



Strategic Plan

2017 to 2021

**Amplifying Voices of the Poor
and Marginalised to Shape
their Own Development**

**Panos Institute
Southern Africa**



Communication for Empowerment



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Panos Institute Southern Africa (PSAf) is a regional non-profit, non – governmental communication for development organisation that facilitates evidence-based advocacy across a range of developmental themes to influence positive social change.

Between 2017 and 2021, PSAf will implement a new Strategic Plan (PSAf 2017 to 2021) which will guide the development and implementation of PSAf's interventions for the five-year strategic period. The motivation for the PSAf 2017 to 2021 Strategic Plan is to ensure that positive social change is effectively achieved through the use of researched and verified evidence. This advocacy is aimed at

challenging status quo and prevailing beliefs which shape policies and programming and also influences people's opinions, attitudes and behaviours.

As a regional organisation, PSAf's comparative advantage lies in the organisation's utilisation of regional platforms, drawing multi-country evidence, targeting regional bodies to drive and strengthen advocacy. PSAf ensures that citizens effectively participate in the development and implementation of the development interventions of their countries and empowers citizens to ensure that governments effectively carry out their mandate of progressively addressing the challenges of underdevelopment in their countries.

UNDERLYING FACTORS

In assessing the operating context, PSAf identified some factors underlying the broad outlined above as follows:

1. Young democracies with limited or no citizen participation, high levels of inequalities and social exclusion

Southern Africa has young and underdeveloped democracies characterized by lack of or limited accountability of duty-bearers to their citizens, high levels of corruption, low or lack of effective citizens participation among other factors. Some of the key underlying factors as identified by PSAf are:

- i. Lack of platforms for effective citizens engagement in governance and developmental processes;
- ii. Low capacities of citizens in participating and fostering accountability of duty-bearers
- iii. Lack of access to information and platforms for communication
- iv. Lack of or limited respect for human rights and high levels of human rights violations
- v. Poor credibility of democratic elections and high levels of voter apathy

2. Weak governance systems and institutions leading to ineffective policies and policy implementation, monitoring and accountability.

- i. Weak and archaic constitutions and laws that do not provide for separation of powers and strong and independent institutions and processes of governance such as elections, constitutionalism, rule of law, anticorruption, among others.
- ii. High levels of corruption and weak oversight mechanisms by citizens, civil society, media and other relevant institution
- iii. Weak capacities of independent oversight mechanisms such as media, civil society, citizens and the like;

3. Environmental degradation, poor governance of natural resources and weak coping mechanisms;

- i. Lack of accountability in management of natural resources
- ii. Weak policies and lack of effective policy implementation in environmental management and governance
- iii. Weak capacities of communities and civil society organizations in environmental sustainability;
- iv. Persistent climate changes, and weak capabilities to adapt and develop resilience

4. Poor public health status and weak health delivery systems affecting quality of life and people's ability to contribute to socioeconomic development;

- i. Weak health delivery systems and policies
- ii. Low budgetary allocation to health and nutrition
- iii. Weak maternal and child health services
- iv. High prevalence of HIV and a region prone to outbreaks of endemic diseases
- v. Poor public health behavior among communities and citizens

5. Restrictive media space and minimum flow of information

- i. Excessive control and dominance of state media and refusal to transform these into public service media
- ii. Control of media space and rejection of calls to broaden and open media space to private and independent media
- iii. Lack of access to information and No guaranteed freedom of the press
- iv. Poor media policies and weaker media laws

PSAf recognises the need to create deliberate interventions where the poor and the marginalised people can express their developmental needs and concerns, demand accountability from their duty-bearers and decision-makers.

In view of the foregoing, PSAf undertakes to take forward the goal: A Southern Africa Community that owns and drives its development. In pursuing this Vision, PSAf's maintains the mission: To amplify the voices of the poor and marginalised communities in driving their development processes.

2.1 PSAf's NICHE

From the context analysis above, PSAf identifies and prioritises effective communication as a crosscutting challenge across all the identified underlying issues. With good access to accurate information and effective communication, the issues identified above can be strategically and sustainably addressed. PSAf's philosophy is that once duty-bearers are capable and accountable in delivering on their mandate, the challenges facing Southern Africa will be addressed. However, this can only happen if there is an effective, accountable and reliable governance system in place. Conversely, an effective, accountable and reliable governance system is only possible where there exists an effective oversight mechanism. Citizens need to be empowered with knowledge, skills and effective platforms for accessing and giving out information that demands accountability from their duty-bearers to ensure that duty-bearers live up to their mandate.

PSAf therefore aims to empower citizens in Southern Africa to demand accountability from their duty-bearers on developmental and poverty reduction processes. PSAf therefore finds its niche in a communication for development approach whereby information and communication are effectively used to foster accountability and drive development.

2.2 PSAf's UNIQUENESS

It can be argued that there are several organisations in Southern Africa that work on enhancing development efforts by fostering accountability through the stimulation of citizen action in oversight and ownership. PSAf's uniqueness rests in the ability to engage the socially excluded and marginalised populations of the region in these processes. PSAf believes that development processes will only prosper if there is equity and inclusion of all people directly and indirectly affected by decisions made by policy-makers. They can only do so if deliberate opportunities and platforms for participation are made available. PSAf targets the extreme poor, the socially excluded and rural based communities to participate in influencing policy decisions that affect their lives. PSAf believes that the poor are poor because they do not participate in and influence the development agenda building. PSAf believes that if

the poor people are empowered with access to platforms for effective communication and dialogue with decision-makers, and also equipped with relevant information on their rights, they can influence the development agenda and hold their leaders to account.

2.3 PSAf's THEORY OF CHANGE

PSAf's theory of change is built on the premise that information and communication empowers people with knowledge and platforms for effective participation in fostering development processes. In this regard, the theory of change is as follows:

1. **Capacity Building of communities in knowledge and skills to influence decision-making:** The first outcome is focussed on building capacity through increasing knowledge and skills on various issues affecting socioeconomic status of the region. PSAf believes that for poor people and marginalised communities to play an effective role, there is need for their capacities to be enhanced. This will be done through generation of information which will be used to educate people on development processes, development challenges their roles in making the situation better.
2. **Creation of an enabling environment for participation:** Once their capacities are built, there is need for people to access spaces for dialogue and engagement. PSAf recognises that the current media environment is not favourable to participation of poor people in development discussions. Media content is most filled up with political debates amplifying voices of the powerful of society and ignoring the people who should be part of the decision-making processes of issues that affect them. PSAf will aim to create an enabling environment by working with the media to develop their nature and capacity to act as agents of change and provide space to local citizens to dialogue with their duty-bearers.
3. **Facilitation of actual participation in development processes:** The third level of the theory of change builds on the fact that capacity has been built and an enabling media environment ensured. PSAf then has identified four specific governance processes which will be facilitated for participation by the target communities and these are: Electoral processes, tracking of allocation and application of public resources at community level to curb corruption, monitoring public service performance for accountability in public policy implementation and promotion and protection of human rights. PSAf will facilitate participation in these areas to ensure accountable governance, anti-corruption and accountability. The poor people will participate in making their leaders to account and receive input on what they consider relevant responses to their issues.

In reflecting on the Southern Africa socio-economic context, and in line with the 2017 – 2021 Theory of Change, PSAf has prioritised the following as themes of focus:

3.1 Media Development and ICTs: Increased access to development information by the poor and marginalized communities in Southern Africa

If information is to be effectively used to drive development, there is need for increased availability and access to this by the most affected and by the vulnerable groups in those communities. There is plenty of available information online and through works of research and analysis that is still not being accessed by the poor and marginalised in our communities either because there are no platforms for its dissemination or that the available platforms are unreachable either due to cost, type of technology being used or the lack of skills by the target groups to access this information.

This need therefore to develop media or information platforms and to build the capacity of both information producers and consumers remains high. This is also in line with the Panos theory of change that emphasises on the availability of information and equipping the vulnerable communities with the necessary skills for them

to effectively utilise this information. In pursuing this goal, PSAf PSAf plans to increase the capacity of media practitioners and media bodies in using existing evidence to champion evidence based advocacy and influence demand for accountability of decision makers. PSAf plans to do this under the following objectives:

Objective 1: To increase media coverage of diverse development issues in Southern Africa: An analysis of the media environment in Southern Africa shows a discrepancy in the needs of the poor and marginalised communities and the type and depth of information being given by their media of choice. The poor and marginalised are in need of information on health, on poverty reduction methods, on agriculture, employment and local news about their communities, culture and customs. This information or news is not available as the media houses are not yet equipped to provide it or do not find it necessary to provide this information. This objective seeks to increase the capacity of media to churn out this vital information through capacity building or through awards of media scholarships to interested media houses.

Objective 2: To transform media into platforms for informed debate and discussion: The analysis shows that the media is currently being used to propagate biased views of the powerful in society, the ruling elite

or advertising firms at the expense of the interests of the locals. For public media their platforms are being used to cast the government and the ruling party in positive light while demonising any contrary views whereas the independent media are being punished for being independent and as a result they opt not to cover issues that annoy the government. Transformation of media space into platforms for informed debate entails ensuring that the media house is receptive to divergent views, seeks to serve the interests of the majority and is on the lookout for new information to enable communities make informed choices to better their lives.

Objective 3: To increase access to development information and communication by the poor and marginalized communities: In the previous strategy, the Programme promoted diversified content and capacity building but there was no effort to ensure that these media products were made available to the very people of groups of people that needed the information. This objective seeks to ensure that not only is information available within the supplies of this information but that it is made accessible to the very people that need it. This programme will provide innovative methods of ensuring that media programmes, news and vital information are delivered to the homes of the very people in dire need of the information.

3.2 Public Health: To advocate for equitable access to health services, and influence equity and accountability in the health policies, health programmes and health delivery mechanisms.

PSAf holds a view that poor health is one of the most important developmental problems affecting Southern Africa's development today. Health challenges facing Southern Africa are fuelled or driven by high levels of human rights violations such as gender-based violence, discrimination, prejudice, social exclusion, and other rights violations which expose vulnerable people to health challenges and/or make it harder for them to access services. Such injustices equally affect the development of policies and the operationalisation of such policies into programmes, thereby making it even harder to achieve equitable access to comprehensive health care particularly for vulnerable groups such as women, children, adolescents, sexual minorities and people with disabilities.

PSAf's planned response to these challenges is to ensure effective and evidence-based advocacy using various innovative and traditional channels to address barriers to reproductive health and rights of all groups and in particular those adversely affected by the underlying issues. In 2017 to 2021, PSAf will focus on the following objectives:

Objective 1: To promote community participation in improving health delivery systems in southern Africa by 2021:

PSAf will facilitate poor and marginalised communities access to relevant information on health delivery systems to facilitate community participation in monitoring service delivery and fostering accountability in health service delivery. Empowering and involving communities will also ensure ownership and sustainability of health services for development, improving the health systems with the goal of reducing disease burden through improved resources, systems, policies and management plays an important role in contributing to poverty reduction and overall economic development of the communities.

Objective 2: To ensure effective communication for equitable access to health care and services in southern Africa by 2021:

Addressing and influencing the laws and policies that increase discrimination and inequalities to access to health is vital to improve access to health even for the socially stigmatised groups. There is therefore need to influence the national policies to take into consideration the international and regional instruments as a way to improve health equity.

Objective 3: To empower communities to promote healthy lifestyles in southern Africa by 2021:

Uptake of health services in southern Africa is hindered by lack of information. The gaps in knowledge and perception

about diseases and their causes increase the level of misconception and poor health seeking behavior. Understanding the barriers to good health will enable the communities to voluntarily assume and sustain positive practices and behavior. There is need for the communities to receive appropriate information on reducing the risk of diseases and to be empowered to take the right lifestyle choices. This could be done through creating awareness of the diseases to ensure access to education and demystifying the myths and misconceptions around diseases.

Objective 4: To enhance the capacity of media to report on health issues in southern Africa by 2021.

– The media has the ability to influence public opinions. Media is critical to both changing behavior and challenging cultural norms and stereotypes. Through its reporting, it can lead to behavioural and attitude change towards promotion of better health. The media can also be able to influence public policy change through being the voice of the vulnerable groups.

3.3 Environment and natural resources management:

To Promote Good Governance in Environment and Natural Resources Management in Southern Africa.

The sustainable management of the environment and natural resources is a key aspect of livelihoods in Southern Africa. The majority of citizens in the region earn their livelihood through the exploitation of the environment and natural resources. However, the lack of accountability and transparency are a problem in the management of the environment and natural resources in Southern Africa. Existing formalised monitoring systems are struggling to address accountability issues such as weak and inconsistent implementation of policy frameworks and corrupt practices. People involvement will offer alternative and complementary means to ensure accountability and transparency in environment and natural resources management. PSAf will respond to these issues through the following objectives:

Objective 1: To strengthen community participation in fostering sustainable environment and natural resources management in Southern Africa by 2021:

PSAf will facilitate communication and multilevel policy dialogues on strategic environmental management issues, to influence sharing and cross-pollinating ideas as well as fostering dialogue that will in turn inform inclusive responses to the environmental challenges facing the

region. This strategy will ensure poor and marginalised people's participation in fostering sustainable environmental management in the region, and advocating for favourable policies for environmental protection and governance of natural resources.

Objective 2: To Raise the Profile of Strategic Environmental Issues in Southern Africa in order to influence policy and programming responses by 2021:

To address the critical environmental issues facing Southern Africa, PSAf will facilitate the generation of information to highlight current and emerging environmental challenges and responses and gaps. This strategy will be vital in assembling information that would inform policy and programme interventions, as well as straighten up or address gaps in these responses. PSAf will also build the capacity of the media in effective reporting of various environmental issues that need policy direction.

Strategic Objective 3: To foster accountability and transparency in environment and natural resources management in Southern Africa by 2021:

PSAf will implement activities aimed at enhancing the capacity of local communities in fostering accountability in natural resources management processes. To this effect, PSAf will also enhance the capacity of the media to monitor policy, programmes and processes in the management of the environment and natural resources.

3.4 Good Governance and Democracy: To increase citizen participation in fostering good governance processes.

The Good Governance and Democracy Programme will focus on empowering the poor and marginalised or socially excluded communities in Southern Africa to play a key role in fostering good governance. The programme's strategic response is premised on the fact that citizens demand for accountability from their duty-bearers on developmental and poverty reduction processes. Interventions under the Good Governance and Democracy programme are premised on the fact that when citizens actively participate in good governance processes, they make those in positions of authority to be accountable and responsive to their needs. To this effect, PSAf will work on addressing the following objectives:

Objective 1: To strengthen citizens' demand for transparency and accountability in the management of public resources: This objective is premised on the fact that when citizens are equipped with information and platforms for sharing it, they can demand for transparency and accountability from those who hold power. And when citizens demand for accountability and transparency, it becomes difficult for corruption and other ills to flourish. PSAf will strengthen engagement between citizens and

different governance actors to enable sharing of ideas and information, providing a platform for citizens to ask questions and for duty bearers to respond to citizens, and also get ideas on how certain issues can best be addressed. PSAf will also generate evidence on the effects of lack of accountability and transparency, and facilitate the use of the evidence for advocacy and lobbying.

Objective 2: To promote citizens participation in democratic electoral processes: This objective seeks to address the problems of limited participation and weak democracies in Southern Africa. Building the capacity of the media to inform and educate citizens in democratic electoral processes. Under this objective, PSAf will conduct civic and voter education, facilitate multi-level and multi-stakeholder dialogue on electoral processes. PSAf will use mass media, social media, coalitions and movement building, community theatre and interpersonal approaches to influence development and implementation of policies and other instruments that promote citizens participation in democratic electoral processes.

Objective 3: To promote citizen participation in advancing regional integration: This objective is premised on the fact that while regional integration is viewed as a positive step for Southern Africa, citizens are detached from the processes. As a result, the people who

4.0

Geographical Remit

are supposed to be at the centre of advancing regional integration politically, economically and socially are left out of the discourse. PSAf will therefore facilitate multi-level dialogue and debate on regional migration and the role citizens can play, enabling different stakeholders to come together and share ideas on the best ways of enhancing citizens' participation in regional migration. PSAf will also generate, package and disseminate evidence of the benefits of regional integration to enable citizens and other stakeholders to build a strong case on the need for accountability of decision makers in regional integration. PSAf will also support interlocutors like the media and civil society to drive debate on regional integration.

The PSAf 2017 to 2021 Strategic Plan will maintain the geographical remit of 10 Southern Africa countries, namely: Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe. This is motivated by the fact that PSAf interventions of using Social Change to drive development remain relevant in these countries.

PSAf is guided by the following values:

Value	Indicator
Integrity	Consistency in our decisions
	Responsible for our actions
	Being accountable for resources Trusted –we do what we say we want to do
Dedication and self drive	We put extra effort into our work
	We meet our work targets
	We work with minimal supervision
	Adding value to whatever we do
Team work	We all play our part in the team
	We complement each others skills
	We contribute to team development
	We attend team meetings and contribute to discussions
	We share information
Openness	We share information and raise issues without fear
	Everyone's concern is listened to

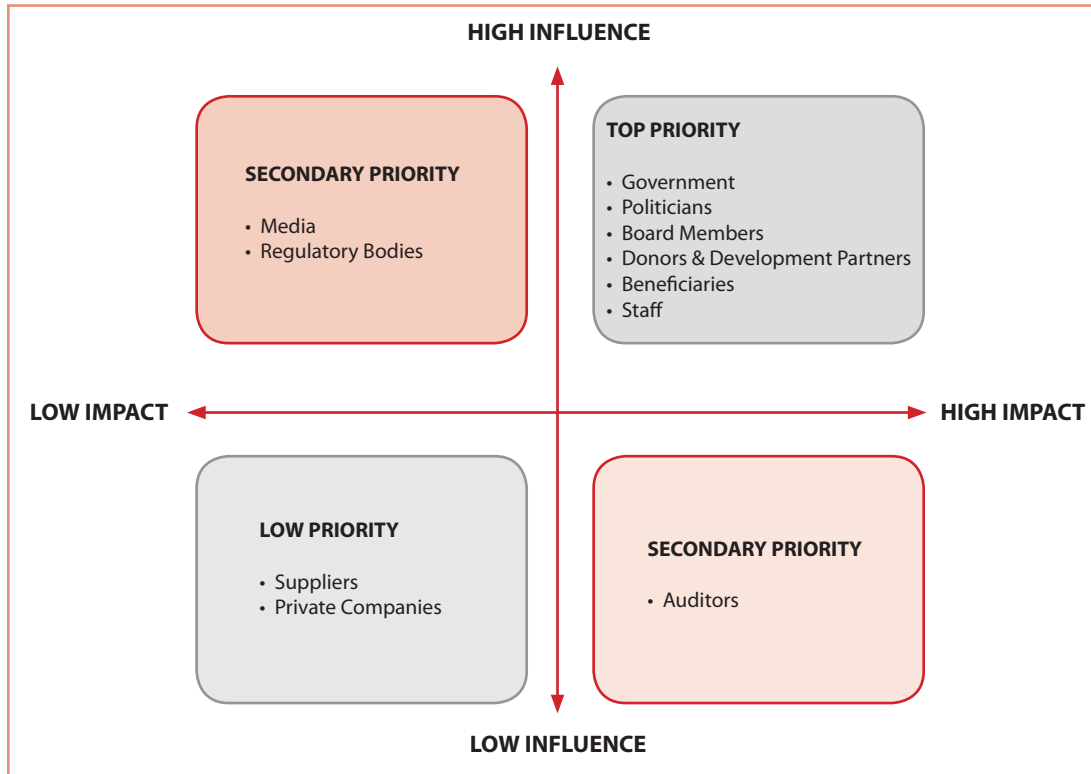


Figure 1: Stakeholders Analysis

Programme	Programme	Budget
Media Development and ICTs	Objective 1 : To increase media coverage of diverse development issues in Southern Africa	755,500
	Objective 2: To transform media into platforms for informed debate and discussion	878,000
	Objective 3: To increase access to development information and communication by the poor and marginalised communities	748,000
Sub-total		2,381,500
Public Health	Objective 1: To promote community participation in improving health delivery systems in Southern Africa by 2021	812, 000
	Objective 2: To ensure effective communication for equitable access to health care and services in Southern Africa by 2021	440, 000
	Objective 3: To empower communities to promote healthy lifestyles in Southern Africa by 2021	604, 000
	Objective 4: To enhance the capacity of media to report on health issues in Southern Africa by 2021.	495, 000
Sub-total		2, 351, 000

Programme	Programme	Budget
Good Governance and Democracy	Objective 1: To strengthen citizens' demand for transparency and accountability in the management of public resources	USD 1,000,000
	Objective 2: To promote citizens' participation in democratic electoral processes	USD 1,020,000
	Objective 3: To promote citizens' participation in advancing regional integration	USD 750,000
	Objective 4: To generate evidence of policy gaps and their impact at the community level, and available of envisaged opportunities for addressing them.	USD 705,000
Sub-total		USD 3,475,000
Environment and Natural Resources Management	Objective 1: To strengthen community participation in fostering sustainable environment and natural resources management in Southern Africa by 2021.	USD 2,032,000
	Objective 2: To Raise the Profile of Strategic Environmental Issues in Southern Africa in order to influence policy and programming responses by 2021.	USD 1,035,000
	Objective 3: To foster accountability and transparency in environment and natural resources management in Southern Africa by 2021.	USD 1,346,250
Sub-total		USD 4,413,250

Programme	Programme	Budget
Communication and knowledge management	Objective 1: To Strengthen the institutional capacity in knowledge and information management to foster Innovation and competitiveness in programming	USD500,000
	Objective 2: To Raise the profile of PSAf in Southern Africa and Internationally	USD752,000
		1, 252,000
Management and Coordination	Objective 1: To ensure effective management and coordination of PSAf programmes	USD 544,000
	Objective 2: To ensure effective oversight and governance of PSAf	USD 200,000
	Objective 3: To facilitate effective finance and administration functions of PSAf	USD 2,500,000
Subtotal		3, 044,000
GRAND TOTAL		USD 16, 916,750

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Vision: A southern African community
that drives its own development