services offered by NANGO.

In order for NANGO to be more effective in their role of strengthening and coordinating the different NGOs who form the membership, the organization has clustered the member organizations into different sectors. The sectors of the NANGO membership include the following; Women and Gender, Health and HIV/ AIDS, Human Rights, Disability, Humanitarian, Youth, Economic, Land and Environment, Children and Arts and Culture.

### **1.3 Challenges that NANGO has been facing as a result of the political environment**

The political environment has posed challenges to NANGO with regards to the organization's service delivery to its membership. According to NANGO (n.d.), despite the fact that security threats of civil society organizations have existed in Zimbabwe since independence under the pretense of getting rid of commercial sex workers from the street and attacks of the university students, the past ten years has seen the increment of attacks on the Civil Society Organizations.

These attacks have been in the form of harassment, abduction, arrest and ridiculing of civil society activists in both the electronic and print media. This has made the work of NANGO to be quite difficult due to the fact that one of the services that are offered by NANGO include the representation of NANGO members in the event that the political environment becomes

unsettled. This representation is a huge challenge for the organisation due to the poor relations that exist between Civil Society Organizations and the government. As a result NANGO becomes the government's target since it is regarded as the voice of civil society of Zimbabwe.

The NANGO Strategic Planning Document of December 2009 also alludes to the fact that that the political environment has led to the mistrust of government and civil society in Zimbabwe. This is due to the fact that the former has been accused of pursuing a regime change agenda. As a result, this has led to unannounced raids taking place at the offices of the civil society organizations including the NANGO Offices which has a resource centre which contains the documentation of the different member organizations such as posters, newsletters and their reports. This has made it difficult for NANGO to accept resource materials from the member organizations, especially those that deal with governance issues.

According to NANGO (n.d) there has been a challenge of infiltration among the NGOs in Zimbabwe. Hence the NANGO members alluded to the fact that they do not know who to trust among themselves. They noted that the vetting of staff and board members has become necessary due to the fact that these individuals can easily pass on the information from the organization without being detected, as well as information that will have been discussed during the workshops and conferences that are held by NANGO. This has therefore posed as a huge challenge for NANGO in carrying out their activities.

#### **1.4 Services offered by NANGO**

The services that are offered by NANGO for staff development of the different NGOs who are members to NANGO include the following;

- Building the capacity of the human resources of the different member organizations through offering training workshops to program officers, directors and board members  
The numerous training workshops that have been offered by NANGO to the members can be found on annex three (3) of the document.
- Organizing directors' summer schools which are workshops for the different member organizations. The directors' summer school is an annual event that is held by NANGO that brings together directors from NGOs who form part of the NANGO membership to reflect on their work and discuss the way forward as civil society. Each year, a theme is selected for the event. This is done so as to guide the participants in reflecting the prevailing socio-political and economic situation of the day. The following themes have been selected in previous years can be found in annex three (3).

The services that are offered by NANGO at the level of organizations who constitute the NANGO membership include the following;

- Dissemination of information among the NGOs who form part of the NANGO membership through e-mails or texting of vital issues concerning the different NANGO activities that are lined up or activities that are being done by another member of NANGO.
- A membership certificate, which increases credibility of the organization.

- Access to opportunity, as members profiles are posted on NANGO website, thereby increasing the exposure levels to potential funding partners.
- Training and capacity building of members on various issues such corporate governance, leadership.
- The NANGO quarterly newsletter “The Umbrella” which has become an authoritative news medium of the broad civil society sector.
- Facilitating the formation of strategic alliances among the members who share the same focus by organizing the sector meetings for members who have been clustered in the same sector.
- A resource centre which has documentation on issues of interests to NGOs which include annual reports, pamphlets, brochures from other organizations within the membership. In addition to the documentation, it has computers with internet access for members’ use.
- Facilitating the participation of members in the national processes through organizing workshops and conferences where they can make input into the concerning the different national processes of the day.  
The themes of the workshops differ according to the socio-political and economic context of the period. The themes under which the workshops have been held can be found at Annex 3.
- Creating an enabling environment for member organizations as they carry out their different activities through representation in the event that the environment becomes turbulent.
- Hosting the NGO Expo, which is an annual event which enables member organisations to display their materials and get exposure.

At the level of the donors, NANGO maintains a database of the donors who will be inviting organizations to submit proposals for projects.

### **1.5 Means of communication applied by NANGO to their members**

The means of communication that is used by NANGO when they are inviting their members to attend activities which include the training workshops and the workshops and conferences on the national processes are: e-mails, phones (both cell-phones and landlines) and a texting system. In all the forms of communication that are used by NANGO to invite the members, the agenda of the training workshop as well as the program is informed to the members of NANGO in the invitation message.

The texting system which is a method of communication is often used to remind the members of the activities that are on the NANGO schedule which they are invited to attend. The texting system is applied by NANGO so as to improve communication, bearing in mind that among the NANGO members, there are individuals who might be implementing projects outside Harare at the time that NANGO sends out texts. Therefore these representatives of the NANGO member organizations can receive the information concerning the training workshops as well as workshops and conferences that are on schedule. NANGO also aims to achieve effective communication through the texting system because it tries to ensure that members receive

communication from NANGO even when there are power cuts which virtually make it difficult for members to access e-mails as well as receiving phone calls on their landlines.

## **1.6 Differentiation of the NANGO Northern Region Women and Gender sector members**

The members of the Women and Gender are not a homogenous group. This is because, despite the fact that their main reason for formation was to ensure that there is empowerment of women only in Zimbabwe and in some cases, of men only, they differ in terms of their staff complement as well as their years of operation as registered organizations in Zimbabwe. Some of the organizations who constitute the Women and Gender sector seek to empower women in Zimbabwe and therefore employ women only to occupy the significant posts of their organizations such as the director and programs officer positions.

The males who are employed at these organizations often occupy lower positions in the organization such as the position of drivers, security guards and gardeners. The other women's organizations within the Women and Gender have both male and female staff occupying the significant posts such as being part of the program staff. However despite the males and females occupying significant positions in the organizations, all the directors of the women's NGOs that were interviewed are female. In the men's organizations, the males constitute the majority of the staff members whilst the females are fewer and also occupy lower positions in the organization.

The organizations are also different in terms of their years of operation. This is because some of them have been in operation for more than ten years and therefore have acquired assets which include permanent organizational buildings as well as vehicles. The sector is also composed of organizations that are still new and have been in operation for less than five years. Therefore the challenges that are faced by these organizations are different from those that are faced with the organizations who have been in existence for more than ten years which include challenges relating to transport for attending the different activities that are organized by NANGO.

The organizations are also different in terms of their proximity to NANGO. Some of the member organizations are located near NANGO, such that it is a few minutes walking distance to visit the NANGO offices. However some of the member organizations within the Women and Gender sector are located outside the capital city of Harare where the NANGO Northern Region operates.

The organizations are also different in terms of the numbers of the staff members they have. Among the member organisations, there are organizations that have been operating for more than ten years who are facing funding challenges at the moment and have had to retrench some of their staff members because they are unable to pay them at the moment. Therefore, they are operating with skeleton staff which is often overwhelmed with work. Such organizations are not prepared to attend a lot of network activities unless the activities are of extreme to them as an organization.

## **1.7 Research problem**

The members of NANGO Northern Region who constitute the Women and Gender sector are mostly women's NGOs with a few men's NGOs. The organizations who are part of the Women and Gender sector in the NANGO Northern Region can be approximated to constitute about forty (40) organizations in number. However the greater number of the members has not been attending the training workshops as well as the workshops and conferences on the national processes. The few who have been attending the training workshops and workshops and conferences have not been consistent in their attendance. Hence, they have only attended once or twice in the last year. These NANGO activities are open to all members of every sector including those of the Women and Gender sector, yet the majority of the representatives of the organizations in the Women and Gender sector have not been attending them.

At some of the training workshops and workshops and conferences that have been organized by NANGO, there was no representative from the Women and Gender sector who attended the activities. These training workshops where there was no member from the Women and Gender sector who attended the training workshops include the Corporate Governance Training, the Social Accountability training, Proposal Writing Training Workshop, Millennium Development Goals Mainstreaming Training of Trainers Workshop.

This is a cause for concern for NANGO due to the fact that the organization is a membership-based organization. Hence if some of the representatives of the member organizations cease to attend the activities they organize, it weakens the organization because it is regarded as the voice of NGOs in Zimbabwe and therefore relies on the support of the NGOs in Zimbabwe who are their members. Therefore, attending the activities that are organized by NANGO reflects that the organization is legitimate and relevant to their membership. As a result, NANGO is concerned about the low attendance of the members of the Women and Gender sector and would like to find out the reason for this low turnout. The Women and Gender sector is mostly dominated by women's NGOs. There are also men's organizations that are part of this sector though they constitute the minority of the organizations in that sector. As a result, NANGO loses out on the contributions from this sector, thereby also missing contributions which are from a gender perspective.

### **1.7.1 Problem owner**

The National Association of Non-Governmental Organizations (NANGO) because it is a membership based organization that is experiencing a low attendance to the training workshops and workshops and conferences on national processes of the members who constitute the Women and Gender sector.

### **1.7.2 My position in the organization**

I am working as the Northern Region Assistant Coordinator at the National Association of Non-Governmental Organizations (NANGO). My responsibilities include assisting in the mobilisation and coordination of CSO activities at regional level for timely interventions. I also contribute to the development of strategic alliances and networks between and among NGOs in the Northern

Region through organising sector meetings. My task also includes assisting in the monitoring of Northern Region project activities by maintaining a variety of records including correspondence, reports, project inputs, budgets, log sheets and financial expenditures in accordance with NANGO requirements. As the Northern Region Assistant Coordinator, it is my task to assist in the logistical preparation for workshops, seminars, presentations, researches and field trips that take place in my region.

### **1.7.3 Objective of the research**

To have increased knowledge on the reasons for the low attendance rate of the NANGO members who constitute the Women and Gender Sector to the activities organised by NANGO which include the training workshops and the workshops and conferences on the national processes taking place in Zimbabwe.

### **1.7.4 Research questions**

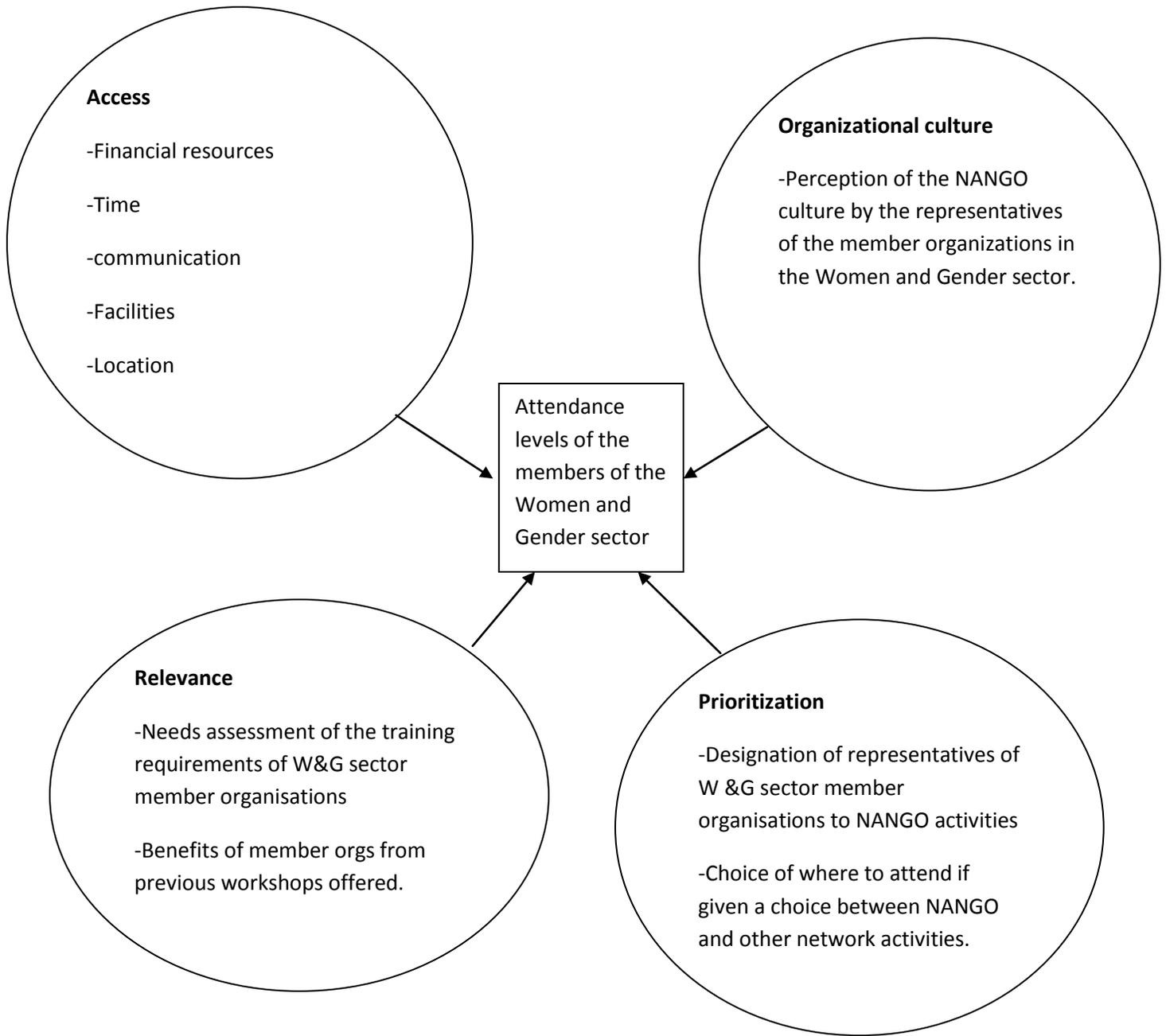
What is contributing to the low attendance of the NANGO Northern Region members in the Women and Gender Sector in the training workshops and workshops and conferences regarding the national processes organized by NANGO?

### **1.7.5 Sub questions**

1. To what extent are the activities offered by NANGO accessible to the members of the Women and Gender Sector?
2. In what ways do the training workshops as well as the workshops and conferences regarding the national processes relate to the needs of the members of the Women and Gender Sector?
3. How does the organizational culture of NANGO affect the attendance of the members of the Women and Gender Sector to NANGO activities?
4. To what extent do the members of the Women and Gender sector prioritize the attendance to the NANGO Training workshops and the workshops and conferences on national process compared to other activities organized by other networks?
5. In what ways do the differences in the organization who constitute the Women and Gender affect their attendance to the NANGO Northern Region training workshops and workshops and conferences on national processes?

## **1.8 Conceptual framework**

This section presents the conceptual framework of the study. This presents the thoughts of the researcher regarding the possible reasons behind the low attendance levels of the member organization representatives of the Women and Gender sector. The section also defines the key concepts that are applied the study.



**Figure 1: Conceptual framework of the factors inhibiting the high attendance levels of the representatives of the member organizations who constitute the Northern Region Women and Gender sector.**

The framework attempts to highlight the possible reasons for the low attendance of the representatives of the member organisations in the Women and Gender sector to the NANGO Northern Region training workshops and conferences on national processes. The factors that are regarded as contributing to the low attendance of the Women and Gender sector are issues

of access which include the timing, transport costs, communication, facilities and the location. Another factor is the relevance which looks into the usefulness of the NANGO activities to the Women and Gender sector member representatives as well as the issues concerning NANGO's consultation levels in relation to the training needs of the members. Prioritization is also another factor which has been identified by the researcher as contributing to the low attendance levels of the Women and Gender sector representatives. Prioritisation looks into the issue concerning where the Women and Gender sector members would rather attend activities if the NANGO activities are held concurrently with those of the other coalitions they are affiliated to. The organisational culture which looks into the values and the norms of the NANGO and how they might be a possible factor affecting the attendance levels of the representatives of the members in the Women and Gender sector.

### **1.9 Definition of concepts**

**Attendance:** the participation of members of the Women and Gender sector to the training workshops and workshops and conferences on national conferences they are invited to take part by the NANGO Northern Region secretariat.

**Access** refers to the time that the activities are organized which affects the attendance of the members. The time can also refer to the duration of the activities, especially the training workshops. If the training workshops are carried out for either many days or till late in the evening, it can lead to the low attendance of the members of the Women and Gender Sector.

**Access** has been defined as well by the researcher as referring to communication to the members of the Women and Gender sector by NANGO. This communication according to the researcher refers to the invitation of the members of the above mentioned sector to the training workshops and the workshops and conferences relating to the national processes in Zimbabwe. If the members are invited late or are not invited at all, it contributes to their low attendance to these activities.

Access according to the researcher can also refer to access to financial resources to attend these workshops. This can be in the form of the high transport costs especially for the members of the Northern Region who are located outside Harare. It can also be in the form of location of the organization which can pose as a hindrance to attending the NANGO activities as a result of the long distance of travel to and from NANGO.

**Relevance** refers to the extent to which the activities that are offered to the Women and Gender sector members are in accordance with their needs.

**Prioritization** refers to the value that is placed by the members on the attendance to the training workshops and conferences that are organized by NANGO.

**Organizational culture-** According to Groverman and Gurung (2001), organizational culture refers to the key norms and values indicating what the organization stands for and how it wishes to operate. They further reiterate that the culture of an organization shapes the different elements which include the organization's mission, procedures, the recruitment process and the way the information flows. As a result, this can have a bearing on the attendance levels of the

members of the Women and Gender sector, particularly if the members of the Women and Gender sector view NANGO as being reflective of the patriarchal nature of the Zimbabwean society. This patriarchal nature can be reflected in the organizational structures where the male staff members occupy positions of management whilst the female staff members occupy lower positions.

## **CHAPTER TWO: Literature review**

The chapter reviews on literature regarding the major areas that are the focus of the research which include participation and gender needs, participation and organizational culture and participation and networks. The chapter shall also review literature on the term empowerment as well as the role of civil society in defending the rights of women in Zimbabwe.

### **2.1 Participation defined**

There are different definitions to participation that have been highlighted by different scholars. Cornwall (2008) defines participation as an infinitely malleable concept that can be used to evoke and to signify anything that involves people. According to Rifkin and Kangere (2001), participation can be defined as the involvement in shaping, implementing and evaluating programs and sharing of the benefits. Oakley (1989) in Rifkin and Kangere (2001) defines participation as an active process where the intended beneficiaries influence program outcomes and gain personal growth.

Cornwall (2008) makes reference to Jules Pretty's typology which defines the different forms of participation. She also notes that the typology puts emphasis more to the user of the participatory approaches. Cornwall (2008) notes that Pretty (1995) makes a distinction from the bad forms of participation which include the manipulative participation and passive participation. Pretty (1995) states the characteristics of manipulative participation as simply a pretense, with people's representatives on official boards who are unelected and therefore have no power. Pretty (2005) in Cornwall (2008) describes the characteristics of passive participation as a situation where people participate by being told what has been decided or has already happened.

The better forms of participation according to Cornwall (2008) include the following; participation by consultation and participation for incentives. Pretty (1995) in Cornwall(2008) defines participation by consultation to be characterized by people participating through answering questions or by being consulted. He notes that participation for incentives is characterized by people contributing resources in return for food, cash or other resources.

Arnstein's (1969) ladder in Cornwall (2008) looks at participation from the perspectives of those on the receiving end. She notes that on the lowest levels of the ladder, there is non-participation which is presented by manipulation and therapy. The other level on the ladder is tokenism which is represented by consultation, informing and placation. This level of participation allows participants to have a voice but does not give them the opportunity to ensure that their voice has influence. The level of citizen power also includes partnership, delegated power and citizen control where the participants hold managerial power or form the majority in the decision-making arenas. This ladder can be useful in analysing the participation levels of the Women and Gender Sector to the NANGO activities.

## **2.2 Participation and networks**

According to Liebler and Ferri (2004) there is no set formula regarding how and why networks are formed. However, they note that the motivation to form networks can actually come from both internal and external sources and that networks can be formed from the top-down or bottom-up. They note that some NGO networks are characterised by a top-down formation which in most cases occurs when the incentive for the formation of the network originates from the donors. The UNDP (2000) notes that the networks that are characterized by the bottom-up formation which often combines northern supporters and southern beneficiaries.

Liebler and Ferri (2004) also note that there are also bottom-up networks which are traditionally informal and created for the purpose of meeting a specific need or to achieve a specific purpose. Prewitt (2008) notes that such networks are not formed as a result of donor interests but instead it is an independent process whereby individuals or organizations form around a base of similar activities.

Liebler and Ferri (2004) state that networks are formed as a compensatory mechanism. Ashman (2000) reiterates by noting that the general economic and institutional conditions may act as a motivator to the formation of networks due to the fact that as civil society organizations face financial uncertainties and as the government services are decreased, networks often provide the services that both civil society and government are no longer able to provide.

According to the UNDP (2000) networks can be classified in a number of ways which are related to geographical coverage, type and range of activities. The UNDP (2000) further notes that the simple classification of networks is between the single and multi-purpose networks. Engel (1993) presents four major clusters of activities that are commonly found in NGO networks. These include provision of services, learning together, advocacy and management. Hence different networks may actually engage in one or more of these clusters or activities depending on the need and capacity.

According to Church et al (2002:12) a network can be called a network when the relationships between those in the network are voluntarily entered into, the autonomy of the participants remains intact and there are mutual or joint activities. Hence networks which are true are not forced upon the organizations that decide to be part of them, but the organizations make a decision to be part of them. The National Association of Non-Governmental Organizations (NANGO) is an example of a network in which NGOs in Zimbabwe apply on a voluntary basis to become members of NANGO.

In order for organizations to decide to be part of networks, the networks actually have to attract these organizations. According to Engel (1993) most networks claim that they bring added value to the ongoing work of their member organizations and foster professional capacity development. Liebler and Ferri (2004) note that networks are formed so as to ensure certain benefits among NGOs which include increased access to information, expertise and financial resources, increased efficiency, solidarity and support, increased visibility of issues, best practices and under-represented groups. Engel (1993) further reiterates the issue concerning benefits that are expected by NGOs when they join networks but stating that most NGOs that

decide to become members of a network decide to do so because they expect to improve the quality of their interventions as well as the effectiveness of their actions.

According to Church et al (2002) it is vital to note that joining a network is not the same as networking but however, the two terms are often used to mean the same. Starkey (1997) notes that networking includes the process of making initiatives to make contacts and encouraging the reciprocal sharing of information. Holmén(2002) states that networking is recommended for NGOs to improve in terms of performance and impact as well as ensuring that NGOs speak with one voice so that their impact as advocacy agencies is increased.

According to Liebler and Ferri (2004) networking is also done because it leads to increased credibility and they note that many types of networks have some form of regulated membership and as a result, participation in these networks can actually lead to opening doors for developing NGOs to donor communities. This can be likened to NANGO which has a membership certificate they give to the organizations they approve as members. The members can in turn use the certificate when applying for funding .The certificate simply highlights that they are a capable contributor to a partnership.

### **Weaknesses of networks**

Networks however are not always permanent hence Liebler and Ferri (2004) note that there is need for networks to ensure that they are responsive to their members' needs and hence they must constantly assess all elements of their functioning .They further emphasize that if a networks ceases to meet the needs of its members, participation will drop off and the network will naturally cease to exist.

Liebler and Ferri (2004) further highlight that members of a network can actually suffer a loss of identity if they feel that the network is not representing them sufficiently. They further note that networks also have a possibility for misrepresentation if the leadership or certain members speak on their behalf inappropriately.

The networks are composed of many NGOs who focus on different areas of development. Hence according to Holmén (2002) the NGO community is a heterogeneous community, hence it brings doubt as to whether it has one voice. Holmén(2002) further states one of the weaknesses of networking which is the fact that it tends to be informal and therefore taking place between an individual and organizations. Therefore,if the individual leaves, the communication link is broken and communication ceases.

According to NANGO (2006), there are challenges that can be faced in the different networks which include the diverse working cultures, where some organizations within the network may view themselves to be above or better than the other members. The manual also notes that there might be challenges regarding the communication approach that should be used within the networks. This is due to the fact that different member organizations within the networks have different communication approaches including the language used as well as writing cultures.

NANGO (2006) also highlights the issue of power relations within networks, stating that it is a challenge to represent all sectors equally and that there might be a chance of domination by other member organizations.

UNDP (2000) notes that it is dangerous for a network to depend on external funding. However, it is stated that some of the networks that are in existence appear to have been created for the purpose of tapping external sources. Therefore when external funding ceases, the reason to maintain the network also disappears.

### **Successful networks**

According to Holmén (2002), in order for networking to be effective, there is need for active participation among all the participants of the network. It is important that all members contribute and are encouraged to contribute to the information disseminated in the network. Holmén (2002) notes that networking is about information sharing and not merely passively receiving it. Therefore the information must be relevant to those who receive it, otherwise if they find it irrelevant, they will cease to network.

According to NANGO (2006), in order for the networks to operate better, there is need for joint decision-making within the network as well as clear and regular communication. The manual notes that communication channels should be clearly defined within the network and should be evaluated over time.

According to the UNDP(2000), the preconditions for successful networking include ensuring that no network is built without carrying out feasibility studies and ensuring that networks rely on their own resources. There is need to ensure diversity of membership within a network as well as a flexible management and an ability to adapt over time to changing circumstances.

Prasad and Prasad (2005) note that for networks to be effective, there is need for the members within the network to respect one another, share their difficulties openly with one another as well as being prepared to learn from each other. The members should also have a common concern and interest.

### **2.3 Participation and gender needs**

According to Reeves and Baden (2000) gender needs can be referred to as the shared and prioritized needs identified by women that arise from their common experiences as a gender. According to Moser (1993) the gender needs can be categorized into practical and strategic gender needs. Practical Gender Needs are defined as the immediate needs that are identified by women as assisting their survival in their socially acceptable roles within the existing power structures. She further emphasizes that the practical needs include issues of inadequacies of living conditions such as water provision, health care and employment. Therefore, policies that meet the Practical Gender Needs (PGN) according to Reeves and Baden (2000) tend to focus on ensuring that women and families have adequate living conditions which include health care, safe water and sanitation as well as access to income earning opportunities. They further note that the Practical Gender Needs do not challenge gender inequalities despite them being as a result of the subordinate position of women in society.

The Strategic Gender Needs (SGN) can be defined according to Reeves and Baden (2000) as needs identified by women that require strategies for challenging male dominance and privilege. The Strategic Gender Needs according to Molyneux (1985) in Moser (1993), Strategic Gender Needs (SGN) refers to all or some of the following; the alleviation of the burden of domestic labour and childcare, the removal of institutionalized forms of discrimination and such as the rights to own land or property and the adoption of adequate measures against male violence and control over women. According to Moser (1993), Strategic Gender Needs are often viewed as feminist in nature. Reeves and Baden (2000) further note that Strategic Gender Needs seek to change the status and position of women in society in relation to men and therefore they are highly likely to be resisted compared to the Practical Gender Needs.

Molyneux (1998) notes that gender needs and interests are conceptually different but in practice, they are closely related in the planning processes. Reeves and Baden (2000) note that needs and interests should not be externally defined or seen as fixed due to the fact that they are a result of a political process of contestation and interpretation.

Reeves and Baden (2000) also note that there are challenges faced in clearly defining the Practical Gender Needs and the Strategic Gender Needs due to the fact that any set of programs and policies may cater for both sets of needs. They also note that assumptions of women's solidarity cannot be made due to the fact that gender interests may not be prioritized over women's other interests which cut across these.

According to Moser (1993) in Sweetman (2005), meetings have to be held at times that fit into women's daily routines and this is a strategic need for women. Hence women in most cases have challenges in attending the training workshops and workshops and conferences relating to national processes due to the challenge of time. Among the roles of the women, they have the productive and reproductive roles which can contribute to their low attendance at the NANGO activities. Ellis (2003) also emphasizes that there are barriers to participation which include lack of time, childcare, location of meetings and transport difficulties.

According to Gurung, Prakke and Leduc (2009), it is vital to have gender sensitive content when organising training workshops. They note that women and men's interests may differ according to the gender needs and roles. As such, when the content of the training does not address the issues of both men and women, it is important to have explicit discussions that deal with men and women. The trainer can also insist on ensuring that the training content is gender sensitive by insisting on relevant examples from males and female participants concerning the topic under discussion. Therefore, gender sensitive training caters for the interests and needs of the male and female participant, thus becoming relevant to the participants.

## **2.4 Participation and organizational culture**

According to Groverman and Gurung (2001), the culture of an organisation refers to the values and norms indicating what the organisation stands for and how it intends to operate. According to Locke et al (2003), the organisational culture can actually affect the participation levels. They give examples of factors which they find to be closely related to organisational culture which

affect participation such as poor management and supervision, undervaluing of participants and disillusionment with the organisation's work.

According to MacDonald, Sprenger and Dubel (1997), organisations in both the North and the South are gendered in the same way that society is gendered. They further highlight the sexual division of labour in organisations mirrors that which is in the society at large. Groverman and Gurung (2001) define a gendered organisation as one in which women and men perform roles and tasks, fulfil positions and are valued according to their socially assigned and accepted roles.

MacDonald, Sprenger and Dubel (1997) note that the organisational culture also includes symbols such as the size and the look of the organisation, whether the staff members eat together or not as well as how meetings are organised. NANGO organises a lot of events and the organisational culture is also reflected in the events which include the training workshops and the workshops and conferences on the national processes.

Blakey et al (2006) states that the other factor that affects participation is high levels of stigma which certain groups from a community or the wider population might be facing. Hence the research intends to find out whether the issue of stigma is a contributory factor to the low attendance of the members of the Women and Gender sector.

## **2.5 Empowerment of women's groups**

### **Empowerment defined**

According to Oxaal and Baden (1997), the term empowerment is used in many different contexts by many different organizations; hence there are a variety of understandings with regards to the use of the term. They note that the idea of power is at the root of the term empowerment. They also highlight that power can be understood as operating in different ways which include 'power over' which involves a relationship of domination/subordination. It is based on socially sanctioned violence and intimidation and also calls upon active and passive resistance.

Power to according to Oxaal and Baden (1997) define it as having decision-making authority, power to solve problems and can be creative and enabling. They define 'power with' as that which involves people organising with a common purpose or understanding to achieve goals. 'Power within' according to Williams et al (1994) which is part of the definition of empowerment refers to self-confidence, self-awareness and assertiveness. It means that individuals are able to recognise how power operates through their experience and gain confidence to influence and change this.

According to the Human Development Report (1995), empowerment is about participation and states that people must participate fully in the decisions and processes that shape their lives. Rowlands (1997) however notes that empowerment is more than participation in decision-making, but instead, it must also include processes that lead people to perceive themselves as able and entitled to make decisions.

According to Oxfam (1995), empowerment involves challenging oppression and inequality through challenging the forms of oppression which force millions of people to play a part in their society on terms which are inequitable or in ways which deny their human rights.

McWhirter (1991) defines empowerment as the process by which people; organisations or groups who are powerless become aware of the power dynamics at work in their life context and develop skills and capacity for gaining some reasonable control over their lives. She defines empowerment to also refer to the process by which the people, organisations or groups who are powerless exercise control of their lives without infringing upon the rights of the others as well as supporting the empowerment of others in the community.

According to Rowland(1997),empowerment operates at three(3) dimensions which include the personal dimension which is a situation of developing a sense of self and individual confidence and capacity as well as undoing the effects of internalised oppression.The other dimension of empowerment according to Rowland (1997)is the rational dimension which includes the development of the ability to negotiate and influence the nature of a relationship and decisions made within it.The collective dimension of empowerment involves individuals working together to achieve than each could have done alone.

### **Empowerment and women's groups**

Moser (1989) in Rowland (1997) defines empowerment as the capacity of women to increase their own self-reliance and internal strength. This is identified as the right to determine choices in life and to influence the direction of change, through the ability to gain control over material and non-material resources.

Johnson (1992) cited in Rowland (1997) notes that women's empowerment involves gaining a voice, gaining mobility and establishing a public presence. She alludes to the fact that although women can empower themselves through obtaining some control of different aspect of their lives, empowerment also suggests the need to gain some control over the power structures or to change them.

According to Tomasevski(1993),empowerment for women is a process which entails breaking away from the cycle of learned and taught submission to discrimination, carried on from one generation to the next.Mohanty(1991) further argues that empowerment for women is a process which involves the critical understanding that power is constructed and developed to subordinate women.

Moser (1989) argues that empowerment is demonstrated by the quality of people's participation in the decisions and processes affecting their lives. Therefore Sweetman (2004) further argues that in spite of the fact that goals of empowering women through development projects demonstrate a commitment to gender equality, it does not necessarily equate to the empowerment of women.

### **2.6Civil society and the protection of women's rights**

Women's rights have been abused of late due to the harsh political environment that has prevailed in Zimbabwe. According to The Women's Charter (2000), in the last decade, women's security has remained a disturbing issue due to the fact that they have been easy targets for political tensions. It also notes that the security of women has been weakened due to the fact that the creation of the youth militia which then increased the cases of rape as a political tool.

The Women's Charter (2000) also highlights the fact that in 2005, the security and safety of women came under threat as most of them lost their homes in Operation Murambatsvina (clean up). According to the Women's Charter (2000) this program was launched by the government so as to cease all forms of illegal activities which include vending, construction of illegal

structures and illegal crop production. As a result of this program, women were forced to move back to their rural homes but however there were some who had no rural homes to go to who ended up living on the open spaces, thus subjecting them to sexual and physical abuse. Therefore their rights were abused.

According to NANGO (n.d.), security threats impact more on women than men and notes that women have paid a high price for being married or associated with men who are Civil Society Activists or are supporters of the opposite party. It also alludes to the fact that the 2008 elections also threatened the security of women.

The Women's Rights activists who are found in the Women's NGOs in Zimbabwe and also constitute part of the Civil Society in Zimbabwe have been trying to assist the women in Zimbabwe whose rights have been violated as a result of the different national processes that have been taking place. According to NANGO (n.d.), some women's rights organisations within the NANGO membership reported that after Operation Murambatsvina (Clean up) in 2005, they were confronted and thoroughly questioned with regards to assisting victims of the Operation Murambatsvina.

The Women rights activists according to the NANGO (n.d.) note that being activists has put a strain on their marriages due to the fact that they have been arrested several times because of fighting for the rights of women in Zimbabwe. Therefore this may suggest that the members of the Women and Gender sector who are part of the women's rights activists would like to be invited to the NANGO training workshops and workshops and conferences on national processes simply because the invitations show that they are recognised by NANGO. Therefore if the members of the Women and Gender sector are recognised by NANGO, it gives them a sense of assurance with regards to acquiring protection from NANGO if their security is threatened due to the political environment.

The conclusion from the literature acquired is that there are different forms of participation which range from simply being present or taking part in an activity without having influence at all as well as participation which involves setting the agenda, thus having influence. Literature also highlights that empowerment is closely linked to participation and includes being able to take part in processes that shape one's life. Networks are formed for different reasons but NGOs choose to become part of networks because of several benefits they expect to gain which relate to increase in effectiveness of their work as individual organisations. However, literature notes that networks have their own strengths and weaknesses. Literature also demonstrates that the gender needs of women are different in that the Practical Gender needs relate to the women acquiring better living conditions and they do not challenge the position of men in society. The Strategic Gender Needs challenge the dominant position of men and therefore are likely to be more resisted than the Practical Gender Needs (PGNs).

The literature also highlights the challenges that the Women in Zimbabwe have faced due to the political environment as well as some of the national processes that have taken place which include the Operation Clean Up and the elections. It also highlights the challenges that have been faced by the women's rights activists as a result of trying to protect the rights of the women.

## **CHAPTER THREE: Research Methodology**

### **Introduction**

The chapter clearly outlines the scope of study, the research methodology that was applied and sample size, the limitations of the study, justification of the selection of the NANGO services that are being analyzed in the study.

#### **3.1 Reasons for the selection of the NANGO Northern Region as an area for research**

The Northern Region was selected as an area for research because it has the largest membership component compared to the other four (4) regions. The reason for this large membership is because the region is made up of member organizations that operate in Harare, which is the capital city of Zimbabwe. The region has a large number of NGOs compared to the other regions and therefore a large membership component compared to the other regions. When NANGO organizes activities, they expect the region to have a higher turnout than the other regions. As such, a low attendance of representatives of any sector is a cause for concern for NANGO.

Secondly, the researcher is part of the Northern Region secretariat and hence appreciated the opportunity to find out in depth the reasons for the low attendance of the members of the Women and Gender Sector. It is quite a rare opportunity that has been awarded to the Northern Region secretariat because the region is located at the head office and often does not get time to engage fully with its membership. This is because it is often engaged in activities of both the Northern Region Secretariat and those of the head office.

#### **3.2 Reasons for the focus on the NANGO training workshops and workshops and conferences on national processes**

The research is focusing on the training workshops and the workshops and conferences on the national processes since they are related to the core business of NANGO which is promoting dialogue between civil society and government. This dialogue is promoted through organizing workshops and conferences where the government officials are invited for interaction with civil society organizations of the workshops and conferences on national processes. NANGO also ensures the participation of NGOs in Zimbabwe in the social, economic and political development of the country. In order to make effective contributions; they need to have their capacities built. NANGO builds their capacity through the different training workshops they offer to their members. The NANGO training workshops and workshops and conferences are done three or four times a month, depending on the funding available to carry out these activities.

#### **3.3 Reasons for the selection of directors of the representatives of member organizations as interviewees**

The research focused on the directors of the different member organizations in the Northern Region Women and Gender sector because they are the individuals in the organizations who have authority over the staff members. This authority is exercised through requesting the staff

members within their organizations to attend the activities that are organized by NANGO. As a result, if a director of an organization does not appreciate the importance of attending NANGO activities, the staff members in most cases are likely not to attend the activities.

### **3.4 Sample size of interviewees and the research methods applied**

Data was collected by the researcher through conducting semi-structured interviews to eleven (11) respondents who are the representatives of the Women and Gender sector. The researcher selected from the database three (3) organizations that have not yet attended any NANGO activity so as to elicit information concerning why they have not attended any NANGO activities. She also selected seven (7) organizations that have been attending NANGO activities but have not been consistent in their attendance. She then interviewed one (1) organization that attends the NANGO activities and is consistent in attending them.

The reason for this selection of the respondents was to be able to compare the information acquired from the respondents so as to acquire a clear picture concerning the reasons behind the low attendance of the representatives of the member organizations in the Women and Gender sector. The researcher interviewed 25% of the total number of the member organizations who form part of the Women and Gender sector who in total are approximately forty (40) in the Northern Region. The reason for the sample size was that though it is limited, it gives a sufficient picture concerning the reasons for the low attendance rate of the members of the Women and Gender sector to the NANGO training workshops and workshops and conferences on national processes.

The researcher also used observation as a research method. This method involves watching and listening carefully to the interviewees, therefore it assisted the researcher in acquiring a clear understanding concerning the reasons for the low attendance of the Women and Gender sector members.

### **3.5 Reasons for the focus on the Northern Region Women and Gender Sector**

The focus was on the members of the Women and Gender sector only because it is the sector with the least attendance rate at the different training workshops and workshops and conferences on national processes. The Women and Gender sector is composed mainly of the Women's NGOs and minority of men's NGOs. Therefore, at the NANGO activities; there is usually a focus on the number of males and females who will have attended the activities. In so doing, they become blind to the fact that the females and males who attend the NANGO activities might not be members of the women and gender sector, but instead they will be representatives of the organizations who fall in different sectors. As a result, there will be no contributions regarding gender issues at the events since the females and males who will be present at the workshop might not represent the Women and Gender sector through their contributions.

### **3.5 Data processing and analysis**

The data was collected as raw data and then organized into the tables depending on the responses acquired from the field for easy analysis. The gathered information was analyzed manually to come up with a research report.

### **3.6 Limitations of the study**

There are a limited number of respondents due to the challenges faced with the NANGO Northern Region database. Some of the contact details of the member organizations were either incorrect or outdated, therefore making it difficult to contact them for the purpose of interviewing them.

Most of the respondents were unable to respond to all the questions that were asked by the researcher. The reason for this inability to respond to some of the questions can be alluded to the fact that some of the interviewees were new at the organization and therefore did not have a lot of knowledge regarding the NANGO training workshops and workshops and conferences on national processes. This in turn compromised the conclusions that were found concerning the research topic.

The researcher was unable to use other research methods such as the Focus Group Discussions due to the unavailability of most NGO staff members in offices because of the constitution making process that is taking place in Zimbabwe. This has led most of the NGOs to concentrate on the sensitizing their constituencies on the national constitution issues.

The above limitations concerning the small number of respondents actually means that the conclusions that have been made for the findings are not reflective of the views of all the members of the NANGO Northern Region Women and Gender sector. They are actually suggestions that the researcher has made regarding the responses received from the limited number of the representatives of member organizations that were interviewed.

The researcher was unable to acquire information concerning the workshops and conferences that were done before 2010 due to the fact that all the Northern Region staff members are relatively new and therefore were unable to furnish the researcher with the information.

## CHAPTER FOUR: Findings and discussions

This chapter looks at the findings and analysis of the data that was collected from the different representatives of the organisations which form part of the NANGO Northern Region Women and Gender sector.

### 4.1 Background of organizations interviewed

**Table 1: Organizations interviewed during research**

Organization	Background of the organization
<b>Annisa Muslim Women Association</b>	The organization was formed 1996 and is based in Epworth. The aim of the organization is to uplift and advocate for Islamic Knowledge to the other Muslim women in Zimbabwe. The organization teaches the Muslim women on dressing, prayers, family living in Muslim ways and Income Generating Activities such as knitting and sewing. The organization is composed of twelve( 12) female employees only
<b>Association of Women's Clubs(AWC)</b>	<p>The organization was founded in 1938 by a visionary teacher trainee Helen Vera who became known in 1941 as Mrs Mangwende. She encouraged poor grassroots women in isolated villages around Zimbabwe to form clubs which met weekly under the village tree to socialize and share ideas and skills. This resulted in the formation of a club movement which later adopted a basic Home Economics Training in Programme in which women taught each other skills such as leadership, sewing nutrition,cookery,agriculture,hygiene,home,family and child care. With recent developments in the country, the organisation has moved to the constitution making process, women's rights issues as well as humanitarian work.</p> <p>The organization is composed of twelve (12) female staff members and one (1) male staff member who is the caretaker.</p>
<b>Zimbabwe Women's Bureau(ZWB)</b>	<p>It is a local national membership non-governmental organization that was established before independence in 1978. The membership of ZWB includes the individual women, community based organizations and institutions concerned with the development of women which is pluralistic and sustainable.</p> <p>The mission of the organization is to improve the socio-economic status of the communities by means of providing training in garment making, pottery production, vegetable gardening, knitting and crocheting. The mission of the organization also includes information, financial and material support for sustainable development programmes to women.</p> <p>The organization consists of 22 staff members including the field staff with</p>

	<p>the majority being female staff. The females hold high posts in the organization which include the post of the director of the organization and the program staff whilst the male staff holds positions which include part time kitchen staff and the gardener of the organization.</p>
<p><b>Young Women Christian Association(YWCA)</b></p>	<p>The organization was formed in 1957 with the purpose of promoting the fellowship of Christian women and girls through various activities that aim to translate faith into action. Through its program, the YWCA aims to improve the quality of life for all women and girls whilst strengthening the family.</p> <p>YWCA is inspired by Christian faith to provide an enabling environment for provision of training in leadership, vocational and life skills to women and girls in an Endeavour to achieve socio-economic empowerment, human rights, health security, dignity, justice and peace for all.</p> <p>YWCA of Zimbabwe has about 10 000 members in 250 branches or groups spread throughout the country. About 80% of the members live in rural areas and 20% in urban areas. The YWCA serves beneficiaries in six centers through vocational training, pre-schools and hostels. A total of about 1000 beneficiaries are served per year. In most branches there are youth groups where youth members of the YWCA meet to do different branch activities and programmers.</p> <p>The organization has ten (10) staff members at the head office which comprise seven (7) females and three (3) males.</p>
<p><b>Jekesa Pfungwa Vulingqondo(JPV)</b></p>	<p>Jekesa Pfungwa Vulingqondo, (JPV) which means “Open your minds” was formed in 1947 as an offshoot to the National Federation of Women’s Institutes in Rhodesia. Women’s institutes carried out weekly visits to African townships teaching basic hygiene, nutrition and home craft skills. These meetings resulted in the formation of the women’s clubs which rapidly spread to form a national network that became known as homecraft. In 1983 JPV became an autonomous organization and in August 2001, JPV registered as a Trust. Since that time, the focus and the capacity has expanded to meet the changing needs and roles of its members in the community in today’s cash based economy.</p> <p>The organization has thirty two(32)staff members which consist of one female director and one female deputy director, two(2) female program officers, two (2)female finance officers, two(2)female administrative secretaries and nineteen field officers(12 females and 7 males)</p>
<p><b>Women AIDS Support Network(WASN)</b></p>	<p>WASN is a women’s organization that looks at the HIV and AIDS through gender lenses. The establishment of WASN was the culmination of the issues raised at a Society for Women and AIDS in Africa (SWAA) meeting in Harare in 1989. From the informal and volunteer based organization started in 1989, WASN has transformed into a professional NGO. With the professionalism has come the dynamism and expertise to effectively articulate the concerns of women and adolescent girls in the area of HIV and AIDS.</p>

	<p>The main objective of WASN is to conduct research based advocacy on women, girls and HIV and AIDS and other related issues in order to create an atmosphere in which women and girls enjoy full sexual, reproductive health and rights.</p> <p>The WASN programs capitalize on the wisdom and strength that is drawn by the organization from the women and girls in the urban and rural areas. The organization recognizes that the women's health rights are the foundation of a nation. The programmes are community based and driven, thus affirming the close connection between WASN and the society the organization works for and with.</p> <p>WASN has 8 staff members. Out of the 8 staff members. These include six (6) female staff members who form the programme staff and two (2) male staff members who include the security guard and the gardener.</p>
<p><b>The Forum for African Women Educationalists Zimbabwe(FAWEZI)</b></p>	<p>FAWEZI is a national chapter affiliated to the Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE) whose headquarters is in Nairobi, Kenya. It was formed in 1992.FAWEZI is a non-political, voluntary, charitable and non-profitable association.</p> <p>The aim of FAWEZI is to support girls and women to acquire education for development.FAWEZI brings together women policy makers, parents and community as well as implementers of programmes in varied education related environments and other prominent women educationalists to provide a unique association to act as the nerve centre to monitor that girls go to school, remain in school and achieve.</p> <p>There are only 3 staff members, one male who is the driver, a female director and a female administrator.</p>
<p><b>Self Help Development Foundation Training and Advisory Services (SHDF-TAS)</b></p>	<p>SHDF-TAS is an NGO that was formed in 1963 which works with women in savings clubs throughout Zimbabwe to eradicate poverty through training in self-help and economic empowerment programs.</p> <p>As an organization, SHDF-TAS works hands on for the development of women in communities through the promotion of self –reliance.80% of their members are in rural areas, with 20% in the urban areas. Of the 250 000 club members, 97% are female. The organization equips members with requisite life skills in the following areas;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Savings management</li> <li>• Technical skills</li> <li>• Project management</li> <li>• Women's rights and leadership</li> </ul> <p>The organization provides a new approach to the development of the poor. A savings union component was brought into the development plan, with the fundamental aim of mobilizing apparently insignificant individual financial assets into sizeable useful worthwhile groups.</p>

	<p>SHDF aims to promote the economic and social development of the people.</p> <p>The organization has twelve (12) staff members (10 women and 2 males).All the females are program staff whilst the two (2) males are the Finance Officer and the Security guard.</p>
<b>Hope For Abused Pregnant Women</b>	<p>Hope for Abused Pregnant Women was formed in 2009.It was formed by a psychologist and 3 nurses. It was formed after the realization that other women’s NGOs do not consider the other young women who fall pregnant or are abused in the homes when they are pregnant.</p> <p>The aim of the NGO is to reduce the abuse of pregnant women by counseling the families where there are pregnant young women or wives.</p> <p>The organization is composed of one male psychologist and 3 female nurses.</p>
<b>Varume Svinurai/Vhukani Madoda Men’s Forum</b>	<p>Varume Svinurai/Vhukani Madoda Men’s Forum Trust is men’s NGO that was formed in 2010.The organization is comprised of 8 trustees and among them there is one female member who is the secretary.</p> <p>The organization focuses on the following areas of programming:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gender</li> <li>• HIV and AIDS</li> <li>• Male reproductive health</li> <li>• Family cohesion</li> </ul> <p>It is a membership based organization with 216 male members at the moment.</p> <p>The objectives of the organization include the following; Advocating, promoting, supporting men and boys’ rights and responsibilities specifically on family cohesion. Preservation of social, traditional and cultural values as well as fighting domestic violence.</p>
<b>Women’s Coalition of Zimbabwe(WCoZ)</b>	<p>WCoZ is a network of women’s rights activists and women’s organizations with national structures that was formed in 1999. The WCoZ is a forum where women meet to engage in collective activism on issues affecting women and girls’ rights. It brings women from diverse backgrounds to collectively advocate for the attainment and enjoyment of their rights. The organizational members of the coalition work in diverse fields including health, legal aid, access to education, gender based violence, torture, skills training, poverty reduction, research, property rights and governance issues. The coalition has chapters in Gweru, Bulawayo, Masvingo, Kariba, Gweru, Gwanda, Bindura, Marondera and Mutare.</p> <p>The organization has 12 staff members (10 women and 2 men).The</p>

	females are program staff whilst the men are security guards
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Among the respondents who were interviewed, there are those who are from relatively new organizations which were formed two to three years ago. There were also respondents from the old organisations who have been in existence for more than ten years. It is interesting to note that, most of the interviewed respondents highlight that their organizations are also membership based organizations. The new organizations(2) compared to the old organizations appear to have more interest in attending the NANGO activities due to the fact that they would like to take the opportunity at the NANGO activities to network with other like-minded member organizations. Networking is vital for the new organizations because they are not affiliated to any other networks besides NANGO and therefore are in need of the exposure which will make them more effective in their work. There is one (1) organization that was formed more than ten years ago which is a Muslim organization which is in dire need of being invited by NANGO to their activities. This is due to the fact that the representatives at the organization face stigma from the communities they operate in simply because they are Muslims whilst the majority of the Zimbabweans are Christians. As a result, the organization would like to attend NANGO activities so that they gain exposure and acceptance from like-minded organizations through networking with other organizations.

Of interest is the observation with regards to the member organizations which further differentiates them from each other in that the member organizations that have been in existence for more than ten years have permanent buildings unlike the relatively new organizations that are using temporary offices. The representatives of the relatively new organizations do not work full time at their organizations due to the fact that they are still yet to acquire funding and therefore have other jobs besides running the NGOs for their sustenance. Hence one may suggest that these representatives of the member organizations are more difficult for NANGO staff members to locate, bearing in mind that they are not full-time employees at the NANGO member organisations.As a result,NANGO staff might fail to locate them when there will be a workshop scheduled to take place, even after attempting to visit the organization.

One may suggest that the factor contributing to low attendance of the members of the Women and Gender sector is that the old organizations are easier for NANGO to contact compared to the new organizations as a result of their permanent physical addresses. NANGO staff is therefore able to pay them a visit if they fail to access them through the use of e-mails, phone calls or texts and invite them to the NANGO activities. This is unlike the new organizations that in most cases are renting offices at organizations which might not be related to non-governmental work. Hence, it is difficult for NANGO staff to locate them if they fail to contact those particular members through the different forms of communication.

There is one (1) old organization within the membership that is now operating with low numbers of staff members. This is due to the funding challenges they are facing. As a result, the

organization has had to dismiss some of its staff members and is operating with a skeleton staff. The staff members who have remained are extremely overwhelmed with work since they have had to manage more than one project in the organization. As a result, the organization has been finding it a challenge to attend different activities offered by different networks including NANGO.

The Women and Gender sector of NANGO is composed mostly of women's NGOs and two men's organizations that are part of it. The majority of the respondents therefore were mostly representatives of the women's NGOs.

The respondents (11) who were interviewed stated that their organizations are composed of both men and women staff members. Among the women's organizations that were interviewed, there are respondents from three (3) women's organizations whose organizations form part of the Women and Gender Sector where the females occupy the powerful positions and the men occupy the lowest positions in the organizations. These low positions include being employed either as security guards, gardeners or drivers. However, there are cases where in some of the women's NGOs, males hold positions which are significant in the organization such as those of program officers. However, the directors are always females. There is one (1) organization which is composed of only females with no male employee. This can be attributed to the fact that the organization is made up of Muslim women who as a result of their religion, are not in a position to work with men.

There is a case of a men's organization where the majority of the staff members are males, with one female person who has the role of a secretary. The issue concerning the designation of staff members within the member organizations of the Women and Gender sector may suggest that the women are used to taking active roles in their organizations since they occupy the significant positions of directors and program staff. Hence it can be suggested that some of the representatives within the Women and Gender sector feel uncomfortable when they see the male staff members at NANGO playing active roles at the workshops and conferences, whilst the females are delegated to carry out housekeeping roles. They are also uncomfortable when they find that the workshop programmes are dominated by male speakers. This in turn may be the cause of the low attendance levels of the representatives of the Women and Gender sector at the NANGO training workshops and workshops and conferences.

The organizations are also different in terms of proximity to the NANGO offices. There is one (1) representative who was interviewed by the researcher whose organization is located near NANGO such that it is a walking distance for the representatives of that particular organization to go to NANGO. As a result; this organization does not face transport challenges when attending any NANGO activities. The organization is fortunate because of its close proximity to NANGO such that even if NANGO holds a workshop at another venue besides the NANGO boardroom, the representatives can walk to NANGO and request NANGO to transport them to the venue. There are also organizations within the Women and Gender sector that are located outside the city of Harare where the NANGO Northern Region Offices are located. The representatives of these organizations that are located outside Harare have to incur more transport costs compared to those organizations that are located in Harare.

The findings regarding the differences among the member organizations that form part of the Women and Gender sector suggest that these differences have an impact on the attendance rate to the activities that are organized by NANGO.

## Findings of the data collected

### 4.2 Access to NANGO services

The section is going to analyze the accessibility of the services that are offered by NANGO to the members of the Women and Gender sector. The issues of access that the section will focus on include communication, time and financial resources in relation to transport. It intends to elicit information concerning whether the low attendance of members of the Women and Gender sector has anything to do with accessing the services.

#### 4.2.1 Communication for invitations

Concerning the means of communication, the researcher intended to solicit information on the effectiveness of the methods of communication that are used by NANGO to invite the representatives of the member organizations.

**Table 2: Means of communication used by NANGO to invite members**

Method of communication	Number of organizations
Cell phone messages	2
Phone calls	4
e-mails	7
Informal method (verbal communication)	1
Never	2

The majority of the respondents are invited to the NANGO activities by e-mail compared to all the other forms of communication that are listed above.

The few respondents (2) who state that they receive communication from NANGO through texts complained that the texts are not an effective method of communication for them. The reason for this notion was that the texts at times are received by a staff member that will be carrying out field work in the remote areas outside the city of Harare. Therefore when the staff receives the NANGO texts, they might not be able to convey the message to the rest of the staff members who will be at the office. This leads to the organization missing the NANGO activities.

One (1) respondent highlights that the NANGO texts are always received by one individual at an organization despite the fact that the member organizations will have submitted contact details to NANGO with all the relevant persons at the organization who should be contacted in the event of any activity taking place.

The researcher observed that the respondent who had complaints concerning the issue of texts not being an efficient method of communication that is used by NANGO is a new director at the organization. Therefore, the old staff members are receiving NANGO texts whilst she is excluded. This can be attributed to the fact that NANGO might not have updated their contact details and therefore still have the contact details of the former director of the organization. This then leads to the NANGO staff communicating with the old staff members of the member organization for any activities being held by NANGO.

The two (2) respondents that note that they have not yet been invited to any activity by NANGO are from the relatively new organizations that were recently approved by NANGO as members of the Women and Gender sector.

There are two (2) respondents who highlight that they used to be invited to the NANGO activities but have not been invited in recent years. It was evident that they have not been invited for any NANGO activities in recent years due to the fact that during the interviews, they kept on referring to names of individuals who were NANGO employees two years or more ago.

According to the researcher's experience, most of the member organizations in the Women and Gender sector were formed mainly to empower women through skills training, raising awareness on the policies that protect them as a sex as well as raising their awareness on issues concerning their sexual health rights. However, recently, they have had to change their focus to suit the prevailing political situation in Zimbabwe. As a result, some of the organizations have had to include rising of awareness of women on the constitution-making process as well as inquiring from their constituencies concerning the issues they would want to be included in the national constitution. Donors are also focusing on the topical issues of the day which include elections, constitution-making processes, as such; the women's NGOs have had to focus on the activities that relate to the national process, which initially were not in their organizational mandates. Hence they have challenges in competing for funds with organizations that were formed exclusively for addressing governance issues. Therefore, one (1) respondent notes that she feels that the reason why her organization is not being invited by NANGO to their activities is the fact that NANGO has shifted focus and so would rather deal with NGOs whose mandates are directly linked to the governance issues in Zimbabwe.

The respondents assume that they have not been invited due to;

- Not paying membership fees in a while.
- Lack of close ties with the NANGO management.
- The members assume that NANGO tends to invite the WCoZ assuming that it will also invite the other women's organizations within the Women and Gender sector membership.
- The shift in focus of NANGO to political issues.

Among the interviewed respondents, there is one (1) who highlighted the fact that she has a close relationship with the NANGO management. This in turn leads to her organization being

invited to attend the NANGO activities through informal ways such as the use of verbal communication.

#### **4.2.2 Perception of the means of communication that are used by NANGO and frequency of invitations**

In the last two to three years, NANGO has organized different training workshops which include the Corporate Governance Training workshop, Social Accountability Training workshop, proposal writing workshops. However, there were no representatives from the Women and Gender Sector who took part in these training workshops. NANGO has also held several workshops and conferences on the Migration and the Diaspora, concerning the ways that the Zimbabweans in the Diaspora can contribute to the growth of the country. NANGO has also numerous workshops and conferences on the constitution where the majority of the representatives from the Women and Gender sector have not been attending these activities.

Eight (8) respondents highlight that they are satisfied with the means of communication. However, three (3) respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the means of communication. They note that the reason for their dissatisfaction is because they have never received any invitation to NANGO's. Hence they assume that the means of communication that are used by NANGO can be the reason why the communication does not reach them.

One (1) respondent states that their organization was last invited two years ago in 2010. Another respondent (1) notes that the invitations from NANGO have been becoming fewer and attributes the minimal invitations to the fact that they have been facing challenges in paying membership fees of one hundred (100USD) dollars per year. Thus, they assume that NANGO only invites paid up members to the training workshops and membership and conferences and therefore is deliberately side-lining the unpaid members, **"NANGO is not involving us and is not realizing the constraints that are being faced by the grassroots women's NGOs. It makes us think that NANGO only likes members who have funding.** However, the NANGO constitution of 20 October 2001 is silent about the invitation policy concerning unpaid members.

One (1) respondent who happens to belong to a member organization that pays the annual membership subscriptions without fail notes that her organization is not satisfied with the frequency of the invitations. She even highlights that in some cases she faces difficulties in justifying why they are subscribing to the NANGO membership, **"As the director, I face difficulties justifying to the board members why the organization should be paying membership fees to NANGO yet it is hardly invited for workshops and conferences"**

One (1) respondent notes that they only get to know of the different activities that NANGO organizes through the media (newspapers), yet they are not invited to these NANGO events.

Two (2) respondents out of the eight (8) respondents who are satisfied with the means of communication state that the frequency of the invitations to the NANGO activities is too much and hence in most cases they fail to attend all the NANGO activities. One (1) respondent notes that they fail to attend because of NANGO's tendency to crowd programs for the whole week. They are then unable to attend all the NANGO activities since they have their own activities to implement at their organizations. Another respondent (1) note that their organization is unable to

take part in all the activities they are invited to by NANGO because they are short staffed due to challenges of funding. Therefore are not in a position to spare any staff members.

From the findings above, it is clear that NANGO has been concentrating on inviting few members of the Women and Gender sector to their activities. The majority have not been involved by NANGO. The lack of involvement of the representatives of the sector is further highlighted by the fact that some of them only get to know of NANGO past activities through the media. It is the duty of NANGO to notify members of all activities that they organize, even if some of the members being informed will not be invited to attend.

#### **4.2.3 Timing and Transport and their impact on the attendance of the members in the Women and Gender sector**

The researcher aims to elicit information from the representatives of the member organizations who are part of the of the Women and Gender sector concerning whether transport and time play a role in the attendance levels of the members of the Women and Gender sector to the NANGO activities. The challenges that are related to transport include the cost of transport as well as its scarcity during certain hours of the day. Hence the time of commencement and ending of the events can affect the members' access to transport.

**Table 2: Timing of NANGO activities**

<b>Perception of timing of NANGO activities</b>	<b>Number of organizations</b>
<b>Satisfied</b>	7
<b>Not satisfied</b>	2
<b>No comment</b>	2

Seven (7) respondents highlight that they are satisfied with the timing of the NANGO activities. This can be attributed to the fact that they have attended training workshops at NANGO which have commenced from morning till lunch hour. They have not attended some of the NANGO activities such as the conferences which at times commence in the evening. The respondents highlight that the training workshops have ended at the appropriate time which is lunch hour. They highlight that if activities finish at lunch hour, it enables them to travel to their respective homes safely without any transport challenges.

One (1) respondent highlights that she is not satisfied with the timing of the NANGO activities such as the conferences on national processes. This is because NANGO sometimes organizes them to begin in the evening. The respondent notes that if the conferences begin in the evening, she is unable to attend them because they have to carry out other tasks such as collecting their children from school as well as the household chores such as cooking.

One (1) representative stated that she is not satisfied with the time of the commencement of the NANGO workshops and conferences on national processes due to the fact that transport is

a challenge to her staff members. She notes that the reason for transport being a challenge is because the staff members at the member organizations do not own personal vehicles. Hence if the conferences end in the evening, they have to be transported by the driver who works for their organization who is a man. The respondent notes that the female staff members being transported in the evening by a male driver might face challenges within their households as a result of that. Two (2) respondents had no comment concerning the timing of the activities

**Table 3: Reasons for W&G sector members not experiencing transport challenges**

<b>Reasons lack of transport challenges faced by members</b>	<b>Number of organizations</b>
<b>Availability of company vehicle</b>	5
<b>Close proximity to NANGO offices</b>	1
<b>Vested interest in the possibilities of networking at the NANGO activities</b>	2

Five (5) respondents note that transport is not a challenge for them in terms of attending the NANGO training workshops and workshops and conferences on national processes because they have company vehicles which enable all staff members to be transported to and from the different meetings and workshops that the organizations are invited to participate.

One respondent(1) notes that her organization is very near NANGO and therefore if there is any training workshop that is held at NANGO, it is just a few minutes' walk to the venue. Two (2) respondents highlight that they do not mind the transport costs they may incur when attending the NANGO activities because they want to be included in the activities so that they meet with the other like-minded organizations that form part of the NANGO membership for networking purposes.

One (1) respondent notes that transport is a huge challenge since his organization is still new and therefore has not acquired any funding as yet. Therefore all the staff members at his organization have to use their personal funds to attend all the activities they are invited to attend. These activities include those of NANGO. He notes that in most cases when he attends any activity, he has to borrow from somewhere. Therefore, transport is a challenge for him because NANGO does not give transport reimbursements. He further goes on to note that transport is also a challenge for him because his organization is located outside the capital city where NANGO operates. Hence he and his staff members have to acquire two different transports to reach the NANGO offices. He mentions that it is a double cost and that the distance is long.

#### 4.2.4 Adequacy of the NANGO venues to meet the requirements of breastfeeding women

The facilities at the venues where NANGO holds their training workshops are adequate to cater for the practical gender needs of the members of the Women and Gender sector. These include facilities that cater for breastfeeding mothers who might be part of the participants. A lack of adequate facilities which are in line with the gender needs of the participants can affect the levels of attendance of the members of the Women and Gender sector as well as all the other women from the other NANGO sectors.

This is due to the fact that among the staff members of the member organizations in the Women and Gender sector are young female staff members. This ensures concentration of the female participants since their children will be there.

**Table 4: Perception regarding NANGO breast feeding facilities**

<b>Is it possible for breast feeding mothers to attend NANGO training workshops and workshops and conferences?</b>	<b>Number of organizations</b>
<b>No</b>	4
<b>Yes</b>	1
<b>No comment</b>	6

Six (6) respondents highlight that they have no comment regarding the above mentioned issue. This is due to the fact that they feel that women should treat the workshops organized by NANGO just like the way they treat going to work, therefore they should not expect NANGO to cater for breast feeding mothers. They even go on to highlight that if members of the Women and Gender sector request for NANGO to ensure that at the organized workshops there are facilities for breast feeding mothers, then they should know that they are becoming liabilities. Hence they felt that the issue should not be brought up at all. The inability of the representatives of the Women and Gender sector to comment on their perception concerning whether NANGO provides breast feeding facilities to female participants attending the training workshops and workshops and conferences can be attributed to the fact that they are not concerned about NANGO's provision of facilities for breastfeeding mothers.

During the interviews, some of the respondents seemed to accept or forgive NANGO for not providing some facilities which cater for the needs of women such as facilities to cater for breast feeding mothers. They justified NANGO by stating that it is not a women's NGO and hence is not expected to accommodate the needs of women.

One (1) respondent states that it is possible for breast feeding mothers to attend NANGO activities, noting that the rooms at the venues that are often booked by NANGO are large and spacious, therefore there is a possibility that a breast feeding woman can bring along a maid to care for the child whilst she attends the NANGO events.

Among the four (4) respondents who feel that it is not possible for breastfeeding mothers to attend the NANGO activities. There is a respondent who highlights that it is not possible for breastfeeding mothers to attend the NANGO activities because she does not consider NANGO as an organization that considers the needs of women, ***“one feature of NANGO is that it is a gender insensitive organization. At one point they did not even have a sanitary bin and the toilets were dirty and seemed to have been built to cater for men instead of women”.***

#### **4.2.5 Toilet facilities at the venues for the NANGO training workshops and workshops and conferences**

The research sought to find out how the members feel about the toilet facilities that are provided by NANGO at their workshop venues. This issue is vital to explore because it is related to women's practical gender needs which looks into the issues of the facilities that are required by women as a sex. Due to women's biological make-up, they have needs for certain facilities such as a clean toilet which has enough privacy as well as other facilities which include the sanitary towel disposal bins. If the toilet facilities are not adequate it can contribute to their low attendance levels. Therefore since the sector under discussion is dominated by women, it is vital to understand if the toilet facilities have been playing a huge role in their low attendance rate.

Ten (10) respondents note that the toilet facilities at the venues that are organized for the NANGO activities are adequate due to the fact that NANGO usually holds their events in hotels. One (1) respondent notes that as long as NANGO does not hold their workshops at their offices, the toilet facilities are adequate. This is due to the fact that the NANGO office toilet facilities are still viewed by some members as being more suitable for males than females.

One (1) respondent notes that the major challenge he has with the NANGO venues is that they appear too small for him. He notes that he is not pleased with NANGO using their boardroom for the training workshops or conferences. This is due to the fact that the NANGO boardroom at the head office is only sufficient to cater for approximately fifteen (15) to twenty (20) participants. As a result, he stated that since his organization is new and in dire need for networking, such a venue will hinder his organization from meeting many NGOs for networking purposes.

In conclusion, it is evident that NANGO is failing to meet the practical gender needs of women. This is because they fail to offer facilities that ensure that women are still able to carry out their gender roles whilst benefitting from the NANGO services. The toilet facilities according to the members are only adequate if NANGO holds a workshop at a hotel, but problematic if workshops are to be done at the NANGO offices. Transport is also a hurdle for the members as they are not given transport reimbursements by NANGO after attending workshops. All these factors are affecting attendance levels of the members.

#### **4.3 Relevance of NANGO activities**

It was necessary to find out from the representatives of the member organizations in the Women and Gender sector whether the training workshops and the workshops and conferences that are organized by NANGO relate to their work since it also might affect the attendance levels of the members. If the organized activities do not relate with the members' work, then they are

most likely not to attend them. The questions related to relevance were intended to solicit information on whether the training workshops and conferences relate to their capacity needs as well as their strategic needs which include their engagement with policy makers or being consulted as a sector so that the issues can be taken up by NANGO to the relevant policy makers. The question on relevance is also to find out from the members if the issues that are discussed at the NANGO workshops and conferences touch on the issues of gender, thereby making it interesting for the members of the Women and Gender sector to attend them.

**Table 5: NANGO’s consultation levels with their W&G sector members**

Does NANGO inquire from you on the topics you desire to be trained on before organizing the training workshops?  Responses	Number of organizations
yes	0
no	9
No comment	2

Nine(9) respondents note that NANGO does not enquire from them regarding their training needs. NANGO just sends invitations to members to attend training workshops without really finding out whether the members they are sending invitations to require the training in the areas they will be proposing. One (1) respondent from among the nine (9) respondents highlights that she was dissatisfied with the way NANGO organizes their training workshops. She goes on to state that NANGO at times gets to the extent of request for certain individuals from the member organizations to attend the training workshops they will have organized without consultation to the members, ***“NANGO has never consulted us for before offering any training workshop. At times they even suggest the name of one of my staff members to attend the training workshops they organize, thereby undermining my position as director of the organization.”***

During the interviews, one (1) respondent notes that When NANGO organizes the conferences to discuss on the national processes such as the constitution making process in Zimbabwe; it expects all the members to be at the same level of knowledge with regards to the constitution issues. She highlights that in the end there will be a dominance of the knowledgeable members during the discussions. Thus the workshop becomes less relevant to her as a member of the Women and Gender sector. As such, she strongly recommends that NANGO builds the capacity of every member before organizing these conferences on the national processes.

#### **4.3.1 Ways in which the previous training workshops have benefitted the Women and Gender Sector members**

Seven (7) respondents allude to the fact that they benefited from the training workshops that they were offered by NANGO. They note that they acquired skills on how to write articles for their magazines at their organizations. They also note that they were trained in documentation and acquired knowledge on exploring more means of communication which include the doing away of conventional methods of communication by creating a blog as well as ways of developing an organizational magazine. One (1) respondent from among the seven (7) notes that her organization acquired skills in Information Technology from the training they received from NANGO.

The researcher had the opportunity to attend a training workshop that was held 3 August 2012 which was on strengthening communication which was offered to the NANGO members. It was a half day workshop which started in the morning and ended in the afternoon at lunch. It was interesting to note that after the training workshop, the members were then able to really say out their training needs. It appears they were not really interested in learning how to articles. Most members seemed more interested in being trained in non-conventional ways of communication besides newsletter development.

Among the four (4) respondents who are dissatisfied with the training workshops offered by NANGO are those who highlight that they were invited to attend training in Gender Mainstreaming. They note that the training was offered to mostly the women's NGOs who already have knowledge on issues of gender mainstreaming. This can be attributed to the argument by Momsen (2010) who notes that gender has been used in some instances to mean women. As a result, men tend to exclude themselves from the topic because they feel that it is targeted towards women. The respondents argue that they should not have been offered that kind of training since they deal with issues of gender mainstreaming. They feel that NANGO should have offered them training on another topic so that they acquire new knowledge.

One (1) respondent notes that NANGO did not make an effort to look for an expert trainer when they offered the training in Gender Mainstreaming. She even goes on to suggest that NANGO advertises for a trainer on certain topics so that different individuals can submit their curriculum vitae so as to ensure that NANGO hires a consultant who is knowledgeable on the subject he or she will be hired to train.

#### **4.3.2 The role of the Women and Gender representatives at the NANGO workshops and conferences.**

The researcher enquired from the respondents whether there are cases where a representative from the Women and Gender sector is requested during the workshops and conferences to give a presentation on the issues under discussion from a gender perspective. Hence the issue of participation at the NANGO activities entails more than attendance but includes making meaningful presentations.

**Table 6: NANGO and the incorporation of gender issues at workshops**

Is there a representative from the Women and Gender sector who is requested to give a presentation from a gender perspective during workshops and conferences on national processes?  Responses	Number organizations
yes	0
no	2
No knowledge	9

The majority of the respondents (9) state that they have no knowledge regarding whether there is any representative from the NANGO Women and Gender sector who is requested during the NANGO workshops and conferences on national processes to give a presentation from a gender perspective on the issues which will be under discussion.

The few respondents (2) who have had the opportunity of attending the NANGO workshops and conferences note that they have not witnessed any member of the Women and Gender sector being requested to make a presentation of the issues which will be under discussion from a gender perspective. One(1) respondent who is a NANGO northern region board member notes that she has had to request to be slotted in to the program at the different NANGO workshops and conferences which will in most cases be highly dominated with male presenters. She however notes that the number of times that she has actually been included in the program at the NANGO workshops and conferences ,the organization has ensured that she has been slotted on the most insignificant part of the program, ***“I have often been requested to give a presentation since I am a NANGO board member in addition to my organization being part of the Women and Gender sector.However,I am often requested to make closing remarks during the workshops and conferences, which is just the same as being requested to give a prayer”***

One may suggest that there are members of NANGO that are more interested in other services offered by NANGO more than the training workshops and workshops and conferences. The interest in the other services that are offered by organizations included the fact that whenever the researcher would contact a representative of an organization with the intention of setting an appointment for an interview, the representative would be quick to enquire whether NANGO was calling due to availability of funds to give to members. This question about whether NANGO has any funding for the members is expected bearing in mind that NANGO has in the past assisted members with funds so that they can carry out their organizational activities necessary for organizational development such as Annual General Meetings.

In conclusion, it is clear that NANGO does not make an effort to incorporate gender issues in their programs for the different events such as the workshops and conferences. The females who are given opportunities to present are given insignificant sections of the program of giving the welcome and closing remarks. The training workshops were highlighted by the members as having female trainers such as the training in documentation and that of Gender mainstreaming. However the workshops and conferences according to the representatives are always facilitated by the males and the programs for these events are dominated by male presenters. Therefore the issues that are discussed are often not inclusive of the issues that are relevant to the members in the Women and Gender Sector.

#### **4.4 Prioritisation of W&G sector members with regards to NANGO activities**

##### **4.4.1 Are the NANGO members of the Women and Gender sector part of other networks?**

The respondents were asked whether they are members of other coalitions besides NANGO. This question was directed to the members of the Women and Gender sector so as to solicit information on regarding where they would rather attend activities if NANGO and other coalitions are to call for workshops simultaneously.

**Table 7: Different networks that the NANGO Northern Region members in the W&G sector are affiliated to**

<b>Coalitions that NANGO member organizations are part of</b>	<b>Number of organizations</b>
<b>NANGO only</b>	2
<b>Zimbabwe AIDS Network(ZAN)</b>	2
<b>Sexual and Reproductive Rights Committee</b>	1
<b>Women's Coalition of Zimbabwe(WCoZ)</b>	7
<b>Women Alliance of Business Association</b>	1
<b>Grassroots Women's Associations(GWA)</b>	3
<b>Zimbabwe Council of Churches(ZCC)</b>	1
<b>Market Linkage Association</b>	1
<b>Crisis Coalition in Zimbabwe</b>	1

Nine (9) respondents state that they are members of other networks besides NANGO. The other coalitions that they are part of are related to their areas of focus as organizations. It is

interesting to note that most of the member organizations of NANGO are affiliated to the Women's Coalition of Zimbabwe (WCoZ).

There are two (2) respondents who note that they are only affiliated to NANGO as a network. One (1) respondent notes that his organization is still young and therefore they prefer to be affiliated to one network but with time, they hope to join more networks. Another respondent (1) from the Muslim Women's Association notes that her organization is a member of NANGO only despite her organization having been formed in 1996. This can be attributed to the stigma that is faced by Muslims in Zimbabwe, which was an issue that was strongly highlighted by the representatives of the organization, hence their decision to be a member of NANGO, "**As Muslim women we are discriminated upon, the people in the community call us Satanists, stating that Zimbabwe is a nation of Christians only. We joined NANGO so that we could try to fight the stigma by informing other NGOs who are part of the NANGO membership who we are and what we do**". They further note that since NANGO is an umbrella body, it has members of different sectors; hence they feel they will be better exposed as NANGO members.

#### **4.4.2 Choice of where to attend between NANGO workshops and those of other coalitions.**

The question was asked to elicit information from the representatives of the member organizations in the Women and Gender sector on how much they value being members and prioritize the NANGO workshops. The question intended to seek information in terms of the relevance of their activities to member organizations compared to those services offered by other coalitions.

Eight (8) respondents mentioned that they have not experienced a time where they had to choose between attending NANGO training workshops and training workshops and conferences simply because the invitations from NANGO are very few.

Three (3) respondents note that they are often invited by NANGO for training workshops and workshops and conferences but decide to attend those activities organized by other organizations. One (1) respondent notes that NANGO has a tendency of organizing too many activities in a week or two weeks. She notes that her organization is unable to attend all the activities and therefore has to be absent for some of the activities. One (1) respondent notes that she would rather attend activities of other networks than those of NANGO because they are more relevant to her work. One (1) respondent notes that NANGO is a male dominated organization and therefore the activities they organise are not vital to her organization. As a result, her organization chooses to attend meetings at other networks which they are affiliated to which deal with women's issues like the Women's Coalition of Zimbabwe, "**NANGO has always been our father, we can always attend their activities when we feel that the other coalitions which deal with women's rights issues have no activities on schedule**".

#### 4.4.3 Inquiry of NANGO workshop schedule on schedule and reports of previous workshops held

The representatives of the member organizations who form part of the Women and Gender sector were asked whether they make an effort to enquire from NANGO on the upcoming training workshops and conferences if they have not been contacted by NANGO. They were also asked whether they request for reports of previous workshops from NANGO if they would have failed to be part of the NANGO activities. This was enquired to the members of the Women and Gender sector so as to be able to analyze whether the members value being affiliated to NANGO and therefore strive as much as possible not to miss out on any NANGO activities.

**Table 8: W&G inquiry levels of NANGO workshop schedule and reports**

<b>Reasons for not enquiring from NANGO for the schedule and reports of previous workshops</b>	
<b>Assumption that NANGO is not carrying out any activities</b>	7
<b>Not motivated to do so</b>	3
<b>Never thought of the idea</b>	1

Seven (7) respondents note that they do not bother to inquire from NANGO whether there were any training workshops or workshops and conferences on national processes that are on schedule in the NANGO Northern Region schedule after having not been invited. The majority of the respondents also allude to the fact that they do not request for reports of previous workshops held by NANGO which they will not have attended.

The reason for this lack of enquiry according to the respondents is because they assume that NANGO is not carrying out any activities, hence the silence in communication. Three (3) respondents note that they are not motivated to inquire of any information concerning NANGO activities on schedule or for reports of previously held workshops. Two (2) respondents note that this lack of motivation is as a result of their belief that NANGO deliberately decides not to invite them to these activities. One (1) respondent notes that she is not motivated to enquire from NANGO concerning the events on schedule or reports of previous NANGO workshops they will have failed to attend because they feel that NANGO does not want them to attend these activities. One (1) respondent notes that she simply has not thought of the idea of enquiring from NANGO concerning the workshops on schedule and the reports of previously held workshops.

One (1) respondent notes that the reasons for not requesting for reports of previous workshops and conferences that are held by NANGO is because when she made an effort to request for reports of the workshops and conferences her organization was unable to attend, her request was not granted by NANGO. Hence she has decided not to bother requesting for these reports anymore.

In conclusion, the members of the Women and Gender sector opt to attend the activities that are organized by other networks instead of those that are organized by NANGO simply because they find NANGO activities more relevant to their work. They hardly enquire from NANGO concerning previously held workshops as well as any NANGO activities that are on schedule because they lack the motivation to do so. The few who have attempted to acquire reports from NANGO have not been successful in their request.

#### **4.5 Organisational culture**

The research sought to acquire information from the members of the Women and Gender sector regarding their view of the organizational culture of NANGO and to assess whether their perception of the culture could be the reason why there is a low attendance from the members in that sector.

##### **4.5.1 The view of members regarding the balance of male and female presenters at NANGO workshops**

Respondents were asked on issues regarding their view in terms of the male and female presenters at NANGO. This was to acquire information from them concerning whether they feel that that NANGO has a culture of incorporating a gender balance in their activities, thus shaping the discussions at the different workshops and conferences to be gender sensitive.

**Table 9: The balance of male and female presenters at NANGO workshops**

<b>Responses</b>	<b>Number of organizations</b>
<b>Yes</b>	0
<b>No</b>	4
<b>No comment</b>	7

Seven (7) respondents state that they are not in a position to comment on whether NANGO ensures that there is a balance between the male and female presenters during the workshops and conferences. Three (3) respondents, who note that there is no balance of male and female presenters during the NANGO workshops and conferences on national processes, highlight that the programs at these events are often dominated by male presenters only. At times, the NANGO National Board Chairperson who is a female is the only female presenter one can find slotted in the program, while the rest of the presenters will be male. The inability by the majority of the respondents to comment on whether there is a balance of presenters during the NANGO activities can be attributed to the fact that they have not been invited to attend the NANGO activities in a while. It can also be as a result of the respondents viewing the question as being irrelevant to the issue concerning their low levels of attendance as a sector.

#### **4.5.2 The role played by the male and female NANGO staff members at workshops and conferences**

The members of the Women and Gender sector were asked concerning the roles that are played by the male and female NANGO staff members at the workshops and conferences that are organized by NANGO. This question was asked so as to acquire information from the members on whether they feel that the roles that are expected of males and females to play in the community are reflected among the NANGO staff. This gives a perspective of how members view the culture of NANGO and can also affect the attendance levels of the members of the Women and Gender sector.

Eight (8) of the representatives of the members of the Women and Gender sector have no comments concerning the roles of the male and female staff members. Among the respondents who had no comments regarding the role played by males and females at the NANGO workshops and conferences are those representatives of member organizations that have never been invited to any NANGO activity as well as members who feel that the issue regarding the role played by males and females at NANGO does not have any effect on their low attendance levels and is therefore insignificant question to them.

The few respondents (3) that highlight that the male and female staff members do not play an equally active role at the NANGO workshops and conferences stated that at these events. They highlight that the females are usually responsible for the housekeeping activities which include the registration of participants, distribution of meal tickets and distribution of stationary. These roles are done by the females whilst the males converse with the facilitators. One (1) respondent notes that the male and female staff members do not play the same active role due to the fact that the NANGO management is dominated by the males and hence they are the ones who complement the presenters who in most cases are also males, whilst the women deal with the housekeeping issues.

Of interest is the observation that was made by the researcher concerning the fact that during the research, the respondents who were able to comment more about the role that is played by both the male and female NANGO staff members are those who are part of the staff members of the organizations where the males occupy less significant positions in the organizations. The females in those organizations occupy the most significant positions which include the post of program staff and the director position. Therefore, they are used to females taking an active role at their organizations whilst the men do not contribute anything with regards to the running of the organization. Therefore they seemed to be greatly affected by the division of roles that is characterized by NANGO.

#### **4.5.5 Language applied by NANGO during workshops and conferences organized**

The representatives of the member organizations were asked about the kind of language and jokes that are used by the NANGO staff members as a way of trying to find out the organizational culture of the organization and whether it is responsible for the low attendance of the members of the Women and Gender sector to the NANGO activities, especially the training workshops and the workshops and conferences.

The majority of the respondents (7) have not been able to comment on the language that is used by NANGO during the workshops. The reasons behind the failure to respond to the question regarding the language used by NANGO to the members can be attributed to the fact that the members felt they were more significant issues that they felt as contributing to the low attendance of the members in the Women and Gender sector that they wanted to highlight, instead of dwelling on issues of language.

Four (4) respondents who could comment on the language of the NANGO staff members state that NANGO staff is gender sensitive in the way they converse with the members but they often hire gender insensitive facilitators especially for the workshops and conferences on national processes. These facilitators according to the members of the Women and Gender sector who are hired by NANGO make women uncomfortable through their dismissive behaviour towards contributions that come from the representatives of the Women and Gender sector

#### **4.5.6 Willingness of the NANGO staff members to know more about gender issues during training workshops and workshops and conferences on national processes**

The question was asked to the representative of the member organizations in the Women and Gender sector to find out if the organization has a culture of making the initiative to make an effort to understand gender issues since they also have members who form part of the Women and Gender sector. The willingness by the NANGO to know more about gender issues can actually be a contributory factor to the attendance levels of the members of the Women and Gender sector.

Nine (9) respondents note that they have no comments regarding the willingness of NANGO to know more about gender issues during workshop and conferences. The few members (2) who make comments concerning NANGO's willingness to know more about gender issues during the NANGO workshops highlight that the interest of NANGO is still lacking. They note that the interest is still lacking because NANGO does not make an effort to include any representative from the Women and Gender sector to give presentations on the issue at hand but from a gender perspective. They note that NANGO seems to include more male presenters in the program who make presentations and this leads to the side-lining of gender issues. The lack of comments from the majority of the respondents can be attributed to the fact that they felt that the question regarding the willingness of NANGO to know more about gender issues was too difficult for them to respond since they have been detached from NANGO during the recent years.

#### **4.5.7 Perception of opportunities awarded to males and females to contribute during NANGO workshops.**

The representatives of the member organizations in the Women and Gender sector were asked whether NANGO offers equal opportunities for the male and female participants to make contributions at the workshops and conferences they organize. This question is vital to solicit information on whether NANGO is able to create a gender sensitive atmosphere during the workshops and conferences, thus enabling both the males and females to be comfortable to make contributions.

Nine (9) respondents could not comment on whether NANGO ensures that both male and female members are awarded the same opportunity to make contributions. The inability to respond to the question regarding the perception of opportunities awarded to males and females to contribute during workshops can be attributed to the fact that despite not having been invited by NANGO to the training workshops and workshops and conferences on national process, some respondents were not comfortable about making comments on the issue. They feared that if they made a negative comment, they would risk losing total recognition by NANGO.

The few (2) representatives of the member organizations in the Women and Gender sector who could comment on the issue state that NANGO ensures that both male and females are given opportunities to make contributions during the workshops and conferences on the national processes. However, some of the members further alluded to the fact that the workshops are not organized in a gender sensitive manner in that it should include female presenters as well. Hence if the conference is not organized in a gender sensitive manner, despite men and women being given the space to contribute, women might still fail to make contributions in the workshops and conferences on national processes.

One (1) respondent notes that the way the workshops are conducted does not ensure equal participation of male and female participants. She states that she has attended several workshops that are organized by NANGO, where there is a male facilitator who does not notice that when he assigns the participants to form groups and discuss on questions for presentation that the females in most cases are made rapporteurs whilst the men will be chairing the groups. She notes that if the females tend to be slow in contributing to the answers, some male participants have been known to shout at the women, thus making them less participatory. In the end, the males are the ones who present on behalf of the groups formed during the workshops. She notes that there is need for the facilitator to ensure that the workshop is organized in a way that makes men and women feel that they are at the same level, where they are given opportunities to carry out the same tasks. This will ensure active participation of both male and female participants.

#### **4.5.8 Perception of value placed on members of all sectors by NANGO**

The members of the Women and Gender sector have been asked concerning the value they feel is placed upon them by NANGO. The aim of enquiring from the members is to find out whether they feel that NANGO has a culture of considering all members of all sectors as important.

The majority of the respondents (8) state that they feel that NANGO does not value all the members of all the sectors in the same way. Two (2) respondents state that they feel undervalued by NANGO simply because they are usually not invited to the NANGO events yet they get to know of these events through the media.

In most cases, when the researcher arrived at the different representatives of the member organizations that constitute part of the Women and Gender sector, she would spend more time than expected. This was a result of the fact that the visited organizations would be extremely excited that NANGO recognizes their existence to the extent that the representative of the

organizations being interviewed would insist on the researcher waiting for his/her board chairperson to arrive, so as to prove the presence of NANGO to the superiors of the organization. This in itself showed that some of the members in the Women and Gender sector are starved of recognition from NANGO, thus justifying why some of the member organizations in that sector feel less valued by NANGO.

Some of the respondents even made an effort to give the researcher a tour around their organization and explaining in depth what the organization does. This demonstrated their gratitude for the visit from a NANGO representative. The behaviour of the Women and Gender sector members who were interviewed shows that they were ecstatic to have a NANGO representative visiting their organization.

One (1) respondent notes that she feels that NANGO does not value all the members the same because she has had to struggle in order to get audience with the NANGO Chief Executive Officer. She feels that the situation should not be like that since she is a member of NANGO and a director of the organization in the Women and Gender Sector. ***,"I used to call several times to talk to the NANGO CEO and would always be given excuses to justify why I could not talk to him to highlight my complaints regarding lack of communication from NANGO. After two months of failing to get hold of him, I had to call him directly on his personal cell phone and gave him the updated contact details for my organization."***

Other respondents (2) state that they feel that NANGO has favouritism of members and seems to prefer to be close to those members who have adequate funding. They feel that they are unfairly treated by NANGO since although they are facing challenges with funding, they have always been strong supporters of NANGO for a long time but now they are being ignored.

In conclusion, it is evident that NANGO is an organization which mirrors the society in that the females at the organization continue to perform the roles they carry out in their societies. During conferences and workshops, the females carry out housekeeping duties whilst the males will be more involved in the program by moderating the discussions or liaising with the facilitator. As such, the women's issues are often not discussed during these events due to the fact that the programs are mainly dominated by male presenters whereas the females are often made to present on the less significant sections of the program which include the closing or opening remarks.

The respondents highlighted that NANGO's language in terms of interacting with the members is non-offensive but they stated that the consultant they hire for facilitation of the workshops and conferences is not gender sensitive and often uses language that discourages them from participating effectively. However, the eating arrangements are not explicit since the respondents noted that the participants just sit together in any manner after the events. Other respondents noted that they look for each other so that they sit together during meals.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: Discussion**

This chapter seeks to analyze the findings from the research and relate the findings to the literature acquired.

### **5.1 Access to NANGO Services**

According to Church et al (2002) it is vital to note that joining a network is not the same as networking but however, the two terms are often used to mean the same. The research findings show that the members of the Women and Gender sector might be part of the NANGO network but unfortunately there is no networking that they are experiencing due to the fact that the majority of the respondents note that they have not been invited to any NANGO training workshops and workshops and conferences on national processes that NANGO has been organizing. One(1) respondent notes that the communication between his organization and NANGO has been so poor to the extent that he has acquired information concerning the workshops that have been organized by NANGO through the media. Other representatives of the members of the Women and Gender sector have had to contact NANGO so that they give them their up to date contact details so as to ensure that they are invited to NANGO activities and are able to network.

According to Ellis (2003) there are practical deterrents that can hinder participation which include access, timing of events, location of meetings and transport .This statement is supported by the findings concerning access to the NANGO services. Among the respondents there were issues that were highlighted concerning transport and the location of the NANGO workshops. One (1) respondent who is a staff member at an organization that is relatively new alluded to the fact that he finds transport quite expensive when attending the NANGO activities because he has to use his personal funds since the organization he works for has not yet acquired funding. He also notes that transport is also expensive for him and his workmates due to the location of his organization which is out of town. As such, he has to board more than one bus to get to the NANGO offices.

Gurung, Prakke and Leduc (2009) highlight the importance of the provision of the practical gender needs and note that at times during the organized events which include training workshops, it might be quite necessary for the organizers to ensure that there is a temporary care centre for mothers with young children or to pay the travel and accommodation costs for infants and an accompanying person to take care of the children. These services ensure the participation of women at different events. The statement relates to the findings whereby a respondent notes that she feels that NANGO is gender insensitive simply because it does not offer services that cater for the gender needs of women. She goes on to highlight that even the toilet facilities at NANGO are adequate only if they organize their training workshops in hotels, however, if they organize their activities at the NANGO offices, it becomes problematic. She notes that the toilet facilities are not suitable for women.

Holmén(2002) states that one of the weaknesses of networking is that it tends to be informal and therefore taking place between an individual and organizations. Therefore, if the individual leaves, the communication link is broken and communication ceases. This view can be supported by the fact that one respondent noted that the NANGO use of the phone texts as a

form of communication is not efficient due to the fact that the texts seem to appear to one individual at the organization and exclude other staff members who form part of the membership. This can be attributed to the fact that the respondent is relatively new to the organization and therefore, the NANGO staff has not yet formed a relationship with her, thus affecting the communication levels. Therefore they have a tendency to send texts to the representatives of the member organization whom they are used to and therefore had formed relationships with. As a result the respondent notes that she has had to contact NANGO so as to give them the updated contact details so as to ensure effective communication.

According to Reeves and Baden (2000), assumptions of women's solidarity cannot be made due to the fact that gender interests may not be prioritized over women's other interests which cut across these. Hence from the findings, the majority of the women could not comment on whether NANGO offers facilities that cater for breast feeding mothers who might be part of the participants in the training workshops and workshops and conferences on national processes. Amongst some of the respondents, there are women who are of the notion that females should not demand for breastfeeding facilities because in so doing, they will become liabilities to NANGO. Other respondents likened the attendance to the NANGO workshops with going to work and note that there is no need for females to request for breastfeeding facilities in the first place. Therefore the responses may suggest that the interests of some of the members of the Women and Gender sector are more on simply being invited by NANGO to their activities, regardless of whether the organization offers the adequate facilities to the females or not.

### **5.1.2 Relevance of the services of NANGO**

According to Huxam (1996), other NGOs network in order to achieve a collaborative advantage but notes that networks are not always a panacea for enhancing capacity development. The representatives of the Women and Gender sector note that they were dissatisfied with the training on Gender Mainstreaming that they were offered by NANGO due to the fact that the trainer seemed not to be an expert in the area that she was training in. They note that NANGO should be strict when hiring consultants so as to ensure that the training workshops that are offered are effective and therefore useful to members. The views of the respondents may suggest that they felt that their capacity was not developed after being part of the trainees of the Gender Mainstreaming workshop and feel NANGO should put more effort when organizing training workshops.

UNDP (2000) notes that it is dangerous for a network to depend on external funding and that some of the networks that are in existence appear to have been created for the purpose of tapping external sources. It also notes that when external funding comes to an end, the reason to maintain the network also disappears. The members of the Women and Gender sector note that NANGO does not consult them when offering them training workshops. This can be attributed to the fact that NANGO is donor funded and therefore the workshops that are offered by NANGO are sponsored by the donors. As a result, if the donors cease to fund NANGO, the organization is most likely unable to offer training workshops to the members. This may suggest that most of the training workshops that have been offered by NANGO might not have been

relevant to the members in the Women and Gender sector, thus leading to the low attendance levels of the members in that sector.

According to the Human Development Report (1995), empowerment is about participation and states that people must participate fully in the decisions and processes that shape their lives. The members of the Women and Gender sector however note that during the workshops and conferences, there is no representative from their sector who is requested to make a presentation concerning the gender issues. Therefore the sector representatives do not feel that they are participating fully in the processes that shape their lives.

However, one (1) respondent who is part of the NANGO Northern Region board notes that she has had to demand to be included in the programs of the workshops and conferences on national processes. She notes that in spite of insisting to be included in the NANGO programs at the workshops and conferences, she has been slotted on the insignificant sections of the program which include being requested to say the closing remarks. She notes that being asked to say the closing remarks is just the same as being requested to say a prayer; therefore her contributions have been insignificant at the workshop and conferences on national processes. Moser (1989) argues that empowerment is demonstrated by the quality of people's participation in the decisions and processes affecting their lives. Therefore the fact that the representatives of the Women and Gender sector are not given the opportunity to present on the significant sections of the programs suggests that they are not empowered by NANGO compared to the representatives of the other NANGO sectors. Hence they need to take an active role in the NANGO workshops instead of just being spectators at the events.

It can be suggested that the members of the Women and Gender sector have been placed by NANGO at the lowest level of Arnstein's ladder of non-participation. This is due to the fact that few members are invited to the NANGO activities. The few representatives that attend the workshops are simply invited to the NANGO workshops and conferences so as to add numbers to the participants already available because the organisation does not seem interested in acquiring information on how the members of that sector are contributing to the national processes in Zimbabwe. Despite the fact that there is a representative of the Women and Gender sector who forms part of the NANGO Northern Region board and hence is at the top of the Arnstein's ladder, the member organisations in that sector are still not being recognised by NANGO. This is highlighted by the fact that the representative of the Northern Region board still has to ask to be included in the programs at the NANGO conferences. However, even after requesting to be included in the conference program, she is still allocated the insignificant sections of the program such as giving the closing remarks. The Women and Gender sector members are not in a position to set the agenda for NANGO at the different workshops; instead, they are passive recipients of the NANGO activities.

According to NANGO(n.d) the women's rights activists have been facing confrontation and numerous arrests as a result of trying to protect the rights of women in the prevailing political environment. Therefore, one may suggest that the women's rights activists who are part of the Women and Gender sector would like NANGO to invite them to the training workshops and workshops and conferences not because of the fact that they benefit from the activities but simply because invitations from NANGO show that NANGO recognises them and this in turn assures them that NANGO will react swiftly if they are arrested when carrying out their work or protecting women's rights

### **5.1.3 Prioritisation of NANGO W & G sector with regards to NANGO activities**

Engel (1993) stated that NGOs join networks because they expect to improve the quality of their interventions as well as the effectiveness of their actions. This statement goes hand in hand with the findings whereby the respondents note that they were part of different networks in addition to being members of NANGO. Among the respondents, there are others who even state that they would rather attend the activities of other networks instead of NANGO because they feel that the other networks are actually more relevant to their work than NANGO. The member organisations that are new and were formed two to three years ago are more interested in attending the activities compared to the old member organizations because they feel that being a part of NANGO will improve the quality of their work through meeting other organisations who do the same work at the NANGO activities. There is also a member organisation that is also more interested in attending the NANGO activities simply because it needs to network with other like-minded organisations and NANGO seems to be their only forum for meeting with other organisations. This is due to the stigma that the representatives of the organisation are receiving from the communities they operate in as well as the other like-minded organisations.

Liebler and Ferri (2004) state that if a network ceases to meet the needs of their members, participation will drop off and the network will naturally cease to exist. The findings show that most of the representatives of the members of the Women and Gender sector do not enquire from NANGO concerning the workshops that are on schedule or ask for reports of previously held NANGO workshops. They state that they are not motivated to enquire from NANGO regarding these issues because they assume that NANGO has not been holding any workshops. The lack of interest in finding out these issues may suggest that some of the members are slowly detaching themselves from NANGO.

Williams et al (1994) states that “power within” are part of the definition of empowerment which refers to self-confidence, self-awareness and assertiveness. It also means that individual have the ability to recognise how power operates through their experience and gain confidence to influence and change this. The members of the Women and Gender sector however seem not to be empowered as yet due to the fact that they do not go to find out from NANGO concerning workshops on schedule so that they can attend the NANGO activities. These members choose to wait for invitations from NANGO which they have been getting at very limited levels and in some cases, not at all. The members therefore need to be assertive and demand for information from NANGO concerning the planned training workshops and workshops and conferences.

### **5.1.4 Organisational Culture of NANGO**

Organizational culture according to Groverman and Gurung (2001) refers to the key norms and values indicating what the organization stands for and how it wishes to operate. The norms and values are reflected in the types of comments and jokes, eating arrangements and how meetings are arranged.

Groverman and Gurung (2001) highlight that perceptions about what is important and who is important belong to the organizational culture. Therefore, the representatives of the Women and Gender Sector note that they feel that NANGO does not value them as a sector. They have such a perception due to the fact that NANGO does not seem to bother to inform some of the

representatives of the sector concerning any activities that are lined up. Instead, they get to know of previous workshops that will have been held by NANGO through the media.

Macdonald, Sprenger and Dubel (1997) note that organizations are gendered in the same way society is gendered and there is sexual division of labour in organizations which mirrors that in society at large. This is evident in NANGO according to the respondents who note that whenever NANGO organizes workshops and conferences, the NANGO female staff members are often witnessed carrying out housekeeping tasks which are in line with the roles done by women. The tasks that are carried out by women include registering of participants and welcoming of the participants is the same as the role that women have of welcoming visitors in the home. This division of roles can be suggested as contributing to the low participation of the representatives of the Women and Gender sector, bearing in mind that among the members of the sector, there are those organizations where female staff members hold significant positions in the organizations, whilst the males occupy the lowest positions in the organizations. Therefore, they might fail to adjust to a shift of roles which they witness at the NANGO workshops and conferences which are opposite of their own organizations.

## **CHAPTER SIX: Conclusion and recommendations**

This chapter seeks to provide the answers in-depth to the research questions that guided this study.

### **6.1 Accessibility of NANGO activities to members**

The respondents note that the activities of NANGO are not accessible to them because of poor communication between them and NANGO. They even note that the texting system that is used by NANGO is not effective. This is due to the fact that the texts are sometimes sent to individuals who might be out of office for field work. As a result, they might not be in a position to convey the message to the other staff members at the office.

They also state that NANGO has not been catering for the practical gender needs of the members which include adequate facilities for the members. These include toilet facilities and facilities for breast feeding mothers who might be part of the participants. One (1) respondent alludes to the fact that the toilet facilities at NANGO venues for workshops are only suitable if the workshop takes place at a hotel. However, she notes that the toilet facilities at the NANGO offices are suitable for males.

Transport is also viewed as a challenge by the respondents who note that NANGO does not give transport reimbursements. This is a huge challenge especially for member organizations that have not yet acquired funding and therefore use their personal funds for carrying out their organizational work. This organizational work includes attending workshops. The other issue is that of the distance where by one (1) respondent notes that his organization is located outside the city of Harare and therefore has to get two buses to reach the NANGO offices.

Failure to pay membership fees has been highlighted as an issue that has hindered the representatives of member organizations from attending the NANGO activities. One (1) respondent notes that she feels ashamed to meet with the NANGO management because her organization has not paid the membership subscriptions.

Change of focus by NANGO to political issues has been highlighted as a factor that has led to NANGO focusing on organizations that focus on the governance issues which include the political issues in Zimbabwe. Most of the members that were interviewed were formed for the empowerment of women through skills training in areas related to their household roles as women such as food processing, basket weaving, garment making as well as raising awareness on HIV and AIDS issues. These organizations have now started incorporating issues of governance into their work since donors are funding such issues these days, but this is not in line with the mandates of their organizations. As such, they feel that NANGO is focusing on the organizations whose focus is on governance issues who in turn have more funding.

### **6.2 Ways in which the NANGO activities relate to the needs of members in the Women and Gender sector**

NANGO does not offer activities that relate to the needs of the members in the Women and Gender sector. This is due to the following reasons;

The respondents note that NANGO offers them training workshops without inquiring from them regarding their capacity needs. As a result they have been offered training on areas which they do not need training in e.g. Gender Mainstreaming Training.

They also note that at times NANGO does not hire experts to train the members during the training workshop which makes the training less effective. One respondent noted that she was not impressed with the Gender Mainstreaming Training workshop.

The respondents highlight that during the program for the conferences that are organized by NANGO, male presenters dominate the program who do not present on gender issues. The females are given insignificant sections of the program which include making the opening and closing remarks.

One(1) respondent notes that she fails to contribute meaningfully at the discussions at the NANGO workshops and conferences on national processes because NANGO simply invites all members to discuss on issues without finding out if all members are knowledgeable enough concerning the issue under discussion.

### **6.3 How organisational culture of NANGO affects the attendance rates of the members in the Women and Gender sector**

NANGO is considered by some of the respondents to be male dominated and therefore the way the organization at times organizes the conferences limits the attendance of female participants. At times NANGO organizes conferences in the evening, thereby limiting the number of females including those from the Women and Gender sector from attending these events.

The language that NANGO uses is viewed by the respondents as being gender-sensitive. They however allude to the fact that NANGO hires male consultants mostly to facilitate during the conferences. The male consultants tend to use language which is not gender sensitive and also do not create an environment which ensures active participation of both male and female participants.

The respondents note that NANGO does not value members in the same way; instead, it seems as if it is side-lining those member organizations in the Women and Gender sector who are facing difficulties in acquiring funds.

### **6.4 Ways that the differences of the member organisations affect their attendance levels**

The member organizations that constitute the Women and Gender sector are not a homogenous group. Among them are the organizations that have been in existence for more than ten years as well as those that have been recently formed.

The relatively new organizations have not acquired funding for their organizations and in most cases use personal funds for the day to day running of their organizations. This also includes attending workshops. They face transport challenges especially if they attend the workshops of NANGO and are not given transport reimbursements.

One may suggest that the new organizations are more difficult to contact compared to the old organizations because the old organizations operate at permanent buildings which are clearly labeled at the gate and the physical addresses of most of the old organizations can be found in the phone directory of Zimbabwe. This is unlike the new organizations who in most cases are renting temporary offices where in most cases they are unable to put visible information of their organizations. Therefore it is difficult for the NANGO staff to pay them a visit to their offices if they are unable to reach them through telephone or e-mail.

Some of the representatives of the new organizations do not work full time at their organization but are instead employed at other organizations for their sustenance .As such, it also poses a challenge for the NANGO staff to reach them for the training workshops and workshops and conferences that are on offer at NANGO.

The relatively new organizations are more eager to attend NANGO training workshops and conferences due to the fact that they still require a lot of networking so that they can form alliances with like-minded organisations.This is unlike the old organizations who are affiliated to other networks besides NANGO and therefore have a wide range of like-minded organizations to work with.

The organizations are also different in terms of their proximity to NANGO. There are member organizations that are near to NANGO and can walk to the organization if there are any activities being organized by NANGO. Other organizations within the NANGO membership are located outside the city of Harare and therefore face expenses in getting transport to NANGO since they have to board more than one bus.

There are other members who once had an adequate number of staff members but due to funding challenges are operating with few staff members. These organizations had to retrench their staff members due to inability to pay them. The skeleton staff remaining has to do double work. Hence these organizations are not able to attend the NANGO activities.

### **6.5 Ways that the members prioritize the NANGO activities compared to those of other networks**

The respondents note that they are affiliated to other networks besides NANGO. They also note that there has never been a time where they have to choose between the activities of NANGO and those of the other networks since NANGO does not communicate with them effectively, as a result there are limited or no invitations from the organization.

One respondent(1) highlights that her organization would rather attend other activities of the networks besides those of NANGO because NANGO invites them for too many activities which are to be done in one week or 2 weeks. As a result, her organization is not in a position to attend all of the activities. Another respondent (1) notes that her organization would rather attend the activities of the other networks because they are more relevant to her line of work than those of NANGO.

## **6.5 Recommendations**

### **a) Improvement of communication**

NANGO should improve their communication with the members in the Women and Gender sector. This can be done through updating their database, thereby ensuring that they are able to text every member when they have any upcoming activities.

### **b) Hiring of expert trainers for training workshops offered**

NANGO should advertise for a trainer for the different training workshops they offer to members. By advertising, they will receive Curriculum Vitae of the different possible trainers and then select a suitable trainer. This will ensure that they offer effective training workshops to members.

### **c) Sharing of NANGO calendar of events with members**

NANGO should share their calendar of events with the members so that they are aware of all the activities that are taking place at NANGO. This will ensure that they do not hear of these activities through other means e.g. the media

### **d) NANGO should impart gender sensitive values in the way they organize their training workshops and workshops and conferences**

NANGO should at times hire female consultants to do facilitations at conferences regarding the national processes e.g. the national constitution. This will ensure that female members as well as those who constitute the Women and Gender sector also feel included by NANGO.

### **e) Revision of the membership fees by NANGO**

The majority of the members interviewed alluded to the fact that they had not paid membership fees because of challenges in funding. This inability to pay the membership fees has contributed to some of the members failing to attend the NANGO training workshops and workshops and conferences because of shame. Hence NANGO should try and reduce the membership fees so that members including those who constitute the Women and Gender sector are able to pay the fees.

### **f) Reimbursement of transport fares**

There is need for NANGO to reimburse the participants' transport money, especially to the representatives of organizations that are five years old and younger in existence. This ensures that attending the NANGO training workshops will not be an expense for them.

### **g) Carry out similar research for all the other NANGO sectors**

There should be a study undertaken for the other NANGO sectors and compare them with those of the members of the Women and Gender Sector.

#### **h) Sensitize members on issues to be discussed at the workshops and conferences**

There is need for NANGO to prepare the members by explaining to them in detail on the topics that NANGO intends to discuss during the workshops and conferences. This ensures that the members are able to make meaningful contributions during the events.

#### **i) Consultation of members concerning the training workshops required**

NANGO should consult the members concerning the training workshops they require. This ensures that the training workshops are more useful to the members.

#### **j) Visiting of members**

NANGO should make an effort to visit the members at their organizations as a way of showing their value for the members. This ensures that the members feel that they are part of the NANGO membership.

#### **k) Organizing NANGO activities at large venues**

NANGO should always hold their workshops at larger venues so as to ensure that many members are invited to ensure networking especially for the new organisations.

#### **l) Detachment of Northern Region secretariat from the NANGO head office**

The Northern Region secretariat should detach itself from the NANGO head office so that they are able to service their membership more efficiently. This includes being able to pay visits to their members in the region.

#### **j) Gender training for NANGO Management and staff**

There is need for NANGO management to be trained on gender so that they are in a position to cater for the needs of the members of the Women and Gender sector. This may in turn improve the levels of attendance of the members of the sector.

#### **Recommendations for the NANGO Northern Region Members**

- a) The members should make an effort to go to the NANGO offices and demand for the calendar of events for the different NANGO activities.
- b) They should actively contribute at the NANGO conferences so that NANGO can take them seriously and might eventually include them in the conference programs to give presentations.
- c) They should mobilize themselves and insist on a meeting with the CEO so that they get recognition which might improve their communication levels with NANGO.

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## ANNEXES

### Annex 1: Checklist with semi-structured questions

My name is **Rungano Bakasa** and I am a Masters student at Van Hall Larenstein University, Wageningen, Netherlands. I am specializing in Rural Development and Gender. The purpose of the interview guide is to solicit information with regards to the low levels of attendance of the Northern Region members who constitute the Women and Gender sector to the training workshops and workshops and conferences on national processes. NANGO is very concerned about the low representation of the members in the Women and Gender sector and therefore since you are a member of NANGO who constitutes part of the afore mentioned sector, I feel that you are in a position to highlight some of the reasons behind the low attendance of the members of the Women and Gender sector to the training workshops and workshops and conferences on the national processes. Due to ethical reasons, the sensitive material will remain confidential and anonymous in the report unless you would like to be acknowledged in the study. Participation in the interview is voluntary and please note that the questions for which I am going to require information are not exhaustive. Therefore any additional information that you might want to add to this interview will be greatly appreciated as it will add value to the study. I am also keen to hear the recommendations that you feel should be applied by NANGO in order to ensure an increase in your participation as the Women and Gender sector to the training workshops and conferences on the national processes.

**Name of respondent**.....

**Sex**.....

**Date**.....

**Time of interview**.....

**Occupation/Designation**.....

**Organizational Profile**.....

**Number of employees**.....

**Sex of employees**.....

## **Access**

- Which forms of communication does NANGO use to contact you when they are conducting Training Workshops and Workshops and conferences on national processes?
- Are you satisfied with the means of communication that are used by NANGO to invite you to the training workshops and workshops and conferences?
- How do you feel about the frequency of the NANGO invitations to attend the training workshops and workshops and conferences?
- What do you think about the timing of the activities? Is it an obstacle?
- Do you find transport an obstacle when attending the training workshops and workshops and conferences on the national processes?
- Are you the only organisation that faces these kinds of transport challenges?
- In your view, is it possible for breast feeding mothers to be able to attend the NANGO training workshops and workshops and conferences on national processes/Are there facilities for the women to care for their children?
- How do you find the toilet facilities at the venues for the training workshops and workshops and conferences?
- Do you have any recommendations for NANGO in terms of how they organise their training workshops and conferences?
- Do you have any suggestions regarding the venue, time and communication to the workshops and conferences that are organised by NANGO?

## **Relevance**

- Does NANGO inquire from you on the topics you desire to be trained in before organising the training workshops?
- Are the workshops and conferences that are held by NANGO related to areas that you find useful to you as a sector/organisation?
- Is there a representative from the sector who is requested to give a presentation from a gender perspective to the discussions during the workshops and conferences?
- In what ways have the previous trainings you have received from NANGO benefitted you as an organisation in the Women and Gender sector?
- Do you have any recommendations on how NANGO can make the training workshops and workshops and conferences more relevant to you?

## **Prioritization**

- Are you members of other NGO networks in Zimbabwe?
- Do you sometimes choose to attend other training workshops or conferences that are organised by other networks that you are part of instead of attending those of NANGO?
- If so, why would you choose the activities that are organised by other organisations instead of those organised by NANGO?

- Do you make an effort to enquire from NANGO on any training workshops and conferences that are on schedule when there is no invitation from them?
- If not, why do you not enquire from NANGO?
- Do you value the attendance to the workshops that are organised by NANGO?
- Who usually represents your organisation at the NANGO activities?
- Do you request for reports from NANGO if you are unable to attend any workshops and conferences on the national processes?

### **Organizational culture**

- In your view, during the training workshops and conferences, does NANGO ensure that gender issues are highlighted or discussed?
- In your view is there a balance of male and female presenters during the workshops and conferences that are organised by NANGO?
- Who usually facilitates the training at NANGO? Is it a male or female facilitator or both?
- During the workshops and conferences, do the male and female staff members of NANGO play an equally active role?
- How do you view the behaviour of staff members in terms of the language used and jokes during the training workshops and workshops and conferences on the national processes?
- During the workshops and conferences on national processes, does NANGO ever request for a representative from the Women and Gender sector to give presentations from a gender perspective on issues under discussion?
- In your view, do the NANGO staff members show a willingness to know more about gender issues during the training workshops and workshops and conferences on national processes?
- During the workshops and conferences on national processes, do you feel that male and female participants are given equal opportunities to make contributions? If not, why do you think so?
- In your view, does NANGO view all members from all the sectors to be equally important?
- During the training workshops and workshops and conferences, how are the eating arrangements of all the participants organised? Do the male and female participants eat together or they are separated?

## Annex 2: Letter to seek permission to conduct research



Date: July 5 2012

### To whom it may concern

Van Hall Larenstein (VHL) University of Applied Sciences is part of Wageningen University and Research, the Netherlands. VHL conducts two Master degree courses:

- Management of Development with specializations in: Social inclusion, Gender and Rural Livelihoods, HIV/AIDS and Food security;
- Agricultural Production Chain Management with specializations in: horticultural chains, livestock chains and post harvest technology and logistics.

**Ms. Rungano Bakasa** is a student of the 2011-2012 cohort.

All our students conduct a thesis to complete their studies, and most of them go back for field work to their home country to collect data in the months of July and August 2012.

We kindly ask you to facilitate our students in case that is convenient to you.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Robert Baars

## **Annex 3: NANGO Activities from 2010-2012**

### **Training workshops that have been offered by NANGO**

- -Budget Monitoring and Expenditure Tracking Training
- -Article writing and Media Advocacy
- -Policy and Advocacy
- -Corporate governance
- -Proposal Writing
- -Effective Strategic Change Management
- -Capacity building workshop on developing and Using newsletters and social media
- -Social accountability training workshop
- -Gender mainstreaming training workshop

### **Themes for the Directors Summer Schools**

- -Towards Sustainable Partnerships for Development
- -Rethinking Development in an era of uncertainty: New Sustainability strategies and Alliances for increased effectiveness
- -A critical reflection on the status of the Human Rights situation and Constitutional reform in Zimbabwe
- -Government and CSOs: We are together for a very long haul
- -Engaging Zimbabwe's reconstruction process: Emerging roles and responsibilities

### **Themes of the workshops and conferences on national processes**

- -Risk Assessment and Identification of Measures to Improve Personal and Organizational Security for 'Partner Organizations'
- -At the Crossroads: Civil Society after 30 years in Zimbabwe
- -Consultative workshop on Migration and the Diaspora
- -Constitutional amendment meeting
- -Constitution Making Process: Civil Society Leadership meetings
- -National Budget consultative meetings