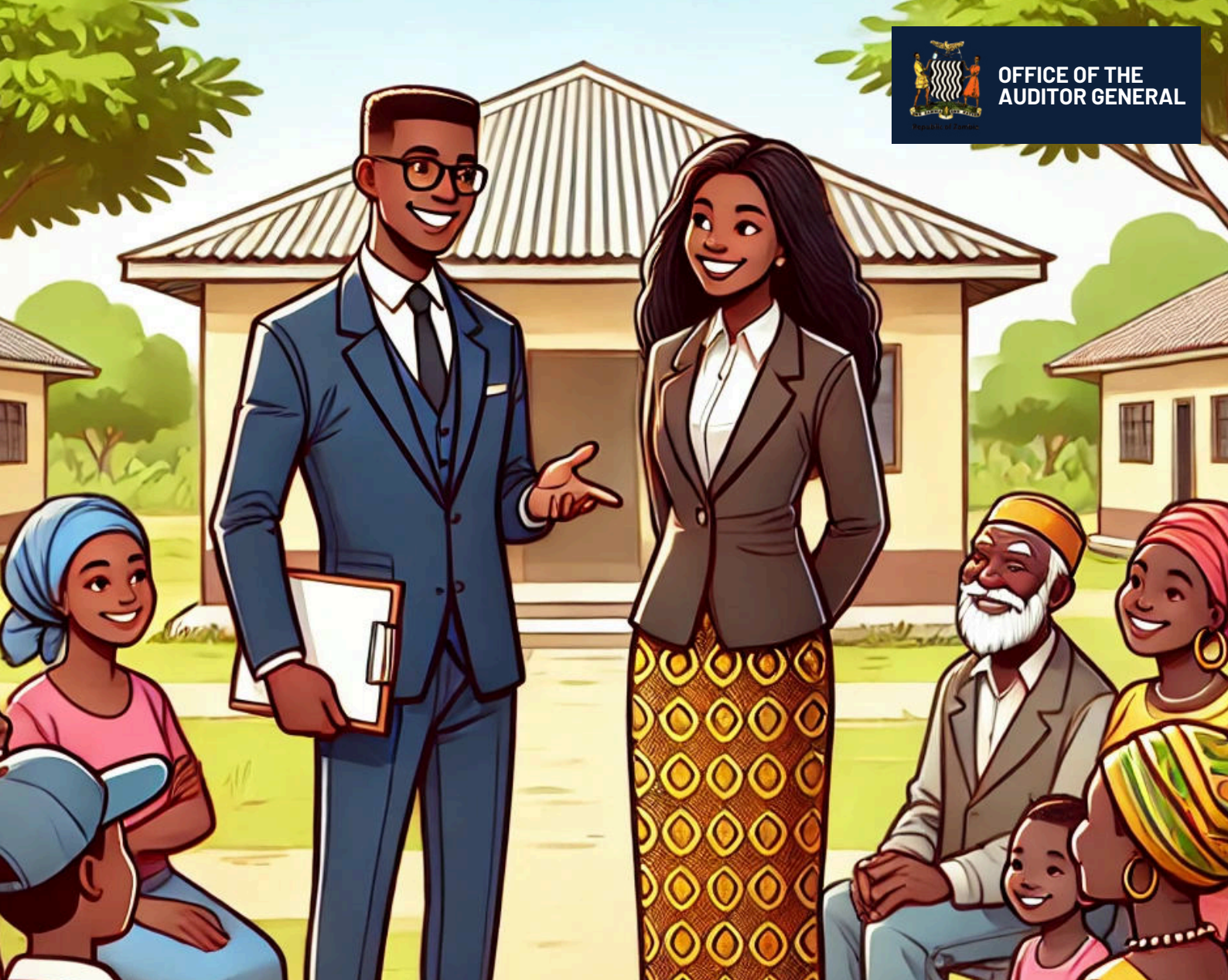




OFFICE OF THE  
AUDITOR GENERAL



# CITIZENS ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

January 2025

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## **A Publication of the Office of the Auditor General**

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## ABBREVIATIONS

AFROSAI-E	African Organisations for Supreme Audit Institutions – English Speaking Countries
CADRE	Collaboration Action and Dialogue to Strengthen the Engagement of SAIs and CSOs in Improving Public Financial Management (CADRE) project.
CEF	Citizens Engagement Framework
CBOs	Community Based Organisations
CSes	Communication and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IDI	INTOSAI Development Initiative
INTOSAI	International Organisation of Supreme Audit Institutions
M & E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
OAG	Office of the Auditor General
PAC	Public Accounts Committee
PFM	Public Finance Management
SAI	Supreme Audit Institution
TI-Z	Transparency International - Zambia

## FOREWORD



It is with great pride and a deep sense of responsibility that I present the Citizens Engagement Framework (CEF) for the Office of the Auditor General (OAG) in Zambia. This landmark document reflects our unwavering commitment to transparency, accountability, and participatory governance. In today's rapidly evolving governance landscape, fostering meaningful engagement with citizens and stakeholders is not merely a choice but a necessity to ensure prudent management of public resources and sustainable national development.

The framework is rooted in the principles enshrined in Zambia's Constitution and aligns with the OAG's strategic priorities. It is designed to institutionalize citizen participation in public financial management, offering robust mechanisms for collaboration, capacity building, and communication. By promoting inclusivity and leveraging innovative tools, this framework aims to empower citizens and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to actively contribute to the accountability process, enhancing public trust in government institutions.

I am confident that this framework will serve as a vital tool in strengthening the bonds between the OAG and the people it serves. It provides an opportunity to harness the collective wisdom of citizens and stakeholders, ensuring that our audits remain relevant, impactful, and responsive to the needs of our society.



As we implement this framework, I call upon all stakeholders, including government institutions, CSOs, and the public, to join us in this journey towards greater accountability and transparency. Together, we can uphold the values of good governance and contribute to Zambia's sustainable development.

I would like to thank the Ministry of Foreign Affairs France under the CADRE GFP project for the provision of funding, the INTOSAI Development Initiative, Transparency International Secretariat and Transparency International Zambia for coordinating the activities and my staff.

I look forward to constructive engagement with our key stakeholders for the benefit of the Zambian people.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Ron Mwambwa', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Dr. Ron Mwambwa  
**Acting Auditor General**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Citizens Engagement Framework (CEF) for the Office of the Auditor General (OAG) in Zambia provides a strategic blueprint for fostering transparency, accountability, and participatory governance. Anchored in Zambia's Constitution and aligned with the OAG's strategic priorities, this framework institutionalizes citizen involvement in public financial management. Through partnerships with Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), this framework empowers citizens to engage in accountability processes, ensuring effective monitoring of public resources and enhancing government accountability and transparency.

The CEF establishes guiding principles, core values, and robust mechanisms for collaboration, capacity building, and communication. It integrates citizen participation into accountability processes, emphasizing inclusivity, mutual respect, and sustainability. The framework leverages technology for enhanced accessibility and transparency while fostering a culture of active engagement among diverse stakeholders.

Key objectives include creating platforms for CSO collaboration, building capacity, and establishing feedback mechanisms. By providing a structured engagement model, the framework seeks to strengthen democratic accountability, and improve governance outcomes. Ultimately, the CEF envisions a participatory audit system that contributes to Zambia's sustainable development goals and builds public trust in systems of governance.



## 1.0. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Background

The Citizens Engagement Framework is an OAG and CSOs initiative designed to enhance public resource management through active citizen participation. Recognising the evolving governance landscape, the framework underscores the value of citizen participation in advancing accountability and transparency. This aligns with INTOSAI Principle 12, which emphasizes responsiveness to citizen needs and effective stakeholder communication.

### 1.2. Objectives

The primary objectives of the framework are to:

- i. Promote citizen participatory audits.
- ii. Establish and implement collaboration platforms between CSOs and the OAG.
- iii. Build capacity for effective citizen and stakeholder engagement.
- iv. Enable monitoring of implementation of audit recommendations.
- v. Foster inclusivity and create robust feedback mechanisms.

### 1.3. Legal Mandate and Operating Environment

The OAG's mandate is rooted in Zambia's Constitution and the Public Audit Act. Key provisions emphasize transparency, accountability, and inclusivity in governance. The Constitution provides the foundation for public participation and oversight of public resources, as highlighted in the following articles:

- Article 5 (1): Sovereign authority vests in the people of Zambia, exercised directly or through elected representatives and institutions.
- Article 8: Establishes national values and principles, including good governance, integrity, and sustainable development.
- Article 198: Mandates transparency and accountability in public finance systems, promoting equitable development and prudent resource use.
- Article 212: Requires the Auditor-General to submit annual audit reports to the President and National Assembly within nine months of the financial year-end.



- Article 267: Defines state institutions to include government departments, agencies, and statutory bodies, underscoring the OAG's authority over these entities.

These provisions collectively guide the OAG in promoting good governance and enabling effective public oversight through its audit functions. The framework adheres to these constitutional imperatives to ensure participatory and transparent audit processes.

The framework adheres to principles enshrined in Articles 5, 8, and 198 of the Constitution, highlighting the importance of public participation and prudent resource use.

#### **1.4. OAG Mission, Vision, Core Values and Strategic Priorities**

- **Vision:** An independent and credible audit institution promoting transparency and accountability in public resource management for the well-being of the citizenry.
- **Mission:** To provide high-quality, timely audit services that foster transparency and accountability in the management of public resources.
- **Core Values:**
  - Integrity: Upholding ethical standards in all actions.
  - Objectivity: Delivering impartial and unbiased audits.
  - Excellence: Striving for diligence and innovation in service delivery.
  - Professionalism: Exhibiting competence and ethical conduct.
  - Confidentiality: Safeguarding sensitive information.
  - Teamwork: working together as a team for a common goal.
- **Strategic Priorities:**
  - a. Improve the audit services.
  - b. Strengthen stakeholder engagement and collaboration.
  - c. Improve resource mobilization and management.
  - d. Optimize operational systems and processes.
  - e. Enhance human capital.
  - f. Improve infrastructure, tools and equipment.

## 2.0. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ENGAGEMENT

The Engagement between the Office of the Auditor General, and its stakeholders is crucial for promoting transparency, accountability, and good governance. Through this framework, the Auditor General's office will engage with CSOs and key stakeholders, ensuring that the audit process is inclusive and responsive to citizens' needs.

### 2.1. Key Benefits

- i. Accountability: Strengthened oversight of public resource use.
- ii. Inclusion: Broader citizen participation fosters a sense of ownership.
- iii. Governance: Improved collaboration leads to better public service delivery.

### 2.2. Benefits for CSOs

- i. Opportunities for advocacy and policy influence.
- ii. Strengthened capacity for effective engagement.
- iii. Enhanced partnerships with government institutions.

### 2.3. Benefits for the Office of the Auditor General

- i. Enhanced credibility and improved stakeholder confidence.
- ii. Broader perspectives for informed audit planning.
- iii. Strengthened implementation of audit recommendations.



### 3.0. SCOPE OF ENGAGEMENT

The framework facilitates citizen involvement in accountability activities including citizen participatory audits from planning to monitoring implementation. It emphasizes participatory audits that align with public concerns, fostering accountability and effective resource utilization. The scope of engagement is flexible and determined by the Auditor General, who will specify the level of engagement based on the nature and requirements of each audit. This engagement can occur:

- i. **Before the Audit:** During the planning phase, citizens and stakeholders can provide input on audit topics and focus areas.
- ii. **During the Audit:** Site visits, or collaborative discussions to enhance the audit process.
- iii. **After the Audit:** Community feedback sessions, and advocacy for implementation of audit recommendations.

The framework ensures structured engagement through consultations, community forums, and simplified audit reports. User-friendly tools and materials will be developed to enable active participation and improve understanding of the audit process by all stakeholders.





## 4.0. THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The conceptual framework integrates guiding principles, core values, and operational structures to institutionalize citizen engagement. It emphasizes respect, transparency, sustainability, and collaboration between the OAG, CSOs, and other stakeholders.





## 5.0. PROCESS TO DEVELOP THE ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

The development of this framework followed a comprehensive and participatory approach, ensuring inclusivity and relevance. Key steps included:

- i. **Stakeholder Analysis:** Identifying key actors, including CSOs, government agencies, and citizens, and understanding their interests and expectations.
- ii. **Research and Benchmarking:** Examining global best practices and aligning them with Zambia's regulatory context to incorporate relevant lessons.
- iii. **Consultation and Feedback:** Conducting workshops, meetings, and surveys to gather input from stakeholders and refine the framework's objectives and mechanisms.
- iv. **Drafting and Review:** Creating the framework document based on collected data and feedback, followed by iterative revisions for clarity and effectiveness.
- v. **Validation and Implementation Planning:** Engaging stakeholders to validate the final framework and establishing timelines, roles, and responsibilities for implementation.



## 6.0.CITIZENS' ENGAGEMENT

This framework is designed to create structured opportunities for citizens and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to actively participate in accountability processes, ensuring that public financial management aligns with the needs and expectations of the people. By bridging the gap between the government and its citizens, the framework enhances public trust and promotes a culture of participatory governance.

Engagement is not a one-size-fits-all approach; it requires flexibility and responsiveness to the unique needs of each audit. Whether through consultations, community forums, or simplified audit reports, the goal is to empower stakeholders to contribute meaningfully, driving improvements in public service delivery and resource utilization

### 6.1 Forms of Citizens' Engagement

- Public Consultations: Open forums for discussing audit topics.
- Community Forums: Collaborative discussions on audit findings.
- Surveys: Tools to gauge public opinion.
- Simplified Reports: Accessible summaries of audit findings.
- Social Accountability Tools: Scorecards and budget-tracking systems.

### 6.2 Guiding Principles of Engagement

In this framework for collaboration, the OAG and the CSOs commit to the following guiding principles which are espoused by these institutions:

- **Respect and Professionalism:** Mutual recognition of roles.
- **Communication:** Clear, timely, and accessible information sharing.
- **Confidentiality:** Protection of sensitive information.
- **Sustainability:** Long-term impact through local capacity building.

This framework notes that all CSOs that engage with the OAG under this framework must adhere to the OAG Code of Ethics.



## 7.0. STAKEHOLDER ENVIRONMENT

The stakeholder environment for citizen engagement is diverse and critical to the success of this framework. Stakeholders include internal actors, such as OAG staff and management, and external stakeholders, including Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), government institutions, and the general public. These stakeholders contribute unique perspectives and resources to ensure effective audit processes.

### Internal Stakeholders

- i. **OAG Staff:** Responsible for implementing audits and ensuring the integration of citizen input.
- ii. **Management:** Provides strategic oversight and ensures alignment with organizational goals.

### External Stakeholders

- i. **Civil Society Organizations (CSOs):** Play a pivotal role in advocacy, capacity building, and mobilizing community participation.
- ii. **Government Institutions:** Collaborate with the OAG to facilitate access to information and support the implementation of recommendations.
- iii. **The Public:** Citizens, as primary beneficiaries of public accountability, actively participate through consultations and feedback mechanisms.
- iv. **Media:** Amplifies audit findings and educates the public on the importance of transparency and accountability.

The success of this framework relies on fostering strong partnerships and creating platforms for meaningful collaboration across these stakeholder groups.



## 8.0. SELECTION OF CSOS FOR ENGAGEMENT

The OAG will adopt a high-level and strategic approach to selecting Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) for engagement. Key considerations include:

- i. **Relevance and Expertise:** CSOs with proven experience in public financial management, governance, or related areas.
- ii. **Inclusivity:** Ensuring balanced representation across sectors, regions, and community groups.
- iii. **Credibility:** Engaging organizations with a strong reputation for integrity and transparency.
- iv. **Capacity:** Prioritizing CSOs with demonstrated ability to effectively mobilize resources and foster community participation.

This selection process aims to establish a diverse and capable network of partners to collaborate on citizen engagement initiatives and participatory audits, ensuring broad and impactful participation in public accountability efforts.





## 9.0. ENABLING FACTORS AND STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVE ENGAGEMENT

The OAG, CSOs and other stakeholders consider the factors below as critical for the success of engagement and realisation of the purpose of engagement:

- a. Capacity and Skills Technical ability of CSOs, Citizens, Officers of OAG and Key Stakeholders** - This will enable them to effectively engage in Citizen Engagement Audits. It is therefore important to embed capacity building programmes for these stakeholders. This will include capacity building in participatory audit tools, social accountability and mechanisms, and in technical areas like the extraction of stakeholder obligations and citizen entitlements. The OAG and CSOs will undertake joint capacity assessment and training. The OAG will, however, seek technical expertise where CSOs lack the capability.
- b. Effective Communication** - Effective communication is key for meaningful engagement between OAG and partners. The OAG will seek appropriate modes of communication that are accessible to its partners. This will include the development of a portal in which the OAG will post relevant information for CEA by the partners in the engagement.
- c. Feedback Mechanism** - The OAG and stakeholders acknowledge that feedback is important in building relationships for future engagements. The OAG will provide timely feedback on CEA reports shared by stakeholders in the engagement.
- d. Leveraging on Technology** - The OAG will leverage technology in its engagement with stakeholders. It is envisioned that the application of technology in the dissemination of information will for instance enable wider and faster sharing of information. The OAG will develop more simplified and user-friendly reports using data visualization.
- e. Availability of Resources** - The OAG, CSOs and other stakeholders acknowledge that availability and access to financial resources is key in successful engagement by citizens in CEA. The OAG and CSOs to individually and collectively mobilize resources towards CEA initiatives.

**f. Standards and Guidelines** - The OAG, CSOs and other stakeholders acknowledge the need for consistency, professionalism and order in the engagement. The OAG will develop and standardise tools that will be used in CEA. Clear standards and guidelines will also be developed to guide the engagement.

**g. Political Goodwill** - The OAG and CSOs acknowledge that political leadership and commitment to accountability is one of the most important preconditions for success of the CEA. Buy-in by legislators is important for institutionalisation of CEA through policy and law. The OAG and CSOs will forge good working relationships with legislators and policy makers.

**h. Common Understanding** - The OAG and partners in the engagement need to understand each other's organisational framework, culture, values, and approach. Partners also need a clear understanding of individual members' roles and responsibilities. Through partnerships the OAG and CSOs can contribute and reap the benefits of others' efforts for a common purpose. Stakeholders in the engagement should have a common understanding of the objectives and desired outcomes of engagement and the means of achieving them. Partners should also be willing to engage.





## 10.0. MONITORING, EVALUATION, AND LEARNING

The Monitoring, evaluation and learning framework ensures continuous assessment of engagement effectiveness. Key performance indicators will track citizen participation, impact on governance, and alignment with strategic objectives. Feedback loops and transparent reporting will enhance accountability and adaptability. The OAG will establish key performance indicators for engagement during the strategic and operational planning process.



## 11.0. CONCLUSION

The Citizen Engagement Framework (CEF) for Zambia represents a significant step toward promoting accountability, transparency, and citizen participation in public financial management. By institutionalising the collaboration between the Office of the Auditor General (OAG) and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), this framework seeks to foster a culture of active engagement, where citizens are empowered to contribute meaningfully to governance processes.

The CEF emphasises the importance of mutual respect, communication, and shared responsibility between the OAG, CSOs, and citizens. Through structured engagement processes and clear roles, the framework ensures that all stakeholders have an avenue for contributing to the oversight of public resources. This partnership strengthens the capacity of the OAG to deliver on its mandate while building public trust in government institutions.

Furthermore, the framework's commitment to leveraging technology facilitates broader access to information, real-time feedback, and transparent data sharing. These measures support inclusive participation, enabling citizens from diverse backgrounds and locations to engage with and understand audit findings.

The successful implementation of the CEF depends on sustained commitment, regular evaluation, and responsiveness to emerging needs. By continuously monitoring progress and adapting strategies, the OAG and its partners can ensure that the framework remains relevant and impactful, contributing to Zambia's overarching goals of good governance and sustainable development. Ultimately, this framework aims to empower citizens, strengthen democratic accountability, and enhance public confidence in Zambia's governance systems.



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