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REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

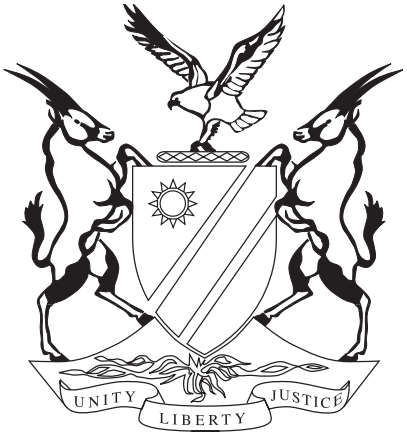
GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA
CIVIC ORGANISATIONS
PARTNERSHIP POLICY

December 2005

Office of the President

NATIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

Decision No. 26th/06.12.05/002



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NATIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ALAN	Association of Local Authorities in Namibia
ARC	Association of Regional Councils
CBO	Community-Based Organisation
CO	Civic Organisation
CCN	Council of Churches in Namibia
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DED	German Development Service
FED	Farmers' Extension Development (Group)
GRN	Government of the Republic of Namibia
JCC	Joint Consultative Committee
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NANGOF	Namibia Non-Governmental Organisation Forum
NCCI	Namibia Chamber of Commerce and Industry
NDP	National Development Plan
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
NPC	National Planning Commission
NPCS	National Planning Commission Secretariat
NUNW	National Union of Namibian Workers
PEAC	Presidential Economic Advisory Committee
PPP	Public Private Partnership
SWAPO	South West African People's Organisation
UN	United Nations
VA	Voluntary Association (under common law)
VSO	Voluntary Services Overseas
WO	Welfare Organisation
WBCG	Walvis Bay Corridor Group

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FOREWORD i
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY iii

1 INTRODUCTION 1

2 SITUATION ANALYSIS 2
2.1 HISTORY OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN NAMIBIA 2
2.2 CURRENT LEGAL AND REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT 3
2.3 THE EMERGENCE OF PARTNERSHIP 4

3 PRINCIPLES UNDERLYING THE POLICY 6
3.1 DEFINING PARTNERS 6
3.1.1 Civil Society 6
3.1.2 Civic Participation 6
3.1.3 Civic Organisations 6
3.1.4 Non Governmental Organisations 7
3.1.5 Community Based Organisations 7
3.1.6 Government and Intermediary Organisations 8
3.2 CORE VALUES AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF PARTNERSHIP 9

4 OVERALL GOAL, OBJECTIVES, ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES AND STRATEGIES 10
4.1 OBJECTIVE 1: To create a greater commitment for civic participation through the promotion and encouragement of active citizenship 10
4.1.1 Rationale 10
4.1.2 Anticipated Outcomes 11
4.1.3 Implementation Strategies 11
4.2 OBJECTIVE 2: To enhance the environment for civic participation and partnership 12
4.2.1 Rationale 12
4.2.2 Anticipated Outcomes 13
4.2.3 Implementation Strategies 13
4.3 OBJECTIVE 3: To bring government closer to the people and create partnership opportunities that benefit government, civic organisation and civil society 14
4.3.1 Rationale 14
4.3.2 Anticipated Outcomes 14
4.3.3 Implementation Strategies 14
4.4 OBJECTIVE 4: To enhance the capacity of partners (government and civic organisations) to enter into partnerships and jointly respond to development challenges and opportunities in an efficient, effective and sustainable fashion 15
4.4.1 Rationale 15
4.4.2 Anticipated Outcomes 15
4.4.3 Implementation Strategies 16

5 INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK 18
5.1 INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW 18
5.2 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES 18
5.2.1 *Advisory Committee* 18
5.2.2 National Planning Commission 18
5.2.3 Civic Organisations 19
5.2.4 Line Ministries 19
5.2.5 Regional Governments and Local Authorities 19

ANNEX: POLICY OBJECTIVES, OUTCOMES AND INDICATORS OF ACHIEVEMENT MATRICES 20

FOREWORD

In 1999, the Government of the Republic of Namibia (GRN) undertook a National Capacity Building Assessment to determine the current status and availability of human, material, and institutional resources for fulfilling the country's national and socio-economic development objectives. Within the context of civil society, the study observed that the policy, legislative and institutional frameworks within which Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and other Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) operate are not adequately defined. Moreover, Government and NGOs collaboration has been somewhat ineffective, being limited to just a few organisations. This may be due to the lack of clear guidelines on partnership, and because NGOs and civil society in general remain weak and divided, and have seldom been able to present a common front on issues affecting them.

Nevertheless, despite their current capacity constraints, NGOs, Community-Based Organisations (CBOs) and other COs play a vital role in providing links to local communities and increasing social capital through the interventions they sponsor. They have undertaken commendable work since independence in funding and implementing development programmes and projects in specific and cross-cutting sectors, at local, regional, national and international levels. Thus, their valuable contribution to national development is widely recognised.

Similarly, despite the absence of a clear policy framework for Civic Organisations-Government partnership, considerable progress has been made in terms of collaboration, especially at the sectoral level. Civic Organisations have participated in policy dialogues and policy formulation, including discussions on the preparation of the national budget and other fiscal policies. The Government also appreciates that partnership with COs can augment its own limited resources by leveraging additional project proposals, finances and competencies. In addition, partnership can help bring about synergy and co-ordination among the various actors operating within an area or sector; create a broader political, economic and social community, and help ensure people's participation in national development. In short, partnership amongst development agencies is a major determinant of the success of development interventions, and hence should receive firm policy support.

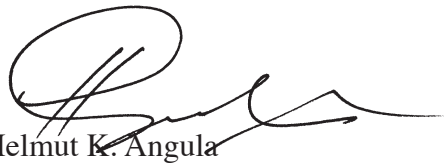
In order to implement the national assessment recommendations and address the issues mentioned above, the Government included the formulation of a Partnership Policy in the five-year Second National Development Plan (NDP2). With financial support from the Governments of France and the Federal Republic of Germany, GRN facilitated the policy formulation process. An Advisory Committee consisting of the National Planning Commission Secretariat (NPCS) and representatives of COs was established to ensure the full participation of all stakeholders in the policy formulation process.

The overall goal of the policy framework is to create a working partnership for the entire country, its citizens and their civic organizations, and for the Government. Thus, the policy reflects those provisions of Vision 2030 that foresee COs working in close partnership with Government, utilising their capacities fully in their advocacy for the people, and in the promotion of national development.

It is clear that all the principles of the partnership policy cannot be realised under the existing, registration and regulatory framework for COs. Thus, a major feature of the policy is its call for the formulation of a new Bill, leading to the establishment of a voluntary, parallel system of registration for those wishing to enter into partnership with Government. The new system would not replace, but rather would complement existing provisions for current legal forms of COs. The details of the proposed Act will be developed in a highly participatory manner.

It is important to state that neither the policy nor the proposed Act intend to control the activities of COs in Namibia. Rather, they seek to provide a comprehensive framework to guide their operations and to harmonise their activities in order to complement the developmental efforts of the Government. This will also allow effective co-ordination of the services provided, more efficient targeting and optimal use of scarce resources, especially by eliminating duplication of functions. Thus, pursuit of the policy will contribute to a coherent approach towards the realization of national development objectives.

Finally, I would like to thank all those who participated in the formulation of this policy. I would also wish to acknowledge the financial support received from France and Germany for consultancy inputs, and the assistance committed by the European Commission in commencing its implementation.



Helmut K. Angula
Director General
National Planning Commission

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The introductory chapter reasons the rationale for partnership between the Government, civil society and their organisations and puts partnership into a national development context. The sector mission in the Second National Development Plan (NDP2) for civil society is to create an enabling environment for civil society and its organisations to operate more effectively and efficiently in mobilising, managing and utilising resources; and to facilitate these organisations to play an active role in the social, political and economic development of Namibia. In line with this mission, NDP2 recognises the prominent role civic organisations (COs) play in the development of the country.

There are past and present factors that have shaped the situation of civil society in Namibia. Naturally, these are closely intertwined, but the distinction between them helps to respond to past influences within a contemporary setting. In Chapter 2, a situation analysis provides the historical background of civil society and outlines the present legal and regulatory environment. It also sheds light on past and present experiences of partnership and shows that there is sufficient experience to support the formalisation of partnership arrangements between the Government and COs.

Chapter 3 defines partners and partnership, together with its core values and principles. The term 'civil society' includes individuals, their voluntary organisations, the private sector as a sector and their relationship with each other as well as with the Government. Thus, civil society houses diversity and difference, which emerge as a result of freedom of association. Unlike Government, civil society should not be seen as a uniform entity which can be consulted or recruited for a specific purpose.

The Government and its agencies assume the responsibility to stay in close contact with citizens, either directly or through civil society and its COs. In doing so, various governmental bodies have different roles and functions with respect to consultation, co-operation and collaboration. There is a need to establish clear principles of collaboration and partnership. Partnership should clearly state the purpose of collaboration, aim at building mutual trust and create an enabling environment for collaboration. This should be shared by all participating groups and should contain achievable goals and objectives. Collaborating partners should have the same vision. They should have a clearly agreed upon mission, with accompanying objectives and strategies. Whilst the mission and goals of each of the collaborating partners will be different, their collaborative goals and interests should be shared.

In Chapter 4, the policy core is outlined. The Government, in consultation with civil society aims to create a 'Working Partnership' - a partnership that works for the entire country, its citizens and their civic organisations and for the Government.

The policy has four objectives:

- To create a greater commitment for civic participation through the promotion and encouragement of active citizenship.
- To enhance the environment for civic participation and partnership.
- To bring the Government closer to the people and create partnership opportunities that benefit the Government, COs and civil society.

- To enhance the capacity of partners (the Government and COs) to enter into partnerships and jointly respond to development challenges and opportunities in an efficient, effective and sustainable fashion.

For each of these four objectives the anticipated goals, outcomes and indicators of achievement are outlined.

In order to put the policy on a sound footing and promote its further development, Chapter 5 describes practical implementation strategies for each policy objective. These implementation strategies deal with the following:

- The promotion of, and support to, indigenous approaches of civic participation.
- The communication of local and international best practices.
- The planning and implementation of a national initiative campaign.
- Support to the International Day of the Volunteer.
- The creation of learning opportunities.
- The development of an improved legal and regulatory environment through the formulation of a new Registration for Partnership Act.
- The development of the CO database.
- The formulation of a Code of Good Practice.
- Government synergy in the involvement of COs.
- Opportunities for civic involvement.
- The production and dissemination of a bi-annual partnership newsletter.
- Measuring the impact of partnership in development.
- Networks and linkages.
- Capacity building initiatives.
- The establishment of a Partnership Help Desk.

Chapter 6 deals with the organisational and institutional arrangements to foster and support partnership. An Advisory Committee will be established under the National Planning Commission (NPC) Act. Members of this committee will represent the Government and COs from all sectors identified in the policy. The NPC shall review the present structure of its Secretariat with regard to its responsibilities towards COs, identify gaps in line with the policy recommendations and strengthen its capacity to promote and facilitate partnership arrangements. Civic organisations have the opportunity to make use of the services of NPCS. It is essential to note that these services are not in conflict with or take over the functions of the Namibia Non-Governmntal Organisation Forum (NANGOF) or other apex organisations. Such organisations will continue to act and advocate in the interests of COs across CO sectoral lines.

1 INTRODUCTION

The adoption of Namibia's Constitution in 1990 was hailed around the world for its enlightened approach to human rights and democratic freedoms. Namibia provides the space for people to express their freedoms. These rights cannot be repealed or amended. All other development priorities reflect and operate within these constitutional requirements.

Through 'Vision 2030', all stakeholders have sketched the road ahead for the country. Whilst this vision should not change, scenarios may arise from internal or external forces and factors, which may challenge the achievement of this vision. It will be essential that the Government and civil society are prepared and ready to face such scenarios and make strategic adjustments to policy implementation.

Short and medium term strategies are outlined in the National Development Plans (NDPs). The sector mission in NDP2 for civil society is to create an enabling environment for civil society and its organisations to operate more effectively and efficiently in mobilising, managing and utilising resources; and to facilitate these organisations to play an active role in the social, political and economic development of Namibia. In line with this mission, NDP2 recognises the prominent role civic organisations play in the development of the country, thus creating the need for the promotion and development of these organisations and calls for:

- A definition of the sector.
- A framework for collaborative, consultative and co-ordinated approaches to issues of public interest between COs and the Government.
- A mechanism for the exchange and flow of information on development activities for better co-ordination in order to minimise wastage of resources.
- Mechanisms to promote transparency, accountability, awareness and commitment among civic organisations and their stakeholders.
- Criteria for evaluating the impact of civic organisations on development (e.g. HIV/AIDS, employment, poverty reduction, environment, gender, democracy, good governance, regional development, youth, people living with disabilities, etc.).

A number of specific reasons for pursuing partnership approaches have been identified:

- They provide a forum for consensus building and promote the development of a strategic approach.
- They facilitate co-ordination in action realising benefits from avoiding overlap and duplication.
- They extend the scope of action and facilitate integration across policy fields, and sectoral and agency boundaries.
- They enhance impact and effectiveness through combined and more efficient use of resources (e.g. co-ordination, integration and concentration on priorities).
- They allow and facilitate a 'division of labour', with each actor fulfilling his comparative advantage.
- They enhance the outcomes of the work of individual partners/organisations.
- They promote innovation and provide broader perspectives.
- They promote more customer-orientation in the development and delivery of public programmes (including improved targeting) and provide links to local people and/or beneficiaries.
- They establish a greater sense of local identity, community and ownership, leading to more inclusive, equitable and socially sustainable development.

2 SITUATION ANALYSIS

2.1 HISTORY OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN NAMIBIA

Before Independence, there was little opportunity for COs' involvement in Namibia. A number of COs, such as the churches, trade unions, student movement, women's organisations and human rights organisations were active in providing mainly social protection and support in the country whilst being highly critical of the colonial regime. Others, outside the liberation movement were tolerated and at times used as 'fronts' by the colonial administration with no, or very questionable legitimacy. However, it can be argued that the liberation struggle against apartheid and colonialism in itself was a movement of civil society, which proved to be highly effective and eventually contributed to the end of colonial occupation.

The establishment of democracy in Namibia had its watershed years in the period following Independence in 1990. The first democratically elected Government realised the importance of NGOs in the development and reconstruction of the country. There has accordingly been a rapid growth in the number and size of NGOs and other civic organisations.

Development policy formulation, immediately after independence, was initiated and driven by the Government. The civil society sector emerged fragmented and experienced extremely low levels of capacity. However, the situation changed rapidly within the first years of independence. Due to the establishment of democratic principles and practices and freedom of association, Namibia became a favoured country of international donor agencies, which were eager to support a fast growing civil society sector. This sector started assuming policy lead roles and became increasingly available for partnership in development. A key source of effectiveness was not only the ability to engage with other interests, but also the capacity to form alliances and coalitions. Faith-based organisations, community-based networks, community-based natural resource management networks, women' groups and national and regional coalitions of NGOs became key actors, as did trade unions and business representative organisations.

There are past and present factors that have shaped the situation of civil society in Namibia. Naturally, these are closely intertwined, but the distinctions between them help to respond to past influences within a contemporary setting. Historical factors that have influenced the current state of civil society in Namibia include:

- the legacy of colonisation and apartheid — where many types of civic organisations were banned by the South African Government, and where civic actions were closely monitored, if allowed at all;

- the adoption of western models of civil society, rather than developing models that are based on the search and adaptation of indigenous and African models of civil society.

Contemporary factors that contribute to the state of civil society in Namibia include:

- the realisation that the Government cannot do it alone and that local and/or sectoral association and organisation can lead to essential development gains.
- the disinterested attitudes that promote a tendency to leave everything to the Government, rather than take an active role.

- the emergence of civic organisations that once were sympathetic to the governing party, now having become critical of it.
- the limited avenues for participation in the market economy and the opportunity to access donor funds have provided a potential career avenue for people to form COs, who would otherwise be working in business.
- the growth in employment opportunities for many Namibians in both the public and private sectors, leaving the non-government sector with a shallow human resource base.

2.2 CURRENT LEGAL AND REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT

Under the current legal and regulatory framework, COs have the option to be registered and operate as:

- ***Voluntary Associations*** (VAs) (under common law) with very few regulatory requirements. All such VAs have to be membership based, and this must be reflected in their constitutions and by-laws.

- ***Trusts*** and ***Foundations*** (Trusts Moneys Protection Act No.34 of 1934) where the trust deed is a more formal legal document, which is registered with the Master of High Court. Trusts are never membership organisations, but are governed by a Board of Trustees, appointed by the Trust.

- ***Section 21 of Companies*** Act, No: 28 of 2004 (Companies not for gain, not having a share capital, as part of the Companies Act) where the most formal legal document defines the rights and obligations of members, and more public reporting about the management and finances of the organisation is required. It should be noted that all VAs would in principle have the opportunity to establish and register as a Section 21 of Companies Act, No: 28 of 2004.

- ***Welfare Organisations*** (Welfare Act No.12 of 1979) , granted by the Ministry of Health and Social Services). This arrangement relates more to the special recognition of an organisation as a welfare organisation in addition to being set up under any of the three possibilities above.

- Registration and/or incorporation within the framework of Acts of Parliament, official Government policy or Cabinet decision. Co-operatives, (under Cooperative Act No. 23 of 1996), Trade Unions, Councils, such as the Sports Council and Youth Council, School Boards are all examples.

The following observations can be made: Voluntary Association is a very loose arrangement and compliance under common law has rarely been challenged. There is hardly any control over the accountability and transparency of such organisations. Thus they are sometimes labelled as 'the informal sector of civil society'. The common law to allow for association also turns a blind eye to the 'invisible' or informal associations that have sprung up. Among these are groups that legitimately or illegitimately and routinely participate in policy processes. They include pressure groups, informal types of associations in urban and rural areas, as well as the influence of the 'new' churches. In many of these own rules of behaviour and solidarity networks have emerged to provide them with some self-protection and inclusion. They often are very much aware of donor

programmes, but may themselves also remain invisible to donors. They include local women's projects, producers' associations or farmers clubs and village-based clubs, and committees that operate as part of the extension services of line ministries.

In the case of Section 21 Companies, hardly any of them follow the prescribed Memorandum of Association. Instead they attach their own individual constitutions in place of such Memoranda often in contradiction with the Act. Section 21 Companies often appear to be 'hybrids' of membership based organisations (Associations) and Trusts with very little clarity over the term 'member' used in the Act.

The need to improve upon the current legislative and institutional framework within which Civic Organisations operate is recognised in NDP2. Consequently, this policy calls for the formulation of a New Bill , to establish a transparent, voluntary, parallel registration process in order to complement existing provisions and to nurture the principles of partnership.

2.3 THE EMERGENCE OF PARTNERSHIP

A range of Government bodies have taken the lead in delivering policies that promote participation, including local and regional Government, independent local development agencies and central Government operating locally targeted measures. The Government immediately after independence, having recognised the important role that COs can play in development, made provision for CO involvement in policy development and implementation. Indeed the role of civil society is mentioned in virtually all Government policies. Government recognises that development has to be bottom-up and must include the active participation of citizens and their organisations, thus 'democratising development'. However, in practice, CO participation has, arguably, been rather minimal. Some of the multiple reasons for low levels of involvement in policy and strategy implementation are listed below:

- COs are insufficiently aware of policy components and miss the opportunity to actively participate both in the formulation of strategies and the implementation of such strategies. The Government has not been sufficiently forthcoming in creating awareness amongst COs about what participation (co-operation and collaboration) opportunities exist, arguing that it is the role of COs to identify and propose strategies for collaboration.

- Lack of a partnership policy framework. Formal recognition of COs and a degree of institutionalisation of partnership are desirable in this regard.

- COs fear that their roles may be instrumentalised in the sense that they may become part of the Government bureaucracy without being given the resources to carry out their assigned functions.

Notwithstanding the fact that partnerships between COs and Government have been rather limited to date, the concept is not new. Indeed, there are a number of positive experiences of such partnerships, the most important of which are as follows:

- Formal and/or informal inclusion of the Government in CO structures to improve policy implementation through better communication and joint activity planning. An example is the JCC which has a Minister as its Patron.

- COs' participation on Fora, Boards, Committees and Commissions established by the Government.

- A formal relationship regulated through Acts and/or Cabinet decisions - Trade Unions, Council of Churches in Namibia (CCN), Co-operatives, sports organisations, school boards, Farmers Extension Development (FED) groups, etc.

- The Government has entered into co-operation with some COs delegating functions and authorities to COs, to be carried out on behalf of and in conjunction with the Government.

- Private-Public Partnerships (PPP) to undertake a project and/or provide services. Partnerships occur often at local levels where local authorities share the responsibility of providing services with NGOs. The Walvis Bay Corridor Group (WBCG) is another PPP, where both private and public sector actors manage and promote the transport corridor as a national asset.

Many sector/line Ministries have embarked on community participation in their policies and strategies through planning, management and implementation of those activities. Examples include health, education, natural resource management and housing and water provision. However, this approach is relatively new in Namibia, and line Ministries and civil society will need to develop the necessary skills for developing community capacity, to identify and implement programmes and projects.

In the light of the above it can be argued that there is sufficient experience to support the formalisation of partnership arrangements between the Government and COs and ensure that such partnerships are beneficial to COs, the Government and the ultimate beneficiaries.

3 PRINCIPLES UNDERLYING THE POLICY

3.1 DEFINING PARTNERS

3.1.1 Civil Society

The term *civil society* is complex and has been ascribed many different meanings. For the purposes of this policy, civil society is deemed to encompass all public activity by individuals, their voluntary organisations, the private sector *as a sector* and their relationships with each other as well as with the Government. The term refers to all levels within a country, from grass roots to national, and indeed beyond borders, as the concept of a global civil society becomes stronger.

By definition, civil society houses diversity and difference. It emerges as a result of freedom of association, which enables citizens to organise around interests or values. If there were no freedom to associate, there would be no civil society. In a democracy, freedom is not handed out selectively. Civil society, therefore, comprises groups, networks, movements and interests sympathetic to national development goals and objectives and others who may be hostile to it. Association of freedom includes the right 'not to associate'. Therefore, unlike the Government, civil society should not be seen as a uniform entity which can be consulted or recruited for a specific purpose.

3.1.2 Civic Participation

Civic participation refers to the engagement and/or involvement of individuals and of civic organisations in the public life of Namibian society. Civic participation or action also refers to the involvement of individuals in the activities of these organisations.

3.1.3 Civic Organisations

The term 'civic organisations' refers to a wide range of organisations found at all levels of civil society between the individual or family and the state, and which become involved in activities that pursue the interests of their members, sponsors and/or beneficiaries. These include NGOs, Community-Based Organisations (CBOs), various clubs (such as service clubs and sporting clubs) and interest-groups (such as trusts, foundations, women's groups, trade unions, chambers of commerce, hawkers' organisations, and faith organisations). Individual businesses, which are part of society's economic structure, are excluded from this definition.

It should be noted that the term 'Civil Society Organisation' (or CSO) has not been used in this policy document for the avoidance of ambiguity. Under NDP2, CSO was used to describe networks and mass membership organisations, but not NGOs or CBOs. Under this policy, Civic Organisations refers to ALL the organisations of civil society, including CBOs and NGOs.

Civic organisations have the following characteristics in common:

- They are non-profit distributing.
- They operate in the public interest or in the interest of their members and/or sponsors.
- They adhere to democratic structures.
- Involvement is voluntary.

- They portray high levels of participation.
- They emphasise empowerment of beneficiaries.
- They operate independently (both financially and administratively) from the state and donors.

3.1.4 Non Governmental Organisations

As noted above, Civic Organisations include NGOs. Again this is a difficult term to define, as such organisations vary widely in scope and character, depending on their philosophy, size and sectoral expertise. They adhere to all the characteristics of COs mentioned above, and whilst most have undergone a considerable degree of professionalisation over recent years, altruism and volunteerism are still important features. In addition, in order to match the criteria for recognition by the United Nations, NGOs should not constitute a criminal group, or engage in violence.

NGOs operate at different levels. Some work country-wide, in which case they are usually referred to as National NGOs, while others are trans-national, and may be described as International NGOs. The latter types are usually based in developed countries, and operate in several developing nations. For the purposes of this policy, the term NGO refers to both levels, but with particular emphasis on national organisations.

Whilst some definitions of NGOs take a very broad stance and apply the term to any not-for-profit organisation that is independent of government (including grass roots organisations), this policy views NGOs as national development agencies. As such, they usually operate in more than one local community, and in more than one field. Thus, they are seen as intermediary organisations between local communities and other development actors, such as Government, International Development Partners and the private sector. They also have an independent board of directors or trustees.

NGOs in Namibia have been active in almost all the major development sectors, such as education and training; agriculture and rural development; small and medium enterprises; gender issues; health; housing; relief, and human rights and democracy. A growing number of them have moved from operational, service delivery, to advocacy and capacity building.

3.1.5 Community Based Organisations

In contrast to NGOs, Community Based Organisations (CBOs), whilst also sharing the characteristics of all COs mentioned above, are defined under this policy as those organisations which operate at the very basic grassroots level. They tend to be locally based, with a relatively small membership comprising a group of individuals who have come together to safeguard or further their own, shared interests or to undertake self-help projects. CBOs are often established with the assistance of NGOs. Whilst the latter typically deliver goods and services, CBOs tend to be the recipients, although they often also constitute the institutional framework through which beneficiary participation is realised.

Although some CBOs can be quite well organised and formally constituted, most are rather informal. For this reason, it is difficult to estimate their number in Namibia. Typical examples include women and youth groups; housing associations; farmers' leagues; savings and credit associations; water point committees and conservancies.

3.1.6 Government and Intermediary Organisations

The Government and its agencies assume the responsibility to stay in close contact with citizens, either directly or through civil society and its civic organisations. In doing so, various Governmental bodies have different roles and functions with respect to consultation, co-operation and collaboration.

The Office of the President through the NPC plans and directs the course of development and interacts closely with civil society. In addition, the office initiates fora, platforms and commissions in which the opportunity exists to discuss and make recommendations of national importance. The Presidential Economic Advisory Committee (PEAC), Presidential Commissions, the drafting of 'Vision 2030' and the 'Smart Partnership' concept are examples.

The Parliament as the legislative arm of the Government consults citizens prior to the promulgation of laws through Parliamentary Standing Committees, which arrange public meetings and hearings. These Standing Committees also co-operate more regularly and formally with segments of civil society such as the business community through NCCI. Through the Parliament's constituency outreach programme, lawmakers ensure that regular consultations occur with citizens and take the opportunity to acquaint themselves with local civil society activities.

Political parties are part of the political make-up of society and are therefore not civic organisations. However, political parties take a keen interest in issues affecting their voters and ensure that development agendas are embedded in their political manifestos. They ensure that democracy stays alive. Political parties engage themselves in development and civic activities such as the combating of social evils (violence and crime) and HIV/AIDS. Through the wings of political parties (such as the Elders' Council, Youth League, and Women Councils), which very often function as civic organisations, important issues in the areas of youth unemployment, education, gender and social safety nets are addressed. Political parties in Namibia can also collaborate more formally with COs through formal or informal affiliation. The most obvious case is the political affiliation of National Union of Namibian Workers (NUNW) to the SWAPO party.

Ministries are responsible for drafting policies, which are adopted by the Cabinet. In these policies the participation of civil society is stressed and partnership with civic organisations recommended. Ministries are open to discuss and enter into partnerships with COs in line with these policies and are in a position to build CO capacity to make the partnership effective.

Government agencies such as the Electoral Commission, the Office of the Ombudsman, Councils established by Acts of Parliament, the Social Security Commission, the Women and Child Abuse Centres, law enforcement agencies, etc., all have a history of collaborating with individual citizens, groups of citizens and civic organisations. Together with civil society they ensure good governance, stability and social security.

Sub-national governments (Local Authorities and Regional Governments) have emerged as very important partners of civic organisations. At local level many partnership arrangements exist, such as in low cost housing (for example, with the Shack Dwellers Federation), and with informal market operators, etc. Through the Government's

decentralisation policy and enabling act, partnership opportunities are likely to increase. In terms of regional and local planning, the various development committees (Regional, Local, Constituency, Settlement Development Coordination Committees) established under the policy provide a platform for dialogue and joint action. All stakeholders should be party to these committees.

Traditional authorities are not part of civil society as they exercise state authority, either formally by virtue of statutes empowering them to do so or through informal means which enable them to exercise state-like authority. However, traditional authorities play an important role in rural civil society, particularly within an important African society setting. They are also considered by political parties to be able to 'deliver' votes during elections. In addition, they have significant legitimacy and play important roles in local conflict resolution and in impeding and promoting development, for instance in their role in community resource management.

3.2 CORE VALUES AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF PARTNERSHIP

The core values underlying partnership are mutual respect, trust and equality. Whilst partnership arrangements will strive to create synergy in development efforts by increasing collaboration between the state and civic organisations, they will at the same time fully respect the independence of COs.

These core values underpin the guiding principles of collaboration and partnership. Partnership should clearly state the purpose of collaboration, aim at building mutual trust and create an enabling environment for collaboration. This should be shared by all participating groups and should contain achievable goals and objectives. Collaborating partners should have the same vision. They should have a clearly agreed upon mission, with accompanying objectives and strategies. Whilst the mission and goals of each of the collaborating partners will be different, their collaborative goals and interests should be shared.

Communication between collaborative partners should be open and frequent. They should interact often—updating one another, openly discussing issues and conveying all necessary information to one another and to people outside the group. Informal and formal communication links should be established. Channels of communication should be clearly written for information flow. In addition, members should establish personal connections—producing a better, more informed and cohesive group working towards common ends.

All partnerships should ensure that:

- each actor has a recognised role and a clear idea of the benefits to them.
- representatives on the partnership structures are committed individuals with significant authority and influence within their respective agencies.
- there are clear lines of communication between the partners and effective boards, committee and forum structures.
- partnership structures stay flexible to accommodate change with changing circumstances.

4 OVERALL GOAL, OBJECTIVES, ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES AND STRATEGIES OF THE POLICY

The overall goal of the policy is for the Government, in consultation with civil society, to create a 'Working Partnership', a partnership that works for the entire country, its citizens and their civic organisations and for the Government.

This goal will be realised through the achievement of the following four objectives:

- To create a greater commitment for civic participation through the promotion and encouragement of active citizenship.
- To enhance the environment for civic participation and partnership.
- To bring the Government closer to the people and create partnership opportunities that benefit the Government, civic organisations and civil society.
- To enhance the capacity of partners (Government and civic organisations) to enter into partnerships and jointly respond to development challenges and opportunities in an efficient, effective and sustainable fashion.

The overall goal and objectives of the policy reflect the provisions of Vision 2030, which call for civil society, its individuals, groups and organisations to cooperate with Government and its agencies at local, regional and national levels in order to consolidate democratic ideals and create synergy in development efforts so as to maximise the social and economic benefits for the beneficiaries. Indeed, Vision 2030 sees the Partnership policy as the means of ensuring that civic organisations are an integral part of policy and decision making and implementation on issues affecting the nation.

The following sections outline the rationale behind each of these objectives, along with their anticipated outcomes, and the strategies outlining the activities that stakeholders will embark upon to implement the policy. (A summary matrix, which includes possible indicators of achievement, is presented in the Annex).

4.1 OBJECTIVE 1

To create a greater commitment for civic participation through the promotion and encouragement of active citizenship.

4.1.1 Rationale

There is a need to raise awareness for civic participation and enable citizens to play an active role in issues that concern them and their communities. Involving people in development builds community pride and promotes ownership and responsibility. It can also mobilise resources that are within communities and promote a stronger social cohesion. It teaches skills and creates learning experiences. Whilst strong emphasis should be given to developing forms of civil society that are uniquely Namibian by the way they respond to the social, cultural, and historical systems of Namibia and its many local, ethnic and national characters, there is also much that can be learnt from other countries, especially in the Southern African region.

4.1.2 Anticipated Outcomes

- Development partners promote and support indigenous approaches of civic participation and organisation.
- Development partners learn from local and international best practices.
- Development partners adopt effective mechanisms to promote, recognise and reward voluntary action and active citizenship.
- Local and international development partners network to achieve a high level of exposure and transfer of knowledge for civic participation and voluntarism.

4.1.3 Implementation Strategies

i. Promote and support indigenous approaches to civic participation

Rather than relying on imported models of civic participation from the West, the civic practices of African societies can be a source of information, inspiration and dialogue. Far from being lost or forgotten, these practices can be revisited and discussed, with a view to designing patterns of civic participation that are contemporary and relevant to the Namibian context. This can be done by engaging traditional elders and village groupings in discussions that draw from traditional practices that contribute to civil society.

A forum shall be provided for COs to discuss the critical issues that affect the role and efficacy of civic participation. Civic organisations shall identify and communicate civic activities that are indigenous or relevant to Namibia to the forum. NPC shall coordinate the design, and facilitate the implementation, of a series of small pilot projects where local communities, COs and the Government enter into partnership approaches that build upon customary and traditional experience and test their applicability to broader civic activities.

ii. Communicate local and international best practices

NPC shall foster international linkages with organisations engaged in civil society development to access information that can be circulated to interested Namibian organisations. In addition, NPC shall identify critical factors that can enhance the role and contribution of civic participation to public life. This could include drawing from the experiences of existing civic organisations in Namibia and elsewhere, to determine the factors that have contributed to their successes, frustration and disappointments, as well as from the experiences of other organisations involved in the promotion of civil society, such as international development agencies.

NPC together with COs shall also investigate the efforts of other countries and communities in the Southern African region, which have sought to promote civic participation and shall communicate local, indigenous and international best practices by publishing a bi-annual partnership newsletter.

iii. Plan and implement a national initiative campaign

Together with NPC, COs shall promote individual and collective initiative. This shall involve the creation of a better understanding of active citizenship and the role of civic organisations. Voluntary activities provide the basis on which civic participation takes place. Just as leaders are an essential prerequisite for the mobilisation and organisation

of civic organisations, so too are the everyday volunteers. Programmes have been developed internationally to support those who may not be in leadership positions, but who are actively involved in different kinds of community activities. These exemplify how civic participation can be recognised, supported and encouraged. In this vein, NPC shall promote a stronger partnership with the UN system in Namibia in the celebration of the International Day of the Volunteer and use this opportunity to highlight voluntary achievements throughout the country.

Other programmes shall be designed to encourage citizens from all walks-of-life to take actions that improve the quality of their own life and that of their communities. This may involve the promotion of role models, as well as training programmes and competitions that nurture and support initiatives at home, at work, in the community or in clubs and associations. This may also involve an extensive media campaign that highlights the initiatives and civic actions of progressive individuals and organisations.

A 'National Initiative Campaign Task Force' shall be established to plan and implement the campaign. This may be done in close co-operation with a selected local NGO and an international development partner.

iv. Create learning opportunities

Learning opportunities have to be within the range of local people and their organisations. This can involve efforts to modify different elements of the climate by the use of appropriate language, the development of civic leaders, and encouragement and reward practices so that people are more aware of how they can contribute to democratic and development outcomes.

Collaboration with international Volunteer Organisations will be encouraged to identify effective ways to share and learn from their experiences. A task force that works out mechanisms for placement and exchange programmes, where local volunteers can learn from local and international experiences, will also be established.

4.2 OBJECTIVE 2

To enhance the environment for civic participation and partnership.

4.2.1 Rationale

Lack of mandate or legitimacy has sometimes led to misunderstanding between development partners and the client groups for whom the initiatives were intended. Civic organisations and Government agencies can easily stand accused of undertaking development projects in their own interest, such as securing funding for staff, infrastructure and equipment with little of the resources coming the way of the intended beneficiaries. Insufficient legitimacy on the side of COs has often been cited as a reason for poor participation and reluctance to enter into partnerships. Thus, GRN wishes to facilitate the creation of a more enabling environment for partnership to flourish.

4.2.2 Anticipated Outcomes

- Citizens have high levels of trust in civic participation through their respective COs and are prepared to invest voluntary time, skills and leadership.
- Voluntary registration on the 'Civic Organisation data base' of NPC provides enhanced recognition of civic organisations and establishes a sound foundation for development partnership.
- A review of the existing legal and regulatory environment for civic organisations, leads to the formulation of a new Bill to provide a parallel, complementary voluntary registration system for partnership.
- Voluntary registration for partnership will enhance the credibility of COs, leading to increased access to funds and opportunities.
- Mutually agreed upon instruments and principles of operation create high levels of synergy for development programmes.

4.2.3 Implementation Strategies

i. Voluntary registration of COs on the database

Initially, after consultation with COs, NPC shall adopt basic minimum requirements for registration of COs on the database under the existing legal and regulatory environment. Registration will require at the least information regarding:

- The constitution of the organisation.
- A membership list, or a list of its sponsors (board of directors/trustees).
- The last financial and annual report.
- An organisational structure.
- Staffing.
- Services provided.
- An indication of partnership potential.

NPC shall further develop and maintain the existing database and encourage civic organisations to register as service providers or potential partners on this database. The minimum requirements shall be reflected by the entries on the database. The database will be updated on a regular basis and its structure will be amended as necessary following the enactment of the new Act and the establishment of a formal partnership registration system.

ii. Legal and regulatory environment for CO registration/incorporation

A study into the current legal and regulatory framework governing the operations of COs shall be undertaken. This review will seek to clarify the roles and responsibilities of the various actors in partnership arrangements for national development. Thus, it will help reduce confusion and eliminate undue competition and overlapping mandates. The study will ultimately result in the formulation of a new Bill to address current deficiencies. The new Bill will not replace existing legal forms of COs or the current provisions which regulate their operations. Rather, it will provide a complementary system operating in parallel, and which will provide clear advantages to those organisations that do voluntarily choose to register. The review and the new Bill formulation process will be undertaken in a highly participatory manner involving the representatives of all stakeholders, and in the spirit of the Partnership policy.

iii. Code of Good Practice

The Government and COs shall adopt a Code of Good Practice for partnership to encourage transparency, accountability, awareness and commitment among partners. This Code should at least include the following elements:

- the use of formal partnership arrangements (such as Memoranda of Understanding or other contractual arrangements);
- a declaration of existing resources and identification of their sources;
- planning and communication mechanisms;
- reporting mechanisms (reports shall have narrative and financial components).

4.3 OBJECTIVE 3

To bring the Government closer to the people and create partnership opportunities that benefit the Government, civic organisations and the civil society.

4.3.1 Rationale

Partnerships between different levels of Government (local, regional and national) and various segments of society afford access to each actor's unique comparative advantages. Partnership can enhance the Government's initiatives, broaden perspectives and raise awareness, thereby creating an environment conducive to more inclusive, equitable and socially sustainable development, especially at grass-root levels.

4.3.2 Anticipated Outcomes

- Government programmes reach the intended target beneficiaries and are sustainable
- Partnership opportunities between the Government (local authorities, regional governments, national level line and central ministries) and COs are identified and effectively communicated.
- Civic organisations recognise the value of partnership and compete for involvement in Government development programmes.
- Government actors, civic organisations and target beneficiaries are informed about the value of partnership.
- Development partners are able to measure the impact of partnership programmes and communicate the outcome.

4.3.3 Implementation Strategies

i. Government synergy in the involvement of COs

NPC shall adopt a mechanism for the exchange and flow of information on development activities for better co-ordination in order to minimise wastage of resources. This shall include regular fora for dialogue between COs and line Ministries and the dissemination of draft policies and bills, which highlights and calls for involvement of civil society actors.

ii. Opportunities for civic involvement

All line Ministries, through the facilitation of NPC, shall identify and communicate opportunities for civic organisations on an ongoing basis. NPC shall design and disseminate a regular development partnership tender bulletin, which calls for submission of interest from civil society to participate in joint development activities.

iii. Produce and disseminate a periodic partnership newsletter

Developing a history of collaboration or co-operation can create an environment for collaboration. Such a history offers potential participants or partners an understanding of roles and expectations under collaboration and enables them to trust the process. NPC shall produce a periodic partnership newsletter, which (among other issues) will provide information on:

- best practices for partnership with concrete examples that can be replicated.
- models and examples of partnership programmes in other countries.
- updates on partnership opportunities.
- benefits of partnership (voices of beneficiaries).

iv. Measure the impact of partnership in development

It is important to measure the impact of the development initiatives of both civic organisations and the Government and to clearly understand how the initiatives have positively (or negatively) affected the livelihoods of people. Partners shall measure the impact and contribution that partnership driven development has made within the context of the National Development Plans. An impact monitoring system will be devised with appropriate impact indicators.

4.4 OBJECTIVE 4

To enhance the capacity of partners (Government and civic organisations) to enter into partnerships and jointly respond to development challenges and opportunities in an efficient, effective and sustainable fashion

4.4.1 Rationale

Some of the major challenges facing COs include the need to develop and maintain their human resources, to develop and adapt their organisational structures and strategically plan and adapt their vision and policies in an ever changing environment.

4.4.2 Anticipated Outcomes

- Horizontal and vertical linkages between development partners achieve high levels of synergy and avoid overlap and duplication.
- Development resources are shared to enhance the capacity of both civic and public organisations and to create financial and technical sustainability.
- Development partners have access to a range of instruments that assist them with entering into effective and efficient partnership arrangements.

4.4.3 Implementation Strategies

i. Networks and linkages

There is a growing recognition of the need to embed organisations in networks. This is viewed more in terms of service delivery (in the sense that if one organisation cannot provide a certain service, then another in its network may be able to). However, there should be a broader purpose of establishing substantial legitimacy. Partnerships, both horizontal amongst civic organisations and vertical with the Government, provide an important opportunity to build capacity and sustainability.

Partnership can create synergy in development efforts, with both partners – Government and COs - playing their distinctive roles. Such partnership will avoid overlap and duplication and ensure that scarce resources are spent to achieve the maximum benefit for the beneficiaries.

The NPC shall encourage and facilitate networks and linkages between civic organisations and Government in identified development sectors. This will help overcome isolation and enhance opportunities for sharing resources, ideas and concerns. Such partnerships may include the participation of Government and COs on each other's governance and/or programme implementation structures, or the creation of joint programme implementation mechanisms (such as Public Private Partnerships).

ii. Capacity building

The staff of nearly all civic organisations need training so as to build skills in areas such as organisational development, management, project identification and preparation, research, monitoring and evaluation, and networking, lobbying and advocacy. COs are losing skilled managerial and professional staff to the public and private sectors at an alarming rate due to strong competition in terms of the remuneration packages offered by these sectors. Capacity building programmes are especially valuable for groups that are often disadvantaged or excluded from many civic activities.

Financial sustainability is one of the key issues facing COs in Namibia. Although not always under pressure from donors, the leadership and staff of COs feel the need to be more financially sustainable to ensure the continuation of their organisations and the services that they render. Experience has shown that international development partners may change their interests and focus, thus placing COs in serious dilemmas if no provision is made for long-term sustainability. Also, presently there is a decline in traditional sources of external funding to Namibia. This is forcing COs to look at alternative sources of income to continue their work. They are also realising that there is a need to make the environment more conducive for their continued operation.

NPC shall assist in mobilising support to establish sustainable mechanisms to assist COs and strengthen their institutional capacity building. NPC shall provide an interface between COs and international development partners for the accessing of donor funds in the context of partnership arrangements and shall provide access to international networks for the implementation of agreed partnerships.

iii. Partnership Support Services

Development policies should aim to put in place a genuine partnership between public agencies and social actors. It should nonetheless be recognised that there is no one model of partnership. Different models will be appropriate in different conditions, depending on the characteristics of the problems, institutional environment, political factors, experience and culture.

NPC shall facilitate harmonious relationships amongst collaborating partners. It shall design model constitutions for COs, and model agreements for partnership, such as Memoranda of Understanding between collaborating partners (Government and COs), clearly outlining the purpose of partnership, anticipated outcomes, planning and implementation, use of shared resources and means of communication. NPC will also provide general advice to COs that wish to enter into partnerships. This will include the provision of information, brokerage services and the dissemination of model documents. In order to provide such services, a 'partnership help desk' shall be established within NPCS.

5 INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

5.1 INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW

The institutional framework for the implementation of this policy will be considered under the review outlined in section 4.2.3. Issues to be studied will include the role of individual line ministries in the new, parallel registration process; the extent to which the registration of local organisations can be decentralised to the Regional Authorities; and the extent to which certain aspects of the new system can be delegated to civic organisations themselves through voluntary codes, and self-regulation under a representative body. However, until the enactment of the new legislation, the institutional framework outlined below will stand.

5.2 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

5.2.1 Advisory Committee

An Advisory Committee will be established under section 8 of the National Planning Commission Act, 1994 (Act 15 of 1994). Members of this committee will represent all levels of Government and COs. The advisory committee will meet on a quarterly basis to advise NPC on the implementation of the GRN – CO Partnership Policy.

At quarterly meetings the committee shall propose and review policy implementation matters. In between committee meetings, the NPCS in co-operation with members from COs may establish task forces to work on any particular technical issue recommended by the committee to be tabled at the next committee meeting. In particular the committee shall perform the following tasks:

- Oversee the review of the legal and regulatory environment and advise on the formulation of the new Bill for Partnership required for the purpose of improving the environment in line with policy recommendations.
- Assist NPC to put in place the mechanisms and instruments that are needed to fulfil its facilitatory role. In addition to the provision of technical advice to the Partnership Help Desk, the Committee's support will also include the constitution of the CO forum for discussing critical partnership issues; the establishment of the National Initiative Campaign Task Force, and the setting up of a Working Group to develop the required M&E system.
- Bring to the attention of NPC any obstacle that may have hampered the implementation of the policy and to propose measures to rectify such situations.
- Advise on strategies for the implementation of the policy and monitor and evaluate the outcomes.
- Advise NPC on the promotion of the policy.

5.2.2 National Planning Commission

NPC shall review the present structure of its Secretariat with regard to its responsibilities towards COs, identify gaps in line with the policy recommendations and undertake the required capacity improvements. These will include:

- Maintaining and developing the CO partnership database
- Providing ongoing information on partnership opportunities

- Facilitating partnership arrangements and enhancing lines of communication amongst Government, COs, international donors and the private sector
- Providing advisory sevices to both the Government and COs
- Coordinating the impact assessment of activities implemented under development partnerships and collating information from various line Ministries and networks
- Facilitating access to finance and funding
- Building capacity in GRN – CO partnership programmes
- Providing information on GRN – CO partnerships to stakeholders (for example through the production of an annual CO-GRN Development Partnership Report and periodic Partnership Newsletter).
- Ensuring that the policy is implemented in harmony with other GRN policies and in pursuit of the provisions of Vision 2030 with respect to civil society and its partnership with all levels of Government.

5.2.3 Civic Organisations

Civic organisations have the opportunity to make use of the services of NPCS. It is essential to note that these services are not in conflict with or take over the functions of existing apex bodies. Such organisations will continue to act and advocate the interests of COs across CO sectoral lines. They will work closely with NPCS both directly and through the Advisory Committee and will actively participate in the proposed review and formulation of the new Act.

5.2.4 Line Ministries

In addition to participating in the Advisory Committee, each line ministry in sectors in which COs tend to be active will designate a Contact Officer to handle relations with COs operating in their fields and to liaise with NPCS.

5.2.5 Regional Governments and Local Authorities

Sub-national units of Government will be represented on the Advisory Committee by a nominee from the Association of Regional Councils or the Association of Local Authorities in Namibia. In addition, each Regional Council will designate a Contact Officer to handle relations with COs operating in their jurisdictions and to liaise with NPCS.

ANNEX

POLICY OBJECTIVES, OUTCOMES AND INDICATORS OF ACHIEVEMENT MATRICES

The table below outlines the salient aspects of the policy, including its expected outcomes. A column listing possible Indicators of Achievement has also been added. These indicators and their associated targets will be developed further through the Advisory Committee, and will form the basis for ongoing monitoring and later evaluation of the policy's implementation progress and impact. Those suggested below are incomplete and merely for guidance purposes.

OBJECTIVE 1	
To create a greater commitment for civic participation through the promotion and encouragement of active citizenship	
Anticipated Outcomes	**Indicators of Achievement**
Development partners promote and support indigenous approaches of civic participation and organisation	Number, type and value of indigenous approaches supported
Development partners learn from local and international best practices	Number, type and value of international practices documented and communicated
Development partners adopt effective mechanisms to promote, recognise and reward voluntary action and active citizenship	Outcome of the initiative campaign
Local and international development partners network to achieve a high level of exposure and transfer of knowledge for civic participation and voluntarism	Number of exposure opportunities and placements

OBJECTIVE 2	
To enhance the environment for civic participation and partnership	
Anticipated Outcomes	**Indicators of Achievement**
Citizens have high levels of trust in civic participation through their respective civic organisations and are prepared to invest voluntary time, skills and leadership	Increasing membership of COs
Voluntary registration on the 'Civic organisation data base' of NPC provides enhanced recognition of civic organisations and establishes a sound foundation for development partnership	Number of COs utilising the opportunity for voluntary registration
A review of the existing legislative and regulatory environment for civic organisations, leads to the formulation of a new Registration for Partnership Act. This in turn will increase the credibility and legitimacy of COs.	New Act and establishment of a voluntary, parallel system for existing legal forms of COs to register for partnership.
Registration on the complementary partnership registration system allows COs to attract more funds from donors	Increased levels of activity of COs
Mutually agreed upon instruments and principles of operation create high levels of synergy for development programmes	Mutually adopted Code of Practice and level of adherence

OBJECTIVE 3	
To bring the Government closer to the people and create partnership opportunities that benefit government, civic organisation and civil society	
Anticipated Outcomes	**Indicators of Achievement**
Government programmes reach the intended target beneficiaries and are sustainable	Level of satisfaction expressed during Beneficiary Assessment exercises. Degree to which individual programmes meet their specific objectives
Partnership opportunities between Government (local and regional authorities and national level line and central ministries) and civic organisations are identified and effectively communicated	Number of opportunities identified and communicated
Civic organisations recognise the value of partnership and compete for the involvement in government development programmes	Number of tenders and level of response
Government actors, civic organisations and target beneficiaries are informed about the value of partnership	Frequency of partnership newsletter, quality and contributions from civil society
Development partners are able to measure the impact of partnership programmes and communicate the outcome	Impact monitoring system and implementation

OBJECTIVE 4	
To enhance the capacity of partners (Government and civic organisations) to enter into partnerships and jointly respond to development challenges and opportunities in an efficient, effective and sustainable fashion	
Anticipated Outcomes	**Indicators of Achievement**
Horizontal and vertical linkages between development partners achieve high levels of synergy and avoid overlap and duplication	Networks created and level of leadership participation
Development resources are shared to enhance the capacity of both civic and public organisations and to create financial and technical sustainability	Level of growth and sustainability of COs
Development partners have access to a range of instruments that assist them with entering into effective and efficient partnership arrangements	Level of utilisation of help desk and quality of instruments