STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE NETWORK OF AFRICAN NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTIONS (NANHRI)(2026-2030)

FINAL DRAFT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Network of African National Human Rights Institutions (NANHRI) presents its 2026–2030 Strategic Plan as a transformative and policy-driven roadmap aimed at strengthening the capacity, autonomy, and strategic relevance of National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) across Africa. Anchored in the Paris Principles and NANHRI's constitutional mandate, the Plan is guided by the vision of ***"A just and inclusive Africa where human rights are universally upheld''***

At its core, the Strategic Plan is a response to both persistent and emerging human rights challenges, including institutional fragility, political interference, climate change, digital surveillance, and socio-economic inequality. It reflects NANHRI's commitment to fortifying the African human rights system by empowering NHRIs as credible, resilient, and rights-based governance actors.

Structured around four interlinked Strategic Objectives, the Plan aims to:

1. *Establish and Strengthen the Capacity, Independence, and Effectiveness of NHRIs*
2. *Advance Human Rights Protection in Response to Mainstream, Emerging Global, and Regional Challenges*
3. *Advance Research-Driven Advocacy, Cooperation, and Visibility to Strengthen the Legitimacy and Impact of NHRIs in Africa*
4. *Strengthen NANHRI's Governance, Operational Efficiency, and Financial Sustainability*

To achieve these goals, the strategy aligns institutional priorities with technological innovation, data-driven programming, and dynamic partnerships. Implementation will be guided by coherent annual work plans and a robust Results Framework, complemented by real-time monitoring, mid-term reviews, and summative evaluations. These accountability mechanisms ensure that the strategy remains adaptive, impactful, and responsive to the continent's evolving human rights landscape.

Ultimately, the 2026–2030 Strategic Plan reaffirms NANHRI's leadership in advancing justice, accountability, and human dignity. It positions the Network as a pivotal regional actor in building a more equitable, rights-respecting, and inclusive Africa.

FOREWORD

It is with profound pride and a resolute sense of responsibility that I present the Network of African National Human Rights Institutions (NANHRI) Strategic Plan 2026–2030. This Plan embodies our collective vision and shared commitment to a continent where human rights are robustly upheld, protected, and promoted through strong, independent, and effective National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs).

Developed through an inclusive, consultative process, this Strategic Plan reflects the voices of our member institutions, partners, and stakeholders across Africa. Grounded in the lessons of our past and attuned to emerging regional and global human rights realities, the plan offers a forward-looking framework designed to enhance NHRI resilience and impact in a rapidly changing world.

As we navigate complex socio-political, environmental, and technological shifts, NHRIs are called upon more than ever to lead with courage, innovation, and solidarity. From defending digital rights and advancing environmental justice to confronting inequality, displacement, and conflict, the challenges are significant; and so too is our collective potential.

As Chairperson of NANHRI, I reaffirm our unwavering commitment, alongside the Steering Committee, to provide visionary leadership, strategic oversight, and steadfast support to the Secretariat in delivering on the ambitious objectives outlined in this Plan. We pledge to mobilize resources, strengthen partnerships, and safeguard NANHRI's role as a dynamic, accountable, and influential continental network.

I call on every NHRI across Africa to embrace this Strategic Plan as a shared agenda and collective responsibility. Together, let us deepen collaboration, foster knowledge exchange, and uphold the highest standards of accountability. United in purpose, we will strengthen the protection of human rights, enhance institutional effectiveness, and build a just, dignified, and equitable future for all Africans.

This Plan is our collective commitment for the next five years; its success will be measured by our unity, dedication, and resolute action.

.....

Chairperson,

Network of African National Human Rights Institutions (NANHRI)

PREAMBLE

It is with immense pride and optimism that I present the Network of African National Human Rights Institutions (NANHRI) Strategic Plan 2026–2030. This Plan represents a pivotal milestone in our collective commitment to advancing human rights across Africa through the empowerment and strengthened performance of our National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs).

The development of this Strategic Plan has been a comprehensive, inclusive, and collaborative endeavour. Over recent months, we engaged extensively with our member institutions, regional and international partners, and leading experts in human rights and governance. Through robust consultations, critical discussions, and expert guidance, including invaluable input from our consultant, we have crafted a strategy that is both visionary and practical.

The NANHRI Strategic Plan 2026–2030 prioritises strengthening the capacity, independence, and effectiveness of our member NHRIs; advancing human rights protection in response to mainstream HR and emerging and complex challenges; fostering evidence-based advocacy; amplifying public awareness; and ensuring operational excellence and sustainability. With a focused and structured approach, we will address critical issues such as climate justice, digital rights, social and economic inequality, the protection of vulnerable populations, and **Business and Human Rights**, which will also be one of our key priority areas.

This Plan is far more than a document; it is a clarion call to action. It demands renewed collective commitment from all NHRIs to take ownership of this agenda, deepen collaboration, and drive the successful implementation of its objectives. Our progress and impact will depend on the unity, determination, and shared resolve with which we work towards a common purpose.

As we embark on this ambitious path, NANHRI reaffirms its commitment to mobilizing the necessary resources to realize this Plan's vision. The Secretariat pledges to leverage all available avenues: regional and international partnerships, donor engagement, and innovative funding mechanisms, to secure the financial and technical support critical to achieving our goals. While challenges lie ahead, we are confident that with sustained effort and strategic alliances, we will overcome them and deliver meaningful results.

Moreover, we recognize that NANHRI's strength is rooted in the capacity of its Secretariat and the members of NANHRI. In the coming years, we will prioritize building a resilient and agile Secretariat equipped with enhanced systems, skilled personnel, and effective tools to support and coordinate the implementation of this Plan efficiently.

I express my profound appreciation to the consultants, the Steering Committee, our partners, and all stakeholders who shaped this Strategic Plan. Let us embrace this roadmap with passion, dedication, and unwavering commitment to secure a future where human rights are a lived reality for every African.

Together, we will realise a continent defined by justice, dignity, and equality.

Thank you.

.....
Executive Director, Secretariat
Network of African National Human Rights Institutions (NANHRI)

LIST OF ACRONYMS

AARs	After-Action Reviews
ACDEG	African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance
ACHPR	African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights
AfCFTA	African Free Continental Free Trade Area
AI	Artificial Intelligence
APF	Asia Pacific Forum
AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission
BHR	Business and Human Rights
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CSFs	Critical Success Factors
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
ECOSOC	Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights
ENNHRI	European Network of National Human Rights Institutions
ESCER	Economic, Social, Cultural, and Environmental Rights
GANHRI	Global Alliance for National Human Rights Institutions
HRDs	Human Rights Defenders
HRs	Human Rights
ICT	Information Communication Technology
IDPs	Institutional Development Plans
ITU	International Telecommunications Union
KPIs	Key Performance Indicators
LGBTQ	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning
MTR	Mid-Term Review
NANHRI	Network for African National Human Rights Institutions

NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
NHRIs	National Human Rights Institutions
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
PAP	Pan-African Parliament
PEST	Political, Economic, Social and Technological
PESTEL	Political, Economic, Social, Technical, Environmental and Legal
RECs	Regional Economic Communities
RINDHCA	International Network for Human Rights of the Americas
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SOGIE	Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, and Expression
SP	Strategic Plan
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats
TOC	Theory of Change
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UNCHR	United Nations Commission for Human Rights
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UPR	United Nations Universal Periodic Review.
VNRs	Voluntary National Reviews

CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

1.1. INTRODUCTION.

The 2026–2030 Strategic Plan sets a visionary framework for the Network of African National Human Rights Institutions (NANHRI) to proactively address Africa's evolving human rights challenges. Grounded in justice, inclusivity, and accountability, it prioritizes strengthening the capacity, independence, and sustainability of National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs), while leveraging transformative advocacy and digital innovation to safeguard rights in the digital era. With a resilient Secretariat, strategic partnerships, and data-driven interventions, NANHRI aims for a continent where human rights are universally upheld by 2030.

Founded in 2007 and headquartered in Nairobi, NANHRI unites 46 NHRIs across Africa's five sub-regions and linguistic groups, serving as the continent's representative within the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI). Its recently established liaison office in Addis Ababa enhances collaboration with the African Union and key regional bodies, reinforcing NANHRI's influence in shaping Africa's human rights agenda. NANHRI's governance structure includes the General Assembly, Steering Committee, and Secretariat, supported by thematic working groups focused on priority human rights issues.

Since its inception, NANHRI has progressed through critical development phases, building foundational structures, expanding regional and international partnerships, and advancing member capacity through results-oriented programming. It has adapted to emerging contexts, notably integrating digital tools and championing rights related to development, climate justice, and digital freedoms. Today, NANHRI is a vital platform for policy dialogue, technical assistance, and coordinated advocacy, strengthening member unity and amplifying African voices in continental and global human rights mechanisms.

Building on this strong foundation, the 2026–2030 Strategic Plan seeks to cement NANHRI's leadership in rights-based governance, bolster NHRI resilience and accountability, and elevate the Network as a central driver of justice, dignity, and inclusive development across Africa; embodying a shared vision for a rights-respecting continent.

1.2. MANDATE OF NANHRI

NANHRI's mandate, as set out in its Constitution, encompasses both general and specific objectives. Article 2 outlines broad goals such as encouraging the establishment of NHRIs in line with the Paris Principles and promoting cooperation among NHRIs and with governmental and intergovernmental institutions. Article 3 expands on this by detailing specific actions, including fostering information exchange, strengthening institutional capacity, boosting NHRI visibility and credibility, and advocating for human rights issues at regional and global levels. These objectives underpin NANHRI's strategic efforts to build a strong, unified network of NHRIs capable of addressing both persistent and emerging human rights challenges.

The 2026–2030 Strategic Plan provides a clear roadmap for NANHRI's future impact. It aims to enhance the resilience of NHRIs, mainstream human rights into governance and development, and promote rights-based approaches across the continent. The Plan emphasizes strengthened advocacy, strategic partnerships, and innovation as central pillars of NANHRI's work. Through this strategy, NANHRI reaffirms its commitment to advancing human rights, justice, and dignity for all people in Africa.

1.3. PROCESS OF DEVELOPING THE STRATEGIC PLAN

The development of NANHRI's 2026–2030 Strategic Plan was a consultative and evidence-based process aimed at addressing the evolving needs of African NHRIs while aligning with global and continental human rights priorities. It reinforced NANHRI's mandate and long-term vision through structured phases.

The process began with an inception meeting to clarify objectives and methodology, followed by a detailed evaluation of the 2021–2025 plan to assess achievements and gaps. A review of the evolving human rights landscape at global, continental, and individual NHRIs was then undertaken. This was followed by a situational analysis conducted using SWOT and PESTEL tools to ground the strategy in current realities and emerging challenges. Further stakeholder consultations, including regional, national, and partner inputs, ensured that inclusive and diverse perspectives shaped the plan.

Based on these insights, the draft strategy was formulated with defined pillars and a Theory of Change, incorporating priorities such as gender equality, youth empowerment, climate justice, and digital rights. The draft was presented to the staff in validation workshops, and inputs from this engagement were incorporated. A revised strategic plan was then presented to the Steering Committee for further validation and endorsement before it could be presented to the General Assembly. This iterative review process secured stakeholder endorsement. To support the implementation, additional operational tools, including a MEAL framework, resource mobilization strategy, risk management strategy, and communication and stakeholder strategy, were further developed.

1.4. PHILOSOPHY OF THE NANHRI STRATEGIC PLAN

The Strategic Plan of NANHRI for 2026–2030 is rooted in a transformative vision that positions human rights at the heart of Africa's development and governance. It affirms that strong, independent, and capable National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) are essential to democratic consolidation, social justice, and inclusive progress. Anchored in a human rights-based philosophy, the plan underscores the inherent dignity, equality, and freedoms of all individuals, reaffirming NANHRI's commitment to institutional empowerment and continental solidarity.

In light of the complex challenges confronting the continent, such as climate change, migration, digital disruption, inequality, conflict, and shrinking civic space, the strategy calls for bold innovation and strategic agility. It reimagines NHRIs not only as state watchdogs but as proactive

agents of civic empowerment, accountability, and transformation. Emphasizing a Pan-Africanist ethos, the plan promotes cooperation, mutual learning, and cross-border solidarity to overcome structural barriers and strengthen the collective capacity of NHRIs.

The plan is aligned with the African Union's Agenda 2063, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and other international human rights instruments. The Plan underscores the importance of the GANHRI framework and reinforces the link between human rights and sustainable development. NANHRI in this plan envisions a people-centered future that leaves no one behind. Ultimately, this strategy reflects NANHRI's belief in the power of rights-based leadership to deepen impact, uphold democratic values, and build resilient and just societies through empowered NHRIs.

1.5. STRUCTURE OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

This Strategic Plan is organized into ten interconnected sections that collectively outline NANHRI's vision, priorities, and implementation roadmap:

1. **Preliminary Issues.** This section includes the *Executive Summary*, which provides a concise overview of NANHRI's mission, strategic intent, priority areas, and the approach to implementation and monitoring. It also features a *Foreword* by the Chairperson of NANHRI and a *Preamble* by the Executive Director, offering high-level reflections and reaffirming institutional commitment to the strategic direction.
2. **Introduction and Context.** Offers background information on NANHRI, the rationale for developing a new strategy, its alignment with global and continental human rights frameworks, and the process that informed its development, as well as the philosophy guiding the plan.
3. **Performance Evaluation.** Reviews the achievements, challenges, and key lessons from the previous strategic planning period, providing a foundation for improved planning and delivery in the 2026–2030 cycle. It draws some important lessons and best practices for the new plan.
4. **Context Analysis.** Explores global, continental, and NHRI-specific dynamics influencing human rights work, including shifts in geopolitics, evolving norms, technological advancements, and regional governance developments.
5. **Situational Analysis.** Presents a comprehensive assessment using SWOT and PESTLE frameworks to identify internal capabilities, external opportunities, threats, and engagement strategies.
6. **Strategic Framework.** Defines NANHRI's vision, mission, and core values, followed by the strategic objectives aimed at enhancing NHRI capacity, promoting policy advocacy, driving research and innovation, securing sustainable resources, and strengthening organizational governance.
7. **Implementation Framework.** Outlines the phased implementation plan, institutional coordination mechanisms, and approaches to resource mobilization necessary for delivering on the strategic objectives.

8. **Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning (MEAL).** Establishes key performance indicators, data systems, and feedback mechanisms to enable real-time tracking, adaptive learning, and results-based management.
9. **Risk Management.** Identifies potential strategic and operational risks, along with proposed mitigation strategies to ensure resilience and continuity.
10. **Annexes.** Includes essential supporting documents such as the Resource Mobilization Strategy, Risk Management Strategy, Communication Strategy, and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy.

CHAPTER 2: PERFORMANCE EVALUATION OF SP-2021-2025

2.1 SYNTHESIS OF PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

SO1: **Enhance the capacity of NHRIs in Africa to deliver on their mandate**

During the 2021–2025 strategic period, NANHRI made measurable progress in increasing the number of Paris Principles-compliant National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) with A-status accreditation and expanding NHRI coverage across Africa. By 2023, A-status compliance reached approximately 53%, while NHRI coverage stood at an impressive 91%. However, these gains were tempered by some downgrades and deferrals affecting some NHRIs. This also underscores the fragility of progress and the urgent need for sustained support to maintain and enhance compliance.

NANHRI, as the regional coordinating body, has a pivotal role in ensuring that progress made is not reversed. It provides the overarching framework for monitoring compliance, promoting solidarity among NHRIs, and ensuring alignment with the Paris Principles. Through technical assistance, training, and peer-learning opportunities, NANHRI can build institutional capacity and address gaps that often lead to downgrades. Equally important, NANHRI serves as a critical advocacy platform, engaging the African Union, regional economic communities, and international partners to secure political goodwill and mobilize the resources necessary to strengthen national institutions. Without NANHRI's continued guidance and regional oversight, isolated NHRIs risk falling behind, and the continental goal of full compliance may remain elusive.

At the same time, NHRIs themselves carry the primary responsibility for sustaining accreditation and compliance. Each NHRI operates within its national legal and political environment, making it essential for them to pursue context-specific reforms that safeguard their independence, strengthen their legal frameworks, and secure sustainable funding. NHRIs must take ownership of regular self-assessments, generate credible data for accreditation reviews, and demonstrate proactive leadership in maintaining their integrity and effectiveness. By engaging with governments, parliaments, and civil society, NHRIs also help to consolidate their legitimacy, expand their mandate, and ensure the protection of their operational autonomy.

Ultimately, progress towards universal A-status compliance requires a dual approach where NANHRI provides regional coordination, oversight, and advocacy, while NHRIs undertake reforms and sustain compliance at the national level. The gains made so far show that the path is

achievable, but the risks of regression underscore the need for continuous collaboration. Only through this shared responsibility can Africa strengthen its human rights architecture, ensure the resilience of its NHRIs, and move closer to achieving full Paris Principles compliance.

While SP1.1 (A-status compliance) demonstrates very high performance, SP1.2—which evaluates financial obligations, strategic planning, and institutional independence—reveals significant challenges.

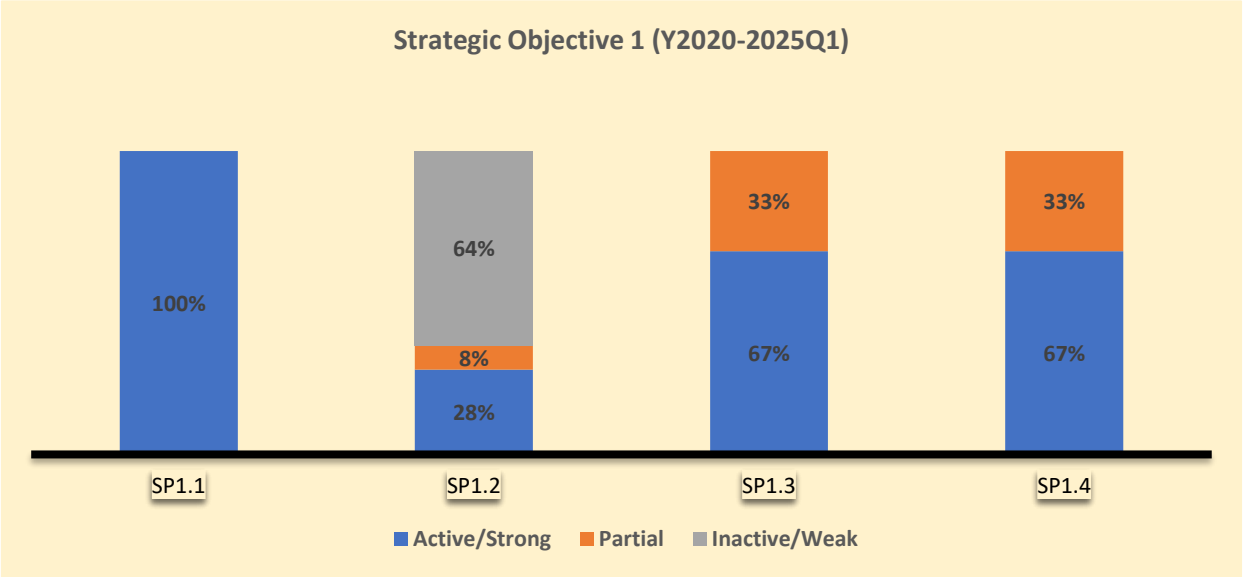


Figure 1 : Enhance the Capacity of NHRIs to Deliver on Their Mandate

Source: Performance evaluation Report of the 2021-2025 strategic plan

NANHRI's engagement with emerging human rights themes expanded notably during this period. The network achieved an indicator success rate of over 80% in areas related to Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, Expression, and Sex Characteristics (SOGIESc), reflecting a strong focus on these critical issues. Conversely, less progress was made regarding digital rights, which received comparatively limited attention, indicating a gap in addressing evolving rights concerns in the digital sphere.

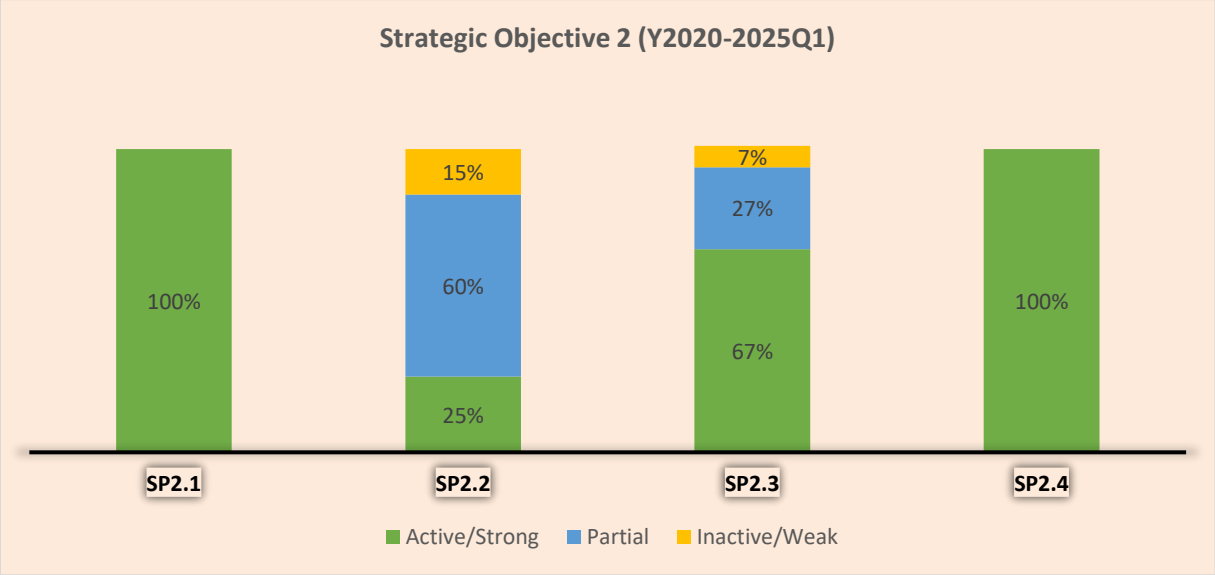
Strategic partnerships with the African Union Commission and the Pan-African Parliament have also reinforced NANHRI's alignment with continental and global frameworks such as Agenda 2063 and Sustainable Development Goal 16 (SDG 16). These collaborations have strengthened the network's institutional positioning and advocacy. Nonetheless, persistent challenges remain regarding NHRIs' financial contributions, strategic plan alignment with other emerging trends, and policy coherence, with performance levels ranging between 20% and 40%. These institutional gaps directly impact the sustainability of A-status compliance and point to an urgent

need for increased investments in technical support, capacity building, and mechanisms that foster financial independence for NHRIs.

S02: Enhance the promotion, protection, and fulfilment of human rights in Africa

From the performance analysis, NANHRI has played a pivotal role in enhancing the capacity and influence of its members within regional and global human rights arenas. Over 50% of NHRIs actively participated in international human rights platforms, while approximately 60% demonstrated strengthened influence in national governance and development planning by effectively applying human rights frameworks. While many still grapple with financing and political influence challenges, the efforts made by NANHRI during the assessment period commendably made a capacity improvement effort. Moreover, 70% of members successfully integrated SDG and Agenda 2063 indicators into their operations, notably through engagement in Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs). These achievements highlight NANHRI's critical function as a facilitator of capacity building and policy advocacy.

Figure 2: Enhance the Promotion, Protection and Fulfilment of Human Rights in Africa



Source: Performance evaluation Report of the 2021-2025 strategic plan

Performance data reflect strong outcomes in international engagement, particularly in ECOSOC rights (SP2.1) and SDG participation (SP2.4). However, progress is uneven, with democracy and rule of law efforts (SP2.2) lagging due to ongoing challenges in treaty ratification and policy influence. While structured human rights interactions (SP2.3) are progressing, gaps remain in referral systems and collaboration with NGOs. Overall, NANHRI excels on global platforms but must bolster regional advocacy and legal reform initiatives to maximize impact.

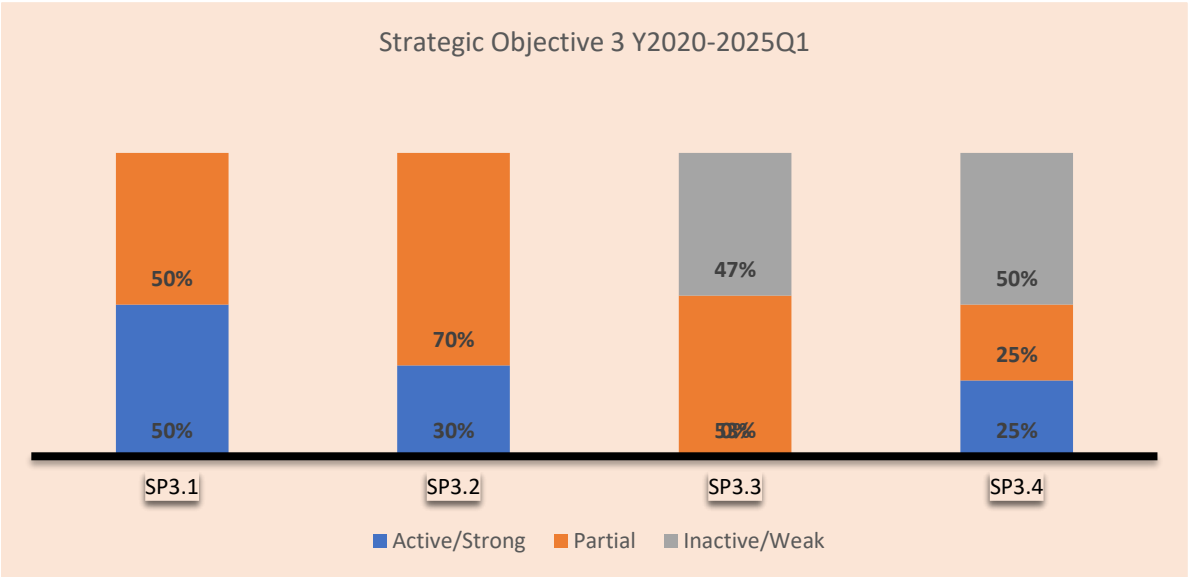
Impact was limited by underperformance in following up on treaty ratification and legal policy implementation, with only 30–40% of NHRIs effectively engaged in this activity. Additionally, structured engagement with African human rights mechanisms remained low, with just 35% of members making referrals or submissions. These gaps reflect critical shortages in both skills and resources, calling for stronger technical cooperation, dedicated capacity-building interventions, and focused resource mobilisation efforts. Enhanced support is needed to deepen national-level implementation, monitoring, and engagement with policy reform processes.

The weaknesses pointed out above underscore systemic challenges in technical capacity, resource availability, and institutional readiness, which constrain the ability of NHRIs to discharge their mandates fully. For NANHRI, this signals the need for a strengthened approach in the next strategic plan —one that prioritizes sustained technical cooperation, targeted capacity-building interventions, and robust resource mobilization frameworks. NANHRI will not only need to safeguard the gains already made in accreditation and coverage but also deepen the impact of NHRIs in national-level implementation, monitoring, and engagement with policy and legal reform processes. This will position NANHRI as a more effective convener and enabler of human rights promotion and protection across Africa.

S03: Strengthen Institutional Development and Sustainability

Strategic Priority 3.1, which focuses on strengthening international partnerships, shows moderate success, indicating that NANHRI has maintained a reasonable level of collaboration and external engagement. However, Strategic Priority 3.2 reveals a significant weakness in programmatic reporting and the implementation of a robust Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning (MEAL) framework, highlighting major gaps in results-based management that could affect the organization's ability to measure and communicate impact.

Figure 3: Enhance Organizational Development and Institutional Sustainability



Source: Performance evaluation Report of the 2021-2025 strategic plan

Financial sustainability under SP3.3 remains a critical area of concern, showing limited progress in mobilizing the required diverse revenue streams needed for funding operational overheads. In contrast, SP3.4, which concerns staff and member engagement, demonstrates a relatively better performance, with early signs of positive momentum. These findings suggest that while NANHRI has made foundational efforts in some areas, it urgently needs to prioritize institutional reforms, strengthen internal systems, and implement diversified and sustainable financing strategies to ensure long-term organizational resilience.

Under this objective, NANHRI positioned itself as a continental knowledge and learning hub. The successful convening of the 7th NHRI Forum in Gambia and the launch of Africa's first continental report on transgender and intersex rights were major milestones. The organisation also reported over 75% success in capacity-building efforts related to Business and Human Rights (BHR), support to Human Rights Defenders (HRDs), and collaborations with NHRIs like the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission.

Despite these achievements, NANHRI continued to face significant institutional challenges. While NANHRI demonstrated strong fundraising capacity in 2023 and 2024, with income exceeding targets and reflecting donor confidence, 2025 saw a sharp decline in donor funding; only 50% of the budget performance target was met. These highlighted vulnerabilities are tied to high dependency on short-term, project-based funding and the volatile funding landscape.

Cross-Cutting Achievements and Digital Engagement

In 2024, NANHRI recorded a remarkable revival in its digital presence, shifting from complete inactivity in the first half of the year to attracting 29,079 unique visitors and 47,551 visits in the second half, with November peaking at 362,954 hits and 17.38 GB of bandwidth use; evidence of growing interest in media-rich content and the success of its digital relaunch strategy. Country-level data highlighted strong global reach, led by the United States, Kenya, Mauritius, South Africa, and Indonesia, affirming NANHRI's rising relevance while pointing to opportunities for targeted localisation and content strategies. Despite anomalies such as potential automated traffic from Russia, overall engagement was meaningful, as shown by a high pages-per-visit ratio. The momentum carried into early 2025, with the first quarter generating 22,096 visits, 36,490 page views, 248,207 hits, and 58.88 GB of bandwidth, confirming sustained stakeholder interest and NANHRI's growing ability to leverage digital platforms for continuous outreach and engagement.

2.2. CONTEXT ANALYSIS

2.2.1 GLOBAL CONTEXT

The global human rights landscape is marked by significant changes that offer challenges and opportunities for human rights work. While international frameworks such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and the efforts of GANHRI and its regional partners,

including NANHRI, have enhanced awareness and mobilization, the gap between human rights commitments and their actual enforcement continues to widen. Rising authoritarianism, digital repression, climate injustice, and armed conflict in several countries underscore the urgent need for stronger multilateral coordination, robust national institutions, and inclusive, rights-based governance to realize the promise of universal human rights in the 21st century.

Civic space is shrinking globally, and it is most acute in Africa. According to the CIVICUS Monitor (2023), just 3% of the global population lives in countries with a fully "open" civic space.[1] In over 100 nations, freedoms of expression, assembly, and association are being systematically curtailed through repressive laws, arbitrary arrests, censorship, and intimidation. In Africa, the situation is particularly alarming, with growing trends of criminalizing the work of human rights defenders, journalists, and civil society actors. Many are subjected to judicial harassment, physical violence, and state-sponsored intimidation for holding authorities accountable. Populist nationalism, sophisticated disinformation, and state surveillance continue to erode democratic institutions, transparency, and accountability. This hostile environment undermines not only individual freedoms but also the collective capacity of civil society to protect and advance human rights across the continent.

The global landscape is also being reshaped by the rapid evolution of digital technologies[2], ushering in an era of unprecedented digital interconnectivity. This connectivity has fuelled global grassroots movements and pro-democracy protests, amplifying the voices of historically marginalized groups. The same digital tools have also introduced complex threats to human rights, including mass surveillance, cyber harassment, misinformation, and censorship. Over 70 countries have enacted restrictive digital laws or orchestrated internet shutdowns to suppress dissent and opposition. The unregulated spread of artificial intelligence, biometric surveillance, and predictive policing now outpaces global human rights standards, threatening privacy, freedom of expression, and equality before the law. This increases the work of many NHRIs, although many are struggling to respond to these shifts.

Geopolitical instability and armed conflict have driven unprecedented levels of forced displacement. By mid-2024, UNHCR reported a record 122.6 million people forcibly displaced globally.[3] Ongoing crises in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Ukraine, Sudan, Myanmar, and the Middle East continue to devastate civilian populations. Sudan alone accounts for 10.5 million internally displaced persons, the largest internal displacement crisis on record. More than half of the world's refugees come from just three countries: Syria, Ukraine, and Afghanistan, highlighting the global community's failure to resolve protracted conflicts or safeguard the rights of affected populations.

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[1] *CIVICUS. (2023). People Power Under Attack 2023 (CIVICUS Monitor report). Johannesburg: CIVICUS.*

[2] *International Telecommunication Union. (2024). Facts and Figures 2024: Internet use continues to grow, but universality remains elusive. According to this report, "In 2024 fully 5.5 billion people were online. That represents 68 per cent of the world population"*

[3] *United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2024, October).* 2024 Mid-Year Trends: Forced displacement increases, reaching 122.6 million by mid-2024*. UNHCR.*

Climate change further compounds the human rights challenges. In 2023, 26.4 million people were displaced due to climate-related disasters, including floods, droughts, wildfires, and cyclones (IDMC, 2024).[4] Communities in the Global South, particularly women, indigenous groups, and marginalized ethnic populations, bear the brunt of these crises. While the recognition of climate justice as a human right is growing, global responses remain fragmented, underfunded, and inequitable. NHRIs, with support from GANHRI and regional networks such as NANHRI, are integrating environmental rights into their work, championing inclusive policies, adaptation strategies, and protections for environmental defenders.

The Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI) plays a central role in uniting and supporting over 120 accredited NHRIs globally, serving as a bridge between national mechanisms and international human rights bodies. Working through its four regional networks, NANHRI (Africa), APF (Asia Pacific), ENNHRI (Europe), and RINDHCA (Americas), GANHRI promotes collaboration, capacity-building, and policy coherence on emerging human rights issues, including digital rights, artificial intelligence, climate change, and migration. Within this framework, reporting requirements ensure accountability and coherence. Individual NHRIs report to their regional networks (NANHRI in Africa) on their compliance with the Paris Principles, institutional developments, and human rights progress. Regional networks, in turn, consolidate and transmit reports to GANHRI, highlighting achievements, challenges, and collective trends. GANHRI reviews these reports, oversees the Sub-Committee on Accreditation (SCA), and submits consolidated findings to the UN Human Rights Council and other international bodies, ensuring that national and regional perspectives inform global human rights governance.

NANHRI can increasingly play a role in peer reviewing other regional human rights institutions by building on Africa's strong tradition of peer review, such as the African Peer Review Mechanism, and adapting these practices to the human rights field. Through cross-regional review teams, NANHRI experts could participate in joint assessment missions with ENNHRI, APF, and RINDHCA, enriching review processes with comparative perspectives and fostering solidarity across continents. By contributing to the development of common benchmarking tools for assessing NHRI independence and effectiveness, NANHRI can help standardize peer review practices globally while showcasing African innovations in capacity building and accountability. Furthermore, NANHRI can champion mutual accountability platforms where regional networks present and critique each other's consolidated reports, enhancing transparency and inter-regional learning. On emerging global issues such as climate justice, digital rights, and migration, NANHRI is well-positioned to pilot new peer review methodologies, thereby reinforcing its leadership and ensuring that African perspectives meaningfully shape global human rights governance under GANHRI's coordination.

2.2.2 AFRICAN HUMAN RIGHTS CONTEXT

Africa reflects many of the global human rights challenges, yet its context is uniquely shaped by its history, politics, and socio-economic conditions. As of 2023, over 25 African countries were

[4] *Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre's (IDMC) 2024 Global Report on Internal Displacement (GRID)*

facing armed conflict, political instability, and social unrest. Major crises, such as Sudan's civil war, Ethiopia's Tigray conflict, insurgencies in the Sahel (Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger), and violence in the DRC, have resulted in mass casualties, rights violations, and displacement. Sudan has 10.5 million internally displaced persons (IDPs), and the DRC hosts 7.1 million (UNHCR, 2024).[5] Concern for human rights protection of these refugees is on the increase.

Aspiration 3 of the African Union's Agenda 2063 underscores the continent's ambition to uphold human rights, democracy, justice, and the rule of law. While some progress has been made, critical gaps persist in institutional performance and democratic accountability. In 2023, only 31% of Africans believed effective oversight mechanisms were in place; up from 19% in 2013, but still well below the 70% target. Weak citizen oversight, political interference, and compromised judicial independence continue to hinder accountability. However, progress in Botswana, Zimbabwe, and Mauritius shows that deliberate institutional reform and political will can improve governance outcomes.

The African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (ACDEG) is gaining traction. As of 2023, 84% of AU Member States had signed, 62% ratified, and 62% domesticated the Charter. While full adherence targets were not met, some countries, such as Kenya, Rwanda, and Togo, have integrated the Charter into their domestic law, leading to institutional reforms and improved governance. Perceptions of electoral integrity have shown modest improvement. Belief in free and fair elections rose from 22% in 2013 to 33% in 2023. However, electoral malpractice, political violence, and limited access to voting remain widespread. Namibia, Zambia, and South Africa serve as positive examples of institutional resilience and credible electoral processes.

Media freedom, key to transparency and participatory governance, has shown improvement. Public perception of media freedom rose from 8% in 2013 to 34% in 2023. Countries like Senegal (90%), Kenya (80%), Ghana (72%), and Uganda (70%) demonstrate that a vibrant media can exist even in complex political environments. Yet, censorship, intimidation of journalists, and restricted access to information persist in many states. Structural discrimination, inequality, and marginalization continue to undermine human rights. Gender-based violence affects over 30% of African women. Despite some legal reforms, patriarchal norms, political exclusion, and economic disparities persist. LGBTQ+ communities face hostility, with 32 countries criminalizing same-sex relationships. Protections for persons with disabilities, ethnic minorities, and indigenous groups remain inadequate.[6]

Human rights defenders (HRDs) operate in increasingly dangerous environments. Arbitrary arrests, enforced disappearances, and harassment are common. In Uganda, 65% of HRDs lack emergency protection, and over 260 attacks on women HRDs were recorded between 2020 and 2024. Environmental activists, including those protesting projects like Uganda's East African

[5] Ibid

[6] *UNICEF. (2021). Measuring violence against women: Statistical trends and indicators. United Nations Children's Fund.*

Crude Oil Pipeline, face heightened risks. Despite these threats, some initiatives offer hope. Uganda's National Coalition of Human Rights Defenders launched a digital platform in 2024 to report abuses and coordinate emergency responses. However, coordination issues and donor dependence continue to hinder the effectiveness of such efforts. Global partners, including Front Line Defenders, have called for stronger protection measures and investment in the continent's human rights infrastructure.

The African Charter on the Rights of the Youth remains a critical tool for advancing youth rights and inclusion. It outlines legal and policy frameworks to address challenges in employment, education, health, peacebuilding, and the inclusion of marginalized youth, including those with disabilities or in the diaspora. Implementation rates rose from 65% in 2013 to 73% in 2023, but challenges remain. Countries like Botswana have pioneered youth-targeted policies, such as economic opportunities and procurement preferences, that show the potential of focused investment. However, chronic underfunding of youth programs remains a major barrier, driving youth disenfranchisement and emigration.

The African Child remains central to the continent's human rights agenda, with instruments such as the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC) and the oversight mandate of the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC) providing the legal and institutional framework for advancing child protection and development. Despite these efforts, millions of African children still face child labor, early marriage, trafficking, recruitment into armed groups, and denial of access to education and healthcare. Weak enforcement, limited resources, and fragmented coordination continue to undermine progress. In this context, NANHRI has a unique responsibility to strengthen oversight of these child-focused institutions, enhance NHRI capacity to monitor and report on violations affecting children, and promote accountability for state parties' obligations under the ACRWC and related instruments. By mainstreaming child rights across NHRI interventions, NANHRI can reinforce the protection of the African Child as a cornerstone of Africa's broader human rights and development agenda.

The African context of LGBTQ+ rights is complex, shaped by cultural traditions, religious beliefs, colonial legal legacies, and shifting political dynamics. While 32 countries still criminalize same-sex, such as Uganda, Nigeria, and Tanzania, where laws frame LGBTQ+ identities as threats to national morality, others, including South Africa, Mozambique, Angola, Botswana, and Cape Verde, have decriminalized them, with South Africa providing constitutional protections and legal recognition of same-sex marriage. Even in progressive states, however, stigma and violence remain pervasive. For NANHRI, this uneven legal and political landscape creates a shifting operating environment: in restrictive states, its efforts are constrained by political resistance and risks to defenders, while in more progressive contexts, it can promote peer learning, highlight best practices, and advance incremental reforms. Navigating these differences requires NANHRI to balance universal human rights advocacy with sensitivity to national contexts, fostering dialogue and alignment with regional and international standards.

2.2.3 SITUATION ANALYSIS OF NHRIs

Across Africa, the 46 National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) that are members of NANHRI play a crucial role in promoting and protecting human rights. They, however, have diversity and various operational and strategic challenges. While about 70% are established by parliamentary acts, several, including those in South Africa, Kenya, Ghana, and Malawi, derive authority directly from constitutional provisions, granting them greater autonomy. Some NHRIs still operate under weaker legal frameworks or executive decrees, making them vulnerable to political influence. As of 2024, only 27 had achieved the highest "A" status accreditation from GANHRI, indicating full compliance with the Paris Principles, while many others remained at lower accreditation levels due to challenges in independence, mandate, or effectiveness.

Funding remains a significant challenge for most NHRIs, with fewer than 30% receiving reliable government financing and many relying heavily on external donors such as UNDP and the EU. This financial dependence undermines their autonomy. Discretionary state funding is often influenced by political considerations. Governance practices vary among the NHRIs, with many facing politicized appointments, staff shortages, high turnover, and limited training opportunities. Although gender inclusion has improved somewhat, leadership across many NHRIs remains predominantly male. Additionally, enforcement powers are generally limited, with most institutions able only to investigate and advise, relying heavily on cooperation from law enforcement and judicial bodies, which is often inconsistent.

All 46 African NHRIs are affiliated with NANHRI, but only about 25 to 30 actively participate in its capacity-building, peer review, and advocacy initiatives. Disparities in institutional maturity mean that weaker NHRIs often remain less engaged. Despite ongoing political interference, underfunding, and limited enforcement authority, some NHRIs are broadening their mandates to address emerging issues such as digital rights and climate justice. Advancing the effectiveness and independence of NHRIs across Africa requires strengthened regional cooperation, greater transparency, and deeper partnerships with civil society and international mechanisms.

CHAPTER 3. SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

3.1. SWOT ANALYSIS

The analysis highlights NANHRI's core strengths that position it as a key actor in promoting human rights across Africa, while identifying internal challenges that may hinder its performance. It also explores emerging opportunities that can be leveraged to enhance its impact, alongside external threats that could affect its operational effectiveness.

Strengths

1. **Institutional Recognition**: Recognized by GANHRI with strong continental legitimacy.
2. **Strategic Partnerships**: Collaborates effectively with AU, UN bodies, and key donors.

3. **NHRI Support Expertise**: Proven capacity to support in accreditation and thematic expansion (e.g., climate justice, digital rights).
4. **Skilled Human Resources**: Competent leadership and functional teams.
5. **Thought Leadership**: Influential in policy discourse and AU reforms.
6. **Growing Visibility**: Strong brand and relevance in emerging human rights issues.

Weaknesses

1. **Limited Capacity**: Understaffed, with missing core functions (e.g., M&E, HR).
2. **Governance Gaps**: Weak oversight and unclear governance roles of WGs.
3. **Unstable Funding**: Over-reliance on a few donors; fragmented fundraising.
4. **Planning and Evaluation Deficits**: Weak strategy execution and lack of M&E tools.
5. **Digital Weakness**: Limited online presence and multilingual communication.
6. **Coordination Issues**: Ineffective working groups and low member engagement.

Opportunities

1. **Emerging Themes**: Lead in climate justice, AI, trade (AfCFTA), and civic space.
2. **New Funding Avenues**: Tap into philanthropy, the private sector, and joint fundraising.
3. **Digital & Youth Engagement**: Leverage digital trends and youth for advocacy.
4. **Policy Influence**: Strengthen AU, PAP, and South-South collaborations.
5. **Knowledge Tools**: Create toolkits, model laws, and digital platforms.

Threats

1. **Political Risks**: Civic space repression and NHRI independence under threat.
2. **Funding Volatility**: Donor fatigue and shifting geopolitical priorities.
3. **Cyber Threats**: Disinformation and weak digital capacities.
4. **Relevance Risk**: Donors may sideline NANHRI for direct NHRI support.
5. **Member NHRI Weaknesses**: Political interference, legal gaps, and unstable leadership.

The SWOT analysis directly informs NANHRI's organizational effectiveness through the following 7-S elements:

1. **Strategy**- NANHRI must reposition itself to address emerging human rights priorities, including climate justice, digital rights, civic space, and economic integration (AfCFTA), while reinforcing traditional mandates. The new strategy should embed sustainability, innovation, and continental policy influence, with stronger alignment to Agenda 2063, SDGs, and the Paris Principles. It must also diversify funding sources to reduce reliance on a narrow donor base and ensure resilience in a volatile geopolitical landscape.
2. **Structure**- The strategic plan anticipates a revised NANHRI's organizational and governance structure to ensure clarity of roles, strengthened oversight, and functional coordination mechanisms. This includes revamping underperforming working groups,

establishing clear lines of authority, and enhancing representation to accommodate regional diversity and thematic specialization.

3. **Systems-** A key priority of the new plan will be the modernization and digitization of operational systems, including the integration of robust Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) frameworks, performance tracking tools, and strategic planning capabilities. Investment in ICT infrastructure, digital platforms, and standardized toolkits will be necessary to support efficient delivery, accountability, and peer learning.
4. **Shared Values**- The 2026–2030 plan should reaffirm and operationalize NANHRI's commitment to human dignity, equality, justice, and the protection of vulnerable populations. To counter shrinking civic space and anti-rights narratives, the plan must enhance the visibility and articulation of these values through stronger advocacy, strategic communications, and engagement with youth and marginalized voices.
5. **Skills**- Addressing thematic knowledge gaps, especially in digital transformation, AI governance, climate justice, and economic rights, is essential. The strategic plan must prioritize capacity development initiatives, continuous learning, and peer exchange to build technical expertise within both the Secretariat and member NHRIs.
6. **Style-** Leadership must retain its collaborative and member-driven approach, but the plan should institutionalize effective communication protocols, strengthen feedback loops, and foster a culture of transparency and strategic foresight. Enhancing internal coherence and external advocacy capacity will be key to maintaining trust and relevance.
7. **Staff-** The strategic plan should address human resource constraints by expanding staff capacity, introducing incentive-based retention mechanisms, and promoting regional and linguistic balance. Establishing fully functional HR and Resource Mobilization units will ensure that NANHRI is better equipped to manage its growing mandate and workload.

3.2. PEST ANALYSIS

The PEST analysis examines the **Political, Economic, Social, and Technological** factors shaping NANHRI's external environment. This framework helps identify strategic considerations for advancing human rights in Africa.

1. Political Factors

1. **Support from the African Union (AU)**: Provides regional legitimacy and alignment with continental human rights frameworks.
2. **Diverse political will among member states**: Some governments strongly support human rights; others resist NHRI independence and advocacy.
3. **NHRI's accreditation under GANHRI**: Enhances institutional legitimacy and compliance with the Paris Principles.
4. **Influence of regional and international human rights treaties**: Creates opportunities for advocacy and harmonized human rights standards.

2. Economic Factors

1. **Dependence on donor funding**: Limits long-term sustainability and program flexibility.
2. **Limited domestic funding for NHRIs**: Many national governments provide inadequate financial support to their institutions.
3. **Economic inequality across member states**: It varies the operational strength and capacity of NHRIs.
4. **Financial constraints**: Can restrict human rights programming, data collection, and regional engagements.

3. Social Factors

1. **Increasing public demand for human rights accountability**: Citizens, especially youth, are becoming more vocal and organized.
2. **Youth engagement and activism**: Offers momentum for regional rights movements and participatory governance.
3. **Cultural diversity and varying societal norms**: Affects perception and prioritization of human rights across regions.
4. **Civil society growth**: Expands collaborative potential for advocacy, outreach, and grassroots mobilization.

4. Technological Factors

1. **Digital platforms for advocacy and training**: Enhance communication, awareness, and virtual engagements.
2. **Potential use of AI and data tools**: Could improve human rights monitoring, reporting, and predictive analysis.
3. **Cybersecurity concerns:** Pose risks to sensitive data and operational integrity.
4. **Digital divide across NHRIs**: Limits some institutions from leveraging technology effectively for rights promotion.

3.3. IMPLICATIONS OF THE ANALYSIS FOR THE STRATEGIC DIRECTION

The SWOT and PESTLE analyses reveal that NANHRI must urgently reposition itself to address both ongoing and new human rights challenges in Africa. While continuing its work in human rights monitoring, accreditation, and advocacy, the 2026–2030 Strategic Plan ought to integrate emerging priorities such as climate justice, AI and digital governance, civic space protection, and economic integration under AfCFTA. NANHRI's relevance hinges on aligning with Agenda 2063, the SDGs, and the Paris Principles through an innovative and forward-looking strategy. The following implications stand out:

1. NANHRI must strategically reposition itself to address emerging human rights issues such as climate justice, AI and digital governance, civic space protection, and economic integration under AfCFTA, while maintaining its core mandates.
2. The organization needs to restructure its Secretariat, establish dedicated Monitoring & Evaluation, Human Resources, and Resource Mobilization units, clarify governance roles, and revamp working groups to enhance institutional capacity and operational efficiency.
3. To ensure financial sustainability, NANHRI should diversify its funding sources by engaging philanthropic foundations, private sector partners, and collaborating on fundraising with member NHRIs to reduce reliance on a limited donor base.
4. Investing in digital transformation, including ICT infrastructure, cybersecurity, multilingual outreach, and digital tools such as AI and data analytics, is critical to modernize training, advocacy, and human rights monitoring.
5. Strengthening strategic partnerships with African Union organs, the United Nations, regional bodies, and South-South networks will increase NANHRI's policy influence and continental leadership.
6. Engaging Africa's digitally active youth and vibrant civil society through co-created initiatives, capacity-building, and digital advocacy will help counter shrinking civic space and foster a grassroots human rights culture.
7. NANHRI must develop legal support mechanisms to protect member NHRIs' independence and autonomy, while implementing rapid-response systems to mitigate external threats such as political repression and donor fatigue.
8. Providing standardized resources like toolkits, model laws, regional benchmarks, and peer-learning platforms will promote consistency across members while allowing local adaptation in emerging thematic areas such as environmental rights, AI ethics, and digital freedoms.
9. Institutionalizing a results-based, data-driven Monitoring & Evaluation system will build a culture of accountability, support strategic planning, and enable evidence-based decision-making and adaptive learning.
10. NANHRI should visibly embed its core values of justice, dignity, and equality throughout its operations and advocacy, prioritizing engagement with youth, marginalized groups, and underrepresented regions to enhance legitimacy and inclusivity.

4. STRATEGIC DIRECTION

4.1. VISION

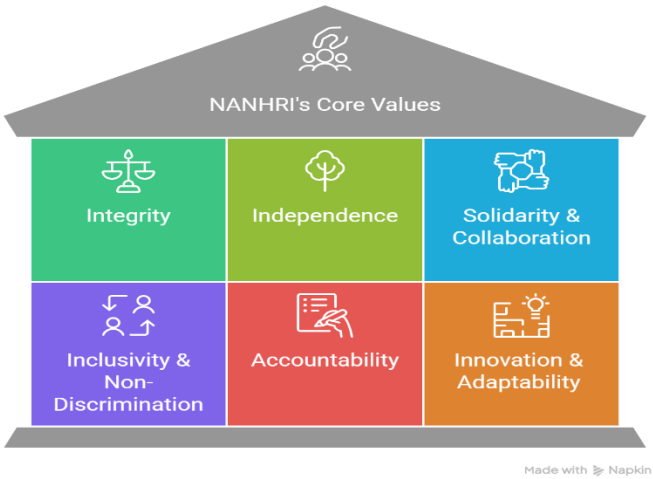
The vision is: *"A just and inclusive Africa where human rights are universally upheld.''*

4.2. MISSION

The mission of NANHRI is: "To support the establishment and empowerment of independent Paris Principles compliant NHRIs that promote and protect human rights."

4.3. CORE VALUES

The core values of the Network of African National Human Rights Institutions (NANHRI) form the ethical and strategic backbone of its 2026–2030 Strategic Plan. These values guide the network's operations, partnerships, and vision for a continent where human rights are respected, protected, and fulfilled. Rooted in the Paris Principles and aligned with Africa's regional priorities, the values ensure that NANHRI remains a principled, accountable, and transformative force. At the heart of these values is integrity, reflecting NANHRI's commitment to transparency, ethical leadership, and professional excellence. Independence underscores the importance of non-partisan action, free from external interference, in the defense of human rights.



Solidarity and collaboration emphasize collective strength, encouraging mutual support among NHRIs and partnerships with regional and international actors. Inclusivity and non-discrimination highlight a strong resolve to serve all people equally, particularly the marginalized and vulnerable. Accountability drives a culture of responsibility in fulfilling mandates and upholding commitments. Finally, innovation and adaptability demonstrate NANHRI's responsiveness to emerging human rights challenges, especially in digital governance and climate justice. These values not only define NANHRI's identity but also inspire its mission to build a just, inclusive, and rights-based future for Africa.

4.4. STRATEGIC PILLARS

The 2026–2030 Strategic Plan is built around five interconnected pillars designed to strengthen the role, resilience, and relevance of African NHRIs.

1. **Strengthening NHRI Capacity and Independence**: NANHRI will support NHRIs to align with the Paris Principles by enhancing legal, institutional, and operational autonomy. Efforts will focus on achieving "A" status accreditation, resource mobilization, digital transformation, and peer learning to build institutional resilience and effectiveness.
2. **Promoting Human Rights and Access to Justice**: This pillar aims to empower NHRIs to advocate for inclusive legal frameworks, protect vulnerable groups, and strengthen access to justice. NANHRI will promote engagement with AU and UN mechanisms and support roles in transitional justice and post-conflict recovery.
3. **Advancing Economic, Social, Cultural, and Environmental Rights**: NANHRI will facilitate the integration of ESCER into national policies aligned with Agenda 2063 and the SDGs. Focus areas include climate justice, indigenous land rights, and corporate accountability, equipping NHRIs to use human rights frameworks for policy advocacy and impact assessment.
4. **Embracing Technology and Innovation**: To remain effective in the digital age, NHRIs will be supported in defending digital rights and shaping technology governance. NANHRI will invest in digital tools, ethical AI use, and e-platforms for monitoring, advocacy, and learning.
5. **Strengthening NANHRI's Governance and Sustainability**: The final pillar targets improved governance structures, operational efficiency, staff capacity, and financial sustainability within NANHRI. Enhancing internal systems and diversifying funding will ensure the Network remains adaptive and high-performing.

4.5. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

Each strategic objective is aligned with NANHRI's mandate under Articles 2 and 3 of its Constitution. For each objective, a brief rationale that explains its relevance and urgency is given, followed by a set of strategic actions intended to achieve the objective.

Strategic Objective 1: Establish and Strengthen the Capacity, Independence, and Effectiveness of NHRIs

Rationale:

In line with Article 2 of NANHRI's Constitution and the Paris Principles, this objective responds to enduring capacity and legitimacy gaps that undermine the effectiveness of National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) in Africa. Many NHRIs operate under resource constraints, face legal and political limitations, or lack institutional maturity. Strengthening their independence, technical capability, and operational resilience is foundational to sustaining a robust human rights system on the continent. NANHRI shall support NHRIs through accreditation assistance, capacity development, peer exchange, and strategic partnerships.

Strategic Actions:

1.1. Provide technical assistance to 80% of NHRIs undergoing Paris Principles accreditation or re-accreditation annually.

1.2 Conduct biennial and governance capacity assessments for all NHRIs with tailored recommendations and follow-up plans.

1.3 Develop and launch a Continental NHRI Capacity-Building Framework by 2030, adopted by 70% of NHRIs by 2028.

1.3 Facilitate annual peer learning for at least 15 NHRIs through staff, mentorships, and thematic workshops.

1.4 Advocate and support the establishment/strengthening of NHRIs in five fragile or post-conflict states by 2030, aligned with Paris Principles.

1.5 Implement three joint advocacy initiatives with the UN, AU, and to safeguard independence and influence.

1.6 Support 20 NHRIs to produce evidence-based human rights reports that enhance national and regional credibility.

1.7 Establish and strengthen strategic partnerships with OHCHR, Academia, CSOs, and ThinkTanks to enable joint programming, coordinated advocacy, and resource mobilization.

Strategic Objective 2: Advance Human Rights Protection in Response to Mainstream HR, Emerging Global and Regional Challenges

Rationale

Article 3(b) of NANHRI's Constitution mandates coordination and the sharing of experiences among members. Given the rapidly evolving landscape of human rights threats, including climate crises, digital surveillance, AI ethics, widening inequality, and forced migration, NHRIs must be equipped to act swiftly and knowledgeably. This objective strengthens NHRIs' ability to anticipate and respond to emerging risks while advancing protections for vulnerable and marginalized groups in increasingly complex governance environments. It also emphasizes the importance of resource diversification and donor engagement to sustain action in priority areas.

Strategic Actions

2.1. Build NHRI capacity on climate justice and environmental rights by integrating human rights into responses to climate change, biodiversity loss, and environmental degradation.

2.2 Support monitoring and protection of civic space and digital rights by equipping NHRIs to address data privacy, surveillance, AI ethics, and emerging technologies in line with fundamental freedoms.

2.3 Strengthen NHRI capacity to protect migrants, refugees, and displaced populations, particularly in Africa's cross-border and humanitarian contexts.

2.4 Enhance monitoring of Economic, Social, and Cultural rights (ESCR) with a focus on high-risk and emerging sectors, extractives, blue economy, green transitions, and infrastructure, promoting rights-based and responsible business conduct.

2.5 Support NHRIs to strengthen early warning and rapid response systems in fragile and conflict-affected contexts.

2.6 Support NHRIs to mainstream gender equality, disability inclusion, youth empowerment, and protection of marginalized communities across all NHRI responses.

2.7 Promote and coordinate structured engagement with regional and international human rights mechanisms.

2.8 Strengthen NHRI engagement and NANHRI-led interventions across torture prevention, strategic litigation, and the ratification and implementation of human rights treaties.

Strategic Objective 3: Advance Research-Driven Advocacy, Cooperation, and Visibility to Strengthen the Legitimacy and Impact of NHRIs in Africa

Rationale:

Anchored in Articles 2(d), 2(e), and 3(c) of NANHRI's Constitution, this objective reflects the imperative of fostering collaboration, knowledge generation, and collective advocacy among members. In the digital age, effective human rights protection requires research-informed strategies, innovation, and strong public trust. By institutionalizing research, expanding evidence-based programming, leveraging digital technologies, and deepening cooperation with stakeholders, NANHRI and its members will amplify their legitimacy, visibility, and policy influence at national, regional, and global levels. This objective ensures that NHRIs not only respond to emerging threats but also proactively shape Africa's human rights agenda.

Strategic Actions

3.1 Institutionalize research and knowledge generation on key human rights issues.

3.2 Produce quarterly human rights reports, indices, and policy briefs to inform Global, AU, REC, and national policy discourse.

3.3 Create a continental knowledge hub by 2030 to share best practices, reforms, and case studies.

3.4 Strengthen NHRI capacity to leverage digital tools to monitor trends, track violations, visualize data, and implement early warning systems

3.5 Enhance NHRI digital advocacy through training on social media engagement, online campaigning, and digital storytelling.

3.6 Implement a Continental Digital Communications Strategy with multilingual campaigns such as podcasts, dashboards, and mobile platforms.

3.7 Forge partnerships with universities, think tanks, tech institutions, and regional bodies to expand research, innovation, and policy influence.

3.8 Strengthen engagement with AU, RECs, governments, CSOs, and media to safeguard NHRI independence and visibility.

3.9 Encourage NHRIs to promote the inclusion of youth, women, and marginalized groups in research, advocacy, and awareness, supported through internships and outreach.

3.10 Convene annual forums and dialogues at national, regional, and continental levels to foster cooperation.

3.11 Expand NANHRI's presence in relevant global spaces to amplify African perspectives in global policy.

Strategic Objective 4: Strengthen NANHRI's Governance, Operational Efficiency, and Financial Sustainability

Rationale:

To effectively serve its members and partners, NANHRI must model the governance, accountability, and innovation it promotes. Article 3(f) underscores NANHRI's responsibility to maintain effective internal systems. In an era shaped by digital transformation, governance and operational excellence also require the adoption of modern technologies that enhance transparency, knowledge management, and impact measurement. This objective enhances institutional governance, optimizes operational performance, integrates digital solutions, and secures the financial sustainability necessary for long-term resilience and influence.

Strategic Actions

4.1 Review and strengthen governance structures by clarifying leadership roles, enhancing accountability, and implementing succession planning.

4.2 Strengthen thematic working groups with clear mandates, technical support and accountability frameworks.

4.3. Enforce transparent and accountable policies in finance, procurement, HR, and ethics, supported by digital and audit tools.

4.4 Modernize financial systems with integrated digital budgeting, monitoring, and real-time reporting, complemented by regular external audits.

4.5 Establish a performance management system aligned to KPIs, using digital dashboards for real-time tracking, feedback, and career development to enhance workforce development through e-learning, professional development platforms and digital HR tools for appraisals and mentorship

4.6 Scale up adoption of digital tools for communication, project tracking, data management, and reporting with secure, interoperable cloud-based systems.

4.7 Implement a MEAL-R framework (Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, Learning, and Risk) using digital data collection, visualization, and AI analytics.

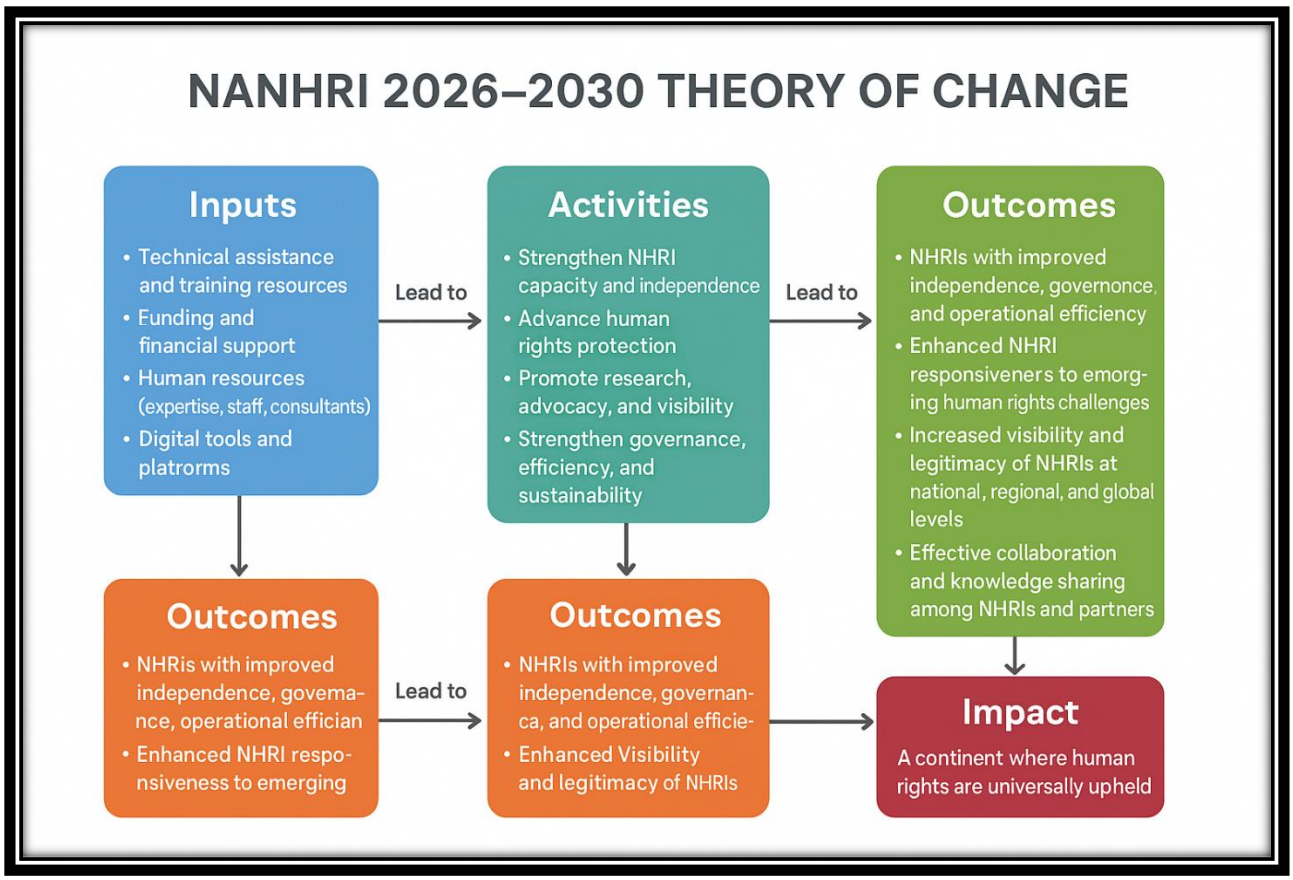
4.8 Set up specialized operational units (M&E, Resource Mobilization, Human Resource,) equipped with modern technologies.

4.9 Develop and implement a resource mobilization strategy leveraging donor platforms, innovative financing, and investment partnerships.

4.10 Strengthen cybersecurity and data protection to safeguard institutional data, member information, and digital advocacy outputs.

4.6. THEORY OF CHANGE

The Theory of Change depicted in the figure presents a strategic framework designed to advance a just and inclusive Africa by empowering National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs). At its heart, the model envisions a continent where human rights are universally respected, protected, and promoted through the work of effective, independent, and credible NHRIs.



The Theory of Change for NANHRI 2026–2030 presents a logical pathway through which the network intends to achieve its vision and mission. It outlines how resources, activities, and strategies will generate immediate outputs, lead to intermediate outcomes, and ultimately contribute to long-term impact across Africa's human rights landscape. The Theory of Change emphasizes that by equipping NHRIs with resources, capacity, and strategic partnerships, NANHRI catalyzes systemic improvements in human rights protection and institutional resilience across Africa. The framework ensures that every strategic action is tied to measurable outputs, which collectively drive outcomes leading to sustained continental impact.

CHAPTER 5. IMPLEMENTATION AND FINANCING MECHANISMS

5.1. INTRODUCTION.

The successful implementation of NANHRI's Strategic Plan for 2026-2030 requires a well-coordinated approach that includes efficient program management, robust financing mechanisms, and active stakeholder involvement. A clear structure, supported by strong leadership, will ensure that the organization remains accountable, transparent, and focused on achieving its mission. This section outlines the key structures and roles of various actors in implementing and financing the strategic plan.

5.2. ORGANIZATIONAL GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES AND ROLES

NANHRI's organizational structure plays a critical role in facilitating the implementation of its strategic objectives. This structure ensures that there is a clear division of responsibilities, accountability, and efficient coordination of activities across different levels of the organization.

Table 1: NANHRI Governance Structure and Roles in the Strategic Plan:

Governance Structure	Role in Strategic Plan	Core Responsibilities
General Assembly	The supreme decision-making body that sets the overall strategic direction and policy framework for NANHRI.	- Approves and endorses the Strategic Plan and organizational budget. - Adopts key policies, constitutional amendments, and structural reforms. - Elects members of the Steering Committee. - Provides strategic guidance and accountability at the highest level.
Steering Committee	Governs, oversees, and ensures accountability for the implementation of the Strategic Plan between General Assembly meetings.	- Provides governance oversight and strategic guidance for plan execution. - Approves annual work plans, budgets, and financial statements. - Monitors organizational performance and sustainability. - Ensures compliance with NANHRI's mandate and governance standards. -Audit, risk, Human resource, remuneration, and resource mobilization
Working Groups	Specialized thematic and technical bodies supporting the delivery of strategic objectives through focused expertise.	- Develop, coordinate, and implement thematic initiatives aligned with the Strategic Plan. - Offer expert advice on program design, advocacy, and capacity-building. - Facilitate peer learning, knowledge exchange, and best

		practice dissemination among NHRIs.
Executive Director	The chief executive officer is responsible for overall leadership, strategic direction, and organizational performance.	- Provides operational leadership and strategic oversight. - Manages Secretariat staff and resources. - Represents NANHRI in regional, continental, and international forums. - Ensures effective delivery of programs and initiatives.
Programme Management Team	Responsible for the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of programs aligned with the Strategic Plan.	- Plans and executes human rights programs and projects. - Ensures alignment with NANHRI's strategic objectives. - Monitors progress, evaluates impact, and reports results. - Maintains coordination with member NHRIs and external partners to maximize synergy and outcomes.

5.3. ACTORS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

The implementation of NANHRI's Strategic Plan for 2026-2030 requires active involvement from a variety of actors, both internal and external, including the Board (Steering Committee), staff, member NHRIs, external partners, and donors.

Table 2: Internal and External Actors Supporting NANHRI's Strategic Plan

Actor Category	Actor	Core Role	Key Responsibilities
Internal	**General Assembly**	Provides strategic oversight and governance.	- Approve budgets, reports, and major initiatives - Monitor finances and ensure alignment with human rights priorities
	Steering Committee	Oversees daily operations and provides leadership.	- Lead resource mobilization - Direct staff and ensure strategy execution - Adjust initiatives as needed
	Program Management Team	Executes programs and strategic initiatives.	- Lead project implementation and capacity-building - Conduct M&E

			- Engage stakeholders for impact
	Staff Members	Manage day-to-day operations.	- Support departments in research, advocacy, and admin - Implement policies and procedures - Organize campaigns and events
External	**Member NHRIs**	National-level implementers and strategic partners.	- Collaborate on research, advocacy, and reform - Participate in capacity-building - Provide input and feedback
	Donors and International Partners	Provide funding and technical expertise.	- Support implementation and resource mobilization - Conduct joint assessments - Ensure accountability for funds used
	Governments and Regional Bodies	Facilitate policy adoption and project implementation.	- Enable national-level reforms - Collaborate on human rights frameworks - Strengthen regional cooperation -Support NANHRI through budgetary support

5.4. FINANCING MECHANISMS

The financing of NANHRI's Strategic Plan for 2026–2030 will adopt a diversified and sustainable approach to reduce reliance on any single funding source and ensure long-term financial resilience. This approach will encompass traditional donor funding from international partners, foundations, and multilateral institutions, with a focus on cultivating and maintaining strong relationships with both existing and prospective donors.

NANHRI will also seek financial contributions from African governments to support the activities of member NHRIs and reinforce regional ownership of the human rights agenda. Strategic partnerships with the private sector under corporate social responsibility (CSR) frameworks will be pursued to align business investment with human rights promotion. In addition, NANHRI will generate income through value-added services such as consultancy, specialized training, and conferences.

CHAPTER 6: MONITORING AND EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

6.1 INTRODUCTION

To effectively deliver on its Strategic Plan (2026–2030), NANHRI will implement a robust Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) framework. This framework ensures accountability, learning, and evidence-based decision-making throughout the implementation of the five strategic objectives. It is designed to track progress, assess outcomes and impacts, and adapt interventions in response to emerging needs and challenges.

6.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE M&E FRAMEWORK

The M&E framework will:

1. Track the implementation and performance of strategic actions under each objective.
2. Generate timely and reliable data for informed decision-making and policy adjustments.
3. Facilitate organizational learning and continuous improvement.
4. Enhance accountability to members, stakeholders, and funding partners.
5. Inform resource mobilization through evidence of results and impact.

6.3 M&E PRINCIPLES

1. **Participation:** Involve NHRIs, partners, and stakeholders in the M&E process.
2. **Transparency and Accountability:** Promote openness in data collection, reporting, and decision-making.
3. **Use of Evidence:** Emphasize data-driven learning and adaptation.
4. **Sustainability:** Embed M&E into institutional systems to ensure long-term use.
5. **Gender and Inclusion Sensitivity:** Disaggregate data to capture diverse experiences and equity.

6.4 M&E STRUCTURE AND INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Entity	Key Responsibilities
M&E Unit	Lead overall coordination, data collection, reporting, evaluation, and learning activities.
Program Units	Implement and report on program-specific indicators.
Member NHRIs	Provide data, participate in evaluations, and utilize findings for institutional development.
Partners (e.g., AU, OHCHR, Civil Society)	Collaborate in joint evaluations, share data, and support verification of results.
Steering Committee (Board)	Provide oversight and strategic guidance on evaluation results and organizational learning.

6.5 RESULTS FRAMEWORK

The framework is organized around strategic objectives, expected outcomes, key performance indicators (KPIs), data sources, and reporting frequency. Below is a simplified results matrix:

Table 3: Results Framework: NANHRI 2026–2030 Strategic Plan

Strategic Objective 1: Establish and Strengthen the Capacity, Independence, and Effectiveness of NHRIs

Action	Key Indicators (SMART)	Baseline (2025)	Target (2030)	Means of Verification	Frequency	Responsible Actors
1.1 Provide technical assistance to NHRIs undergoing accreditation	• % of NHRIs undergoing accreditation supported annually	Ad-hoc support; <40% covered	At least 80% supported annually	GANHRI records; NANHRI TA reports	Annual	Technical Assistance Unit; Accreditation Desk
1.2 Conduct biennial capacity & governance assessments	• # of NHRIs assessed biennially • % with follow-up plans developed and implemented	Few assessments; no systematic follow-up	100% of NHRIs are assessed every two years; 100% with follow-up plans	Assessment reports; institutional action plans	Biennial	M&E Unit; Governance & Accountability Unit
1.3 Develop Continental NHRI Capacity-Building Framework	• Framework developed and validated by 2027 • % of NHRIs adopting by 2028	None	Framework operational by 2027; 70% adoption by 2028	Framework document; adoption records; training reports	2027/2028	Policy, Research & Capacity Units
1.4 Support NHRIs to design and implement Institutional Development Plans (IDPs)	• % of NHRIs with IDPs • % of IDPs reviewed biennially	<20% with formal IDPs	50% of NHRIs with IDPs by 2030; biennial reviews institutionalized	IDPs; NANHRI review and progress reports	Biennial	Capacity Development Unit; M&E Unit
1.5 Facilitate annual peer learning	• # of NHRIs participating annually • # of exchanges/workshops/ mentorships conducted	Limited, irregular exchanges	Minimum 15 NHRIs engaged annually	Peer-learning reports; workshop and exchange records	Annual	Learning & Exchange Unit; Membership Unit

1.6 Advocate and support establishment/strengthening of NHRIs in fragile states	• # of fragile/post-conflict states supported • # of NHRIs progressing toward Paris Principles compliance	Weak or uneven NHRI presence	At least 5 functional NHRIs supported by 2030	Mission reports; draft laws; accreditation outcomes	Annual	Advocacy Unit; AU Liaison Office; Executive Secretariat
1.7 Implement joint advocacy initiatives	• # of joint advocacy initiatives annually • # of AU/UN/REC/CSO partners engaged	Ad-hoc initiatives	Minimum 3 joint initiatives annually	Advocacy reports; joint statements; campaign outputs	Annual	Advocacy & Partnerships Unit
1.8 Mobilize resources for NHRI capacity development	• Volume of funds mobilized • # of new funding partners engaged	Limited and concentrated donor base	50% increase in funding; at least 10 active partners	Financial reports; donor agreements; RM database	Annual	Resource Mobilization Unit; Finance Department
1.9 Support NHRIs to produce evidence-based human rights reports	• # of NHRIs supported annually • # of reports referenced by national, AU, or UN mechanisms	<10 supported annually	20 NHRIs supported per year; increasing external citations	Published reports; citations; policy briefs	Annual	Research, Knowledge & Publications Unit
1.10 Facilitate NHRI coordination platforms	• # of coordination platforms convened annually • # of joint initiatives emerging	Few platforms; low institutionalization	At least 5 active platforms annually	Platform reports; joint action plans	Annual	Coordination & Networking Unit
1.11 Establish operational partnerships	• # of new partnerships signed annually • % producing joint programmes or outputs	Limited structured partnerships	At least 5 new partnerships annually; 70% active	MoUs; joint workplans; programme reports	Annual	Partnerships Unit; Executive Office
1.12 Roll out training on safeguarding NHRI independence	• # of NHRIs trained • % demonstrating improved compliance scores	No structured programme	At least 20 NHRIs trained by 2030; measurable compliance gains	Training modules; pre/post evaluations; assessments	Biennial	Capacity Development Unit; Governance Unit
1.13 Strengthen NHRI governance through clinics	• # of governance clinics annually • % of participating	Limited governance support	At least 1 clinic annually;	Clinic reports, feedback	Annual	Governance &

	NHRIs reporting improved governance		70% report improvement	surveys, and governance scores		Accountability Unit
1.14 Create a continental NHRI knowledge hub	• Knowledge hub operational by 2027 • # of case studies/tools uploaded annually • # of users accessing hub	No central hub	Hub launched by 2027; updated quarterly; growing usage	Online platform; analytics; public		

Strategic Objective 2: Advance Human Rights Protection in Response to Mainstream HR, Emerging Global and Regional Challenges.

Action	Key Indicators (SMART)	Baseline (2025)	Target (2030)	Means of Verification	Frequency	Responsible Actors
2.1 Build NHRI capacity on climate justice and environmental rights	• # of NHRIs trained on climate & environmental rights • # of NHRIs integrating HR into national climate/environment strategies • # of climate-related HR interventions supported	Limited ad-hoc initiatives	At least 25 NHRIs trained; 15 integrating HR approaches; regular interventions documented	Training reports; national policy inputs; programme reports	Annual	Climate, Environment & ESCR Desk; Capacity Development Unit
2.2 Support monitoring and protection of civic space and digital rights	• # of NHRIs supported on digital rights, AI ethics, and surveillance • # of national monitoring frameworks/tools developed • # of policy interventions or investigations conducted	Emerging issue: limited NHRI capacity	At least 20 NHRIs supported; continental guidance tools developed; increasing investigations annually	Technical support reports; toolkits; NHRI publications	Annual	Civic Space & Digital Rights Unit; Research & Policy Unit
2.3 Strengthen NHRI capacity to protect migrants, refugees, and displaced populations	• # of NHRIs trained on migration and displacement • # of cross-border or humanitarian monitoring initiatives supported • # of policy or protection interventions influenced	Uneven NHRI engagement	At least 20 NHRIs supported; 10 cross-border initiatives operational	Training reports; field mission reports; protection briefs	Annual	Migration & Humanitarian Response Unit; Partnerships Unit

2.4 Enhance ESCR monitoring in high-risk and emerging sectors	• # of NHRIs supported to monitor ESCR in priority sectors • # of sector-focused investigations or reports produced • # of engagements with business/regulators supported	Limited sectoral focus	At least 25 NHRIs supported; 30 sector reports produced	NHRI reports; regulatory submissions; business & HR engagement records	Annual	ESCR & Business & Human Rights Unit
2.5 Support NHRI early warning and rapid response systems	• # of NHRIs with functional early warning mechanisms • # of rapid response interventions supported annually • % of participating NHRIs using risk analysis tools	Few structured systems	At least 15 NHRIs equipped; annual documented responses	Early warning tools; incident logs; response reports	Annual	Fragility, Conflict & Prevention Unit; M&E Unit
2.6 Mainstream gender, disability, youth, and marginalized groups across NHRI work	• # of NHRIs supported with inclusion strategies • % of NANHRI-supported programmes integrating inclusion markers • # of thematic guidelines produced	Inconsistent mainstreaming	At least 30 NHRIs supported; 100% of programmes inclusion-screened	Programme reports; inclusion audits; thematic guidelines	Annual	Gender, Inclusion & Social Justice Unit
2.7 Promote structured engagement with regional and international HR mechanisms	• # of coordinated NHRI submissions annually • # of joint engagements facilitated with AU/UN mechanisms • % of participating NHRIs reporting improved effectiveness	Irregular, uncoordinated engagement	Minimum 10 coordinated engagements annually	Submission records; meeting reports; feedback surveys	Annual	Regional & International Mechanisms Unit
2.8 Strengthen NHRI engagement on torture prevention, strategic litigation, and treaty implementation	• # of NHRIs trained on torture prevention and OPCAT • # of strategic litigation initiatives supported • # of treaty ratification/implementation interventions influenced	Limited technical depth	At least 20 NHRIs trained; 15 litigation initiatives supported			

Strategic Objective 3: Advance Research-Driven Advocacy, Cooperation, and Visibility to Strengthen the Legitimacy and Impact of NHRIs in Africa.

Action	Key Indicators (SMART)	Baseline (2025)	Target (2030)	Means of Verification	Frequency	Responsible Actors
3.1 Institutionalize research and knowledge generation	• Research policy and agenda adopted • # of thematic research programmes operational • # of NHRI-led studies supported annually	Ad-hoc research	Research policy in place by 2027; at least 5 sustained research streams; 10 studies annually	Research policy; workplans; publications	Annual	Research & Knowledge Unit; Executive Office
3.2 Produce quarterly reports, indices, and policy briefs	• # of continental reports/indices produced annually • # of policy briefs disseminated • # of citations in AU/UN/national policy processes	Irregular publications	4 continental products per year; increasing policy uptake	Published reports; distribution logs; citation tracking	Quarterly/Annual	Research & Publications Unit
3.3 Create a continental knowledge hub	• Knowledge hub operational by 2030 • # of best practices, reforms, and case studies uploaded annually • # of active users	No integrated platform	Hub launched by 2028; regularly updated; minimum 1,000 active users	Online platform; analytics; content repository	Annual	Knowledge Management Unit; ICT Unit
3.4 Strengthen NHRI digital monitoring and data systems	• # of NHRIs trained on digital monitoring tools • # of NHRIs using digital data systems • # of early warning tools piloted	Limited digital systems	At least 25 NHRIs trained; digital tools operational in 15 NHRIs	Training reports; platform records; pilot evaluations	Annual	Digital Transformation Unit; M&E Unit
3.5 Enhance NHRI digital advocacy capacity	• # of NHRIs trained on digital advocacy • # of coordinated online campaigns supported	Uneven, low digital reach	At least 30 NHRIs trained; annual continental campaigns	Training reports; analytics; campaign outputs	Annual	Communications & Digital Advocacy Unit

	• Engagement growth across NHRI platforms					
3.6 Implement Continental Digital Communications Strategy	• Strategy adopted and costed • # of multilingual campaigns produced annually • # of podcasts, dashboards, and mobile tools launched	No unified strategy	Strategy operational by 2027; minimum 6 campaigns annually	Strategy document; media products; engagement analytics	Annual	Communications Unit; Executive Office
3.7 Forge research and innovation partnerships	• # of MoUs signed with universities, think tanks, and tech institutions • # of joint research/innovation initiatives launched	Limited formal partnerships	At least 15 partnerships; 10 joint initiatives	MoUs; joint programme reports	Annual	Partnerships Unit; Research Unit
3.8 Strengthen engagement with AU, RECs, CSOs, and media	• # of structured engagement platforms convened • # of joint advocacy statements and campaigns • # of media engagements annually	Engagement mostly ad-hoc	Minimum 12 structured engagements annually	Meeting reports; advocacy outputs; media tracking	Annual	External Relations Unit; Communications Unit
3.9 Promote inclusion in research and advocacy	• # of NHRIs implementing inclusion programmes • # of youth/women internships and outreach initiatives supported • % of research outputs with inclusion lens	Limited structured inclusion	At least 20 NHRIs supported; inclusion criteria mainstreamed	Programme reports; internship records; publication reviews	Annual	Gender, Youth & Inclusion Unit
3.10 Convene annual forums and dialogues	• # of national, regional, and continental forums convened	Irregular convenings	At least 1 continental and 4 regional	Forum reports; declaratio	Annual	Convening & Membership Affairs Unit

	• # of cooperation agreements or action plans emerging		forums annually	ns; action plans		
3.11 Expand NANHRI presence in global spaces	• # of global policy platforms engaged annually • # of African NHRI statements, panels, or submissions • # of strategic global partnerships	Limited coordinated presence	Participation in at least 10 major global platforms annually	Participation records; statements; partnership MoUs		

Objective 4: Strengthen Institutional Governance, Systems, and Digital Transformation

Action	Key Indicators (SMART)	Baseline (2025)	Target (2030)	Means of Verification	Frequency	Responsible Actors
4.1 Review and strengthen governance structures	• Governance review completed and approved • Revised governance framework adopted • Succession plan operationalized • % of leadership positions with clear ToRs and accountability mechanisms	Governance framework is outdated; no formal succession plan	Governance framework revised by 2027; succession plan operational; 100% of leadership roles with updated ToRs	Governance review report; approved statutes/policies; Board minutes	Biennial/Annual	Board of Directors; Executive Office; Governance Committee
4.2 Strengthen thematic working groups	• # of thematic working groups with approved mandates • %	Inconsistent mandates and outputs	100% of working groups are operational with mandates; annual	Approved ToRs, workplans; annual reports	Annual	Secretariat; Thematic Leads; Membership Affairs

	submitting annual workplans and reports • # of technical products delivered annually		reporting institutionalized			
4.3 Enforce transparent and accountable internal policies	• Finance, HR, procurement, and ethics policies reviewed and digitized • # of staff trained on compliance • # of internal audits conducted annually	Partial policies; limited digitization	Full policy suite updated and digitized by 2027; annual audits conducted	Policy manuals; training records; audit reports	Annual	Finance & Administration; Internal Audit; HR Unit
4.4 Modernize financial systems	• Integrated financial management system operational • % of transactions processed digitally • # of external audits completed on time	Semi-manual systems	Fully integrated system by 2027; 95% digital processing; clean annual audits	Financial system reports; audit opinions	Quarterly/Annual	Finance Department; IT Unit; External Auditors
4.5 Establish performance management and digital HR systems	• KPI-based PMS approved and deployed • % of staff with annual performance plans and appraisals • # of staff accessing e-learning and mentorship platforms	No unified PMS; limited e-learning	PMS operational by 2027; 100% staff appraised annually; e-learning institutionalized	PMS manuals; HR records; learning platform analytics	Annual	Human Resources Unit; Executive Office

4.6 Scale up adoption of digital operational tools	• # of core operational systems digitized • % of programmes using digital project management tools • % of reports generated through integrated systems	Fragmented digital tools	Fully cloud-based operational environment by 2028	System documentation; usage analytics; internal reports	Annual	ICT & Digital Transformation Unit
4.7 Implement MEAL-R framework	• MEAL-R framework approved and operational • # of programmes using digital MEAL tools • # of learning and risk reports produced annually	Monitoring fragmented	MEAL-R system operational by 2027; all programmes covered	MEAL manuals; dashboards; evaluation reports	Quarterly/Annual	MEAL Unit; Programme Managers
4.8 Establish specialized operational units	• Dedicated M&E, RM, and HR units staffed • % of staff trained on new systems • # of cross-unit coordination reviews	Limited specialized units	Units fully functional by 2027; annual performance reviews	Organogram; HR records; capacity reports	Annual	Executive Office; HR Unit
4.9 Develop and implement a resource mobilization strategy	• RM strategy approved and costed • # of donor and investment partnerships established • % growth in unrestricted	Limited RM strategy	Strategy operational by 2027; 50% funding growth; diversified portfolio	RM strategy; donor agreements; financial reports	Annual	Resource Mobilization Unit; Executive Office

	and diversified funding					
4.10 Strengthen cybersecurity and data protection	• Cybersecurity and data protection policy adopted • # of systems compliant with data protection standards • # of cybersecurity audits and drills conducted	Minimal cybersecurity systems	Comprehensive cybersecurity framework by 2027; annual audits and drills			

6.6 Monitoring Tools and Methods

1. **Annual Implementation Reports:** Prepared by all departments and consolidated by the M&E Unit.
2. **Mid-Term and End-Term Reviews:** Independent evaluations at mid-point and end of the strategic plan.
3. **Outcome Harvesting and Most Significant Change:** Documenting qualitative change stories.
4. **Dashboards and Digital M&E Platforms:** Real-time monitoring of project KPIs.
5. **Stakeholder Feedback Surveys:** To assess satisfaction and partnership quality.

6.7 RISK MONITORING AND ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT

The M&E system will be linked to NANHRI's Risk Management Framework to anticipate and respond to implementation challenges. Data from the M&E system will inform periodic adjustments to the strategy.

6.8 LEARNING AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

Lessons from implementation will be captured through After-Action Reviews (AARs), learning workshops, and dissemination of knowledge products. The M&E Unit will coordinate a bi-annual Learning Bulletin to share insights across the network.

6.9 REPORTING SCHEDULE

Report Type	Lead Entity	Frequency
Activity Reports	Program Leads	Quarterly
Progress Report	M&E Unit	Bi-Annually
Annual Performance Report	NANHRI Secretariat	Annually
Mid-Term Review	Independent Evaluators	Mid-2028
Final Evaluation	Independent Evaluators	End-2030

This Monitoring and Evaluation Framework ensures that NANHRI remains responsive, accountable, and results-oriented throughout the implementation of its 2026–2030 Strategic Plan. It supports a culture of learning, transparency, and strategic adjustment, all of which are essential to advancing human rights in Africa.

CHAPTER 7: RISK MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

7.1. INTRODUCTION

Effective risk management is essential to the successful implementation of NANHRI's Strategic Plan 2026–2030. As a regional human rights mechanism operating in diverse political, social, and economic environments, NANHRI must proactively identify, assess, and mitigate internal and external risks that may threaten the achievement of its strategic objectives. This chapter outlines the institutional approach to risk management, key risk categories, mitigation strategies, and accountability mechanisms.

7.2. RISK MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

NANHRI's risk management framework aims to:

- Anticipate and respond to uncertainties affecting strategy execution.
- Safeguard the independence, reputation, and financial sustainability of NANHRI and its member NHRIs.
- Promote a culture of proactive risk awareness and continuous improvement.
- Ensure operational efficiency, legal compliance, and programmatic effectiveness.

7.3. RISK GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

Entity	Roles and Responsibilities
Board of NANHRI	Oversight of strategic and institutional risks; approval of risk policies.
Executive Director	Overall accountability for implementing risk management policies and reporting.
Heads of Departments	Identification and management of programmatic and operational risks.
M&E and Audit Teams	Provide independent verification of risk management controls and mitigation progress.

7.4. KEY RISK CATEGORIES AND MITIGATION STRATEGIES

7.4.1 Strategic Risks

Risk Description	Mitigation Strategy
Inadequate political support for NHRI independence	Strengthen advocacy with AU, RECs, and national governments; use international leverage.
Failure to achieve key objectives due to overambition or resource gaps	Annual reviews, prioritize high-impact interventions; phased implementation.
Misalignment between the NANHRI strategy and member priorities	Inclusive strategic planning and participatory mid-term reviews.

7.4.2 Operational Risks

Risk Description	Mitigation Strategy
Inadequate internal capacity (HR, systems, ICT)	Capacity building, process digitization, and performance management tools.
Disruptions due to political instability or conflict in member states	Develop contingency plans; work with partners on remote support mechanisms.
Weak coordination with NHRIs and partners	Strengthen stakeholder engagement mechanisms and use digital coordination platforms.

7.4.3 Financial Risks

Risk Description	Mitigation Strategy
Overdependence on donor funding	Develop diversified resource mobilization strategy including African philanthropy.
Irregular or delayed donor disbursements	Establish reserve fund; enhance liquidity management and donor communication.
Fraud, misappropriation, or poor financial controls	Enforce internal controls, regular audits, and transparency mechanisms.

7.4.4 Compliance and Legal Risks

Risk Description	Mitigation Strategy
Non-compliance with national and international laws	Regular legal reviews; compliance training; internal policy updates.
Reputational damage due to misinformation or legal challenges	Implement a crisis communication strategy and legal risk tracking system.

7.4.5 Technological and Cybersecurity Risks

Risk Description	Mitigation Strategy

Data breaches, loss of confidential information	Deploy cybersecurity tools; train staff; adopt data protection protocols.
Technological obsolescence of digital systems	Regular ICT upgrades; partnership with tech firms and digital innovators.

7.4.6 Environmental and Climate Risks

Risk Description	Mitigation Strategy
Natural disasters affecting programming and operations	Design climate-resilient operations; include environmental risk assessments in planning.

7.5. RISK MONITORING AND REPORTING MECHANISMS

NANHRI will institutionalize a structured process for risk monitoring and escalation:

1. **Quarterly Risk Reports**: Prepared by departments and consolidated by the Risk Management Unit.
2. **Annual Risk Review**: Presented to the Board with recommendations for improvement.
3. **Real-Time Alerts**: A digital tool will allow staff to flag emerging risks, triggering prompt response.
4. **Risk Registers**: Maintained and updated regularly, categorized by program area and strategic objective.

7.6. RISK APPETITE AND TOLERANCE

NANHRI maintains a **moderate risk appetite**. While the organization will pursue innovation and bold human rights advocacy, it will not compromise its integrity, governance standards, or member trust. High-risk ventures will be undertaken only with clear safeguards and Board approval.

7.7. BUILDING A RISK-AWARE CULTURE

A strong institutional culture is crucial for successful risk management. NANHRI will:

1. Integrate risk awareness in staff induction and training programs.
2. Reward proactive risk identification and mitigation initiatives.
3. Regularly assess organizational readiness to adapt to change and uncertainty.

7.8. ROLE OF PARTNERS AND STAKEHOLDERS IN RISK MANAGEMENT

NANHRI recognizes the role of its members, donors, AU organs, and civil society partners in reducing risks by:

1. Promoting shared ownership of risks and solutions.

2. Ensuring transparency in engagements.
3. Collaborating on preventive strategies in high-risk regions.

The effective management of risks is integral to NANHRI's mandate of promoting and protecting human rights across Africa. This framework serves not only as a safeguard but also as a catalyst for institutional resilience, innovation, and impact throughout the 2026–2030 strategic cycle.

CHAPTER 8: CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS FOR STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

8.1. INTRODUCTION

The successful implementation of NANHRI's Strategic Plan 2026–2030 hinges on several critical enablers that support the achievement of its vision, mission, and strategic objectives. These Critical Success Factors (CSFs) are the essential areas where focused attention, resources, and coordination will make the difference between plan success and underperformance. This chapter outlines the key CSFs and how they will be addressed during the implementation of the strategy.

8.2. DEFINITION OF CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

Critical Success Factors are the essential conditions, capabilities, or processes that must be effectively managed to ensure that an organization can successfully achieve its strategic objectives. For NANHRI, they are the foundational pillars upon which the effective delivery of its continental mandate rests.

8.3. NANHRI'S CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS (CSFS)

8.3.1 Strong Leadership and Governance. Visionary leadership and accountable governance to provide strategic direction and institutional integrity is required. NANHRI will need to ensure regular engagement of the Governing Board and member NHRIs, institutionalize governance review mechanisms, and strengthen the Secretariat's management capacity.

8.3.2 Sustainable Resource Mobilization. Without predictable and adequate funding, strategic goals cannot be delivered. NANHRI will need to implement its Resource Mobilization Strategy, broaden the donor base to include bilateral, multilateral, foundations, and the private sector, while promoting member contributions and exploring innovative financing mechanisms such as endowment funds and regional levies.

8.3.3 Enhanced Institutional Capacity. High-performing human resources and systems are essential to execute the strategy. NANHRI will need to recruit and retain core qualified, motivated staff; invest in ICT, knowledge management, and operational systems; and build staff capacity through training and effective performance management.

8.3.4 Member Engagement and Ownership. The strategic plan must reflect and respond to the needs of member NHRIs to ensure relevance and effectiveness. NANHRI will need to promote

participatory implementation processes, establish feedback mechanisms from members on progress, and encourage peer learning and collaboration through regional platforms.

8.3.5 Effective Communication and Visibility. Stakeholder buy-in and public support depend on visibility and clarity of NANHRI's impact. This will be achieved by implementing a strategic communication plan, utilizing digital platforms and social media for advocacy and engagement, and publishing annual progress reports, success stories, and policy briefs.

8.3.6 Strategic Partnerships and Alliances. Collaborations increase scale, influence, and resource efficiency. NANHRI will need to strengthen partnerships with the African Union, United Nations, Regional Economic Communities, civil society organizations, and academia. These partnerships will be formalized through Memoranda of Understanding and joint action frameworks, while NANHRI actively engages in continental human rights initiatives and policy dialogues.

8.3.7 Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL). Progress tracking ensures accountability and adaptive learning. NANHRI will need to implement a robust MEL framework aligned with strategic indicators, conduct mid-term and end-term evaluations, and document lessons learned and best practices to inform continuous improvement. Recruitment of a dedicated staff for undertaking the monitoring and evaluation at the institutional level beyond programs is vital.

8.3.8 Risk Management and Adaptive Capacity. Strategic risks, whether political, financial, or operational, can derail progress if not proactively managed. NANHRI will need to operationalize its risk management framework, build resilience through scenario planning and adaptive strategies, and engage in continuous risk monitoring and mitigation.

8.3.9 Political and Institutional Support. Support from governments, the African Union, and regional bodies sustains NANHRI's legitimacy and impact. NANHRI will need to advocate for enabling legal and policy frameworks for NHRIs, leverage AU decisions to enhance NHRI recognition and independence, and build strategic rapport with both state and non-state actors.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: MONITORING AND EVALUATION INDICATOR TRACKING MATRIX

Strategic Objective 1: Establish and Strengthen the Capacity, Independence, and Effectiveness of NHRIs

Strategic Action	Indicator	Baseline 2025	Target 2026	Target 2027	Target 2028	Target 2029	Target 2030
1.1 Provide technical assistance to NHRIs undergoing accreditation	% of NHRIs supported during accreditation/re-accreditation	50%	60%	70%	75%	80%	80% sustained
1.2 Conduct biennial capacity & governance assessments	# of NHRIs assessed biennially	20	25	30	35	40	45 (100%)
1.3 Launch Continental NHRI Capacity-Building Framework	Framework status & adoption rate	Not developed	Framework launched	30% adoption	70% adoption	80% adoption	85% adoption
1.4 Support NHRIs to design IDPs	% of NHRIs with IDPs under NANHRI review	10%	20%	30%	40%	45%	50%
1.5 Facilitate annual peer learning	# of NHRIs participating annually	10	12	15	15	18	20
1.6 Support NHRIs in fragile/post-conflict states	# of new/strengthened NHRIs	1	2	3	4	5	5 sustained
1.7 Implement joint advocacy initiatives	# of joint initiatives annually	2	3	3	3	3	3
1.8 Mobilize financial & technical resources	Value of resources mobilized (USD)	$1.5m	$2m	$2.5m	$3m	$3.5m	$4m cumulative
1.9 Support NHRIs to produce reports	# of NHRIs supported annually	10	12	15	18	20	20
1.10 Facilitate coordination platforms	# of platforms convened annually	3	4	5	5	5	5

1.11 Establish operational partnerships	# of new partnerships annually	2	3	4	5	5	5
1.12 Training on NHRI independence	# of NHRIs trained cumulatively	5	8	12	15	18	20
1.13 Governance clinics	# of clinics held annually	2	3	3	3	3	3
1.14 Continental knowledge hub	Hub development & utilization	Not established	Design initiated	Hub launched	50% utilization	75% utilization	85% utilization

Strategic Objective 2: Advance Human Rights Protection in Response to Mainstream and Emerging Challenges

Strategic Action	Indicator	Baseline 2025	Target 2026	Target 2027	Target 2028	Target 2029	Target 2030
2.1 Climate justice & environmental rights	% of NHRIs integrating climate & environmental rights	15%	25%	40%	55%	65%	75%
2.2 Civic space & digital rights	# of NHRIs with digital rights capacity	8	12	18	22	28	35
2.3 Migrants & displaced populations	# of NHRIs with dedicated protection programmes	10	15	20	25	30	35
2.4 ESCR in high-risk sectors	% of NHRIs producing sector-focused ESCR reports	20%	30%	45%	60%	70%	80%
2.5 Early warning & rapid response	# of NHRIs with functional systems	5	8	12	15	18	20
2.6 Gender, disability & youth mainstreaming	% of NANHRI-supported programmes inclusion-screened	25%	35%	50%	65%	75%	100%
2.7 Regional & international mechanisms	# of coordinated submissions annually	4	6	8	10	12	15
2.8 Torture prevention, litigation & treaties	# of NHRIs with strengthened legal/torture-prevention capacity	6	10	14	18	20	22

Strategic Objective 3: Advance Research-Driven Advocacy, Cooperation, and Visibility

Strategic Action	Indicator	Baseline 2025	Target 2026	Target 2027	Target 2028	Target 2029	Target 2030
3.1 Institutionalize	Research system	No system	Framework designed	Policy adopted	Operational	Scaled	Sustained

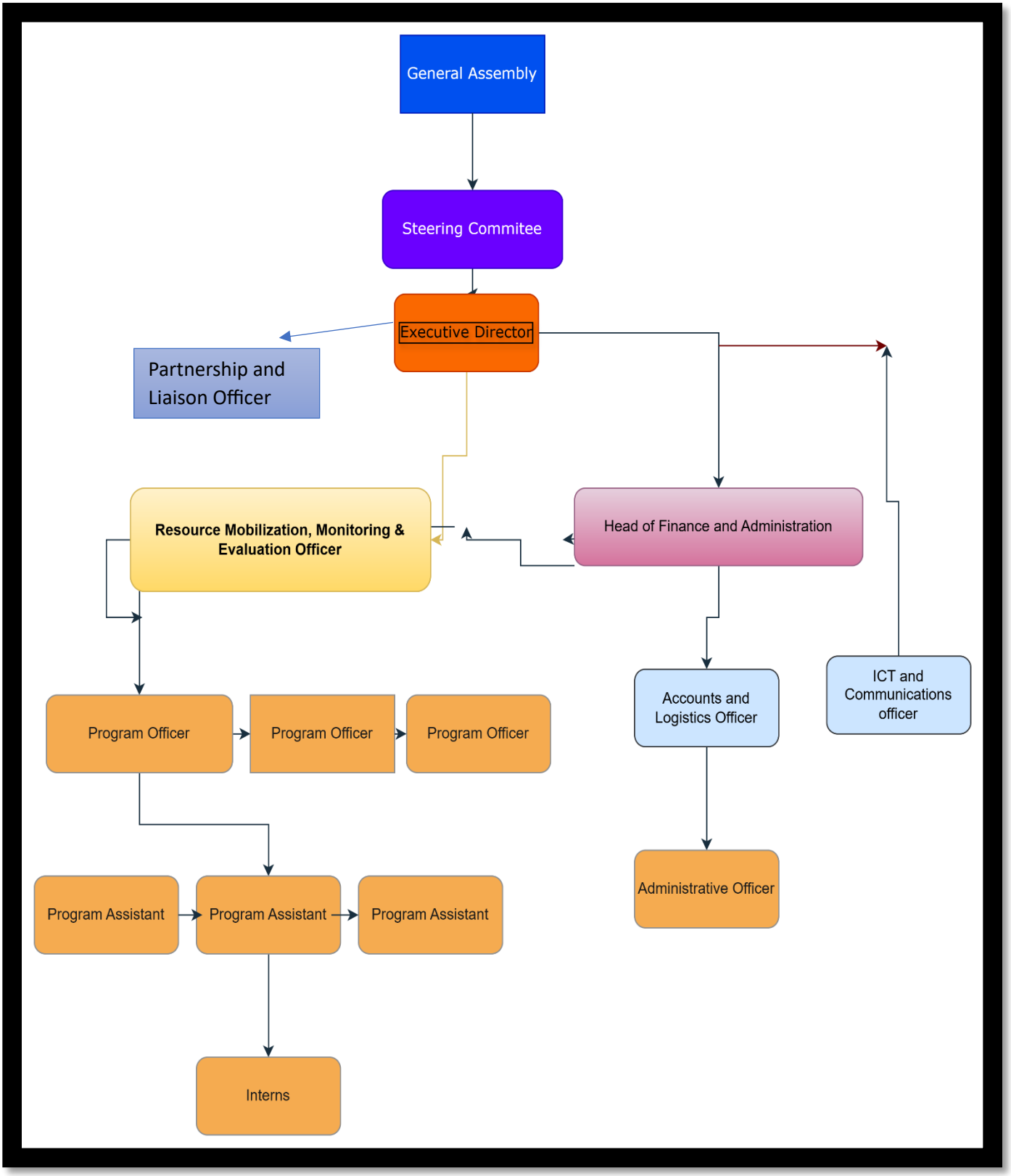
research systems	development stage						
3.2 Reports, indices & briefs	# of continental publications annually	5	7	10	12	12	15
3.3 Continental knowledge hub	Platform status & usage	None	Designed	Development	Launched	60% utilization	1,000+ active users
3.4 Digital monitoring tools	# of NHRIs using digital monitoring tools	5	8	12	15	18	22
3.5 Digital advocacy capacity	# of NHRIs trained	10	15	20	25	30	35
3.6 Digital communications strategy	Strategy development & adoption	None	Drafted	Adopted	40% adoption	70% adoption	90% adoption
3.7 Research & innovation partnerships	# of active partnerships	5	7	10	12	15	20
3.8 Stakeholder & media engagement	# of structured engagements annually	10	12	15	18	20	25
3.9 Youth & marginalized inclusion	# of NHRIs implementing inclusion programmes	5	8	12	15	18	20
3.10 Annual forums & dialogues	# convened annually	1	2	3	3	3	3
3.11 Global policy presence	# of global platforms engaged annually	5	7	8	9	10	12

Strategic Objective 4: Strengthen NANHRI's Governance, Operational Efficiency, and Financial Sustainability

Strategic Action	Indicator	Baseline 2025	Target 2026	Target 2027	Target 2028	Target 2029	Target 2030
4.1 Governance reform	% of governance reforms implemented	40%	55%	70%	80%	90%	100%
4.2 Thematic working groups	# of fully functional working groups	3	4	5	6	6	7

4.3 Internal policies digitized	# of core policies digitized	3	5	7	8	9	10
4.4 Financial systems modernization	% of financial transactions processed digitally	30%	50%	70%	85%	95%	100%
4.5 Performance & digital HR systems	% of staff under KPI-based PMS	20%	40%	60%	80%	90%	100%
4.6 Digital operational tools	% of programmes using digital systems	25%	40%	60%	75%	85%	95%
4.7 MEAL-R framework	Framework implementation stage	Not developed	Designed	Piloted	Operational	Scaled	Institutionalized
4.8 Specialized operational units	# of specialized units established	2	3	4	5	5	5
4.9 Resource mobilization strategy	RM strategy implementation stage	Draft	Finalized	Rolled out	Active	Scaled	Sustained
4.10 Cybersecurity & data protection	% compliance with cybersecurity standards	30%	50%	70%	80%	90%	

APPENDIX B:SHORT-TERM ORGANOGRAM



APPENDIX C: LONG-TERM ORGANOGRAM

