OSISA Strategy

2015–2018

OSISA
Open Society Initiative
for Southern Africa

OUR VISION

A region in which the basic human rights of all its people, and in particular marginalised communities are protected; where both states and the private sector are accountable; and where all are able to actively participate in the social, political and economic spheres of public life, and enjoy equitable access to its resources, free from discrimination, exclusion and inequality.

Contents

1. Introduction

The Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa (OSISA) was established in 1997 as part of a world-wide network of autonomous Open Society Foundations established by George Soros. OSISA is committed to deepening democracy, protecting human rights and enhancing good governance in the Southern African region. The institution works in ten southern Africa countries – Angola, Botswana, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe. OSISA does not currently work in Madagascar but intends to explore opportunities to do so during the strategy period. OSISA operates through a multiplicity of interventions at regional and country levels, covering a geographical terrain of more than 280 million people.

Since 1997, OSISA has grown in size, as well as in financial and substantive terms. Its annual budget has grown from USD 5 million in 1997 to USD 24 million in 2014. OSISA's work has grown from a few programmes supporting mainly human rights and democracy-building, education and media initiatives, to advancing socio-economic justice, promoting transparency in natural resource governance, developing a sharper programmatic and political focus on how marginalisation of minorities, social exclusion and inequality – especially gender-based inequalities – affect and undermine open society, as well as developing new forms of partnership to address the region's monumental challenges. The *complexity* of political, social and economic challenges faced by the region and countries covered by OSISA has also changed.

This strategy proposal sets out OSISA's key areas of work for the period 2015–2018. The history and context of Southern Africa is appraised in section 2, which focuses on the three fields of concern common to the region. OSISA's planned responses to address these challenges are detailed in section 3. After indicating how OSISA plans to support the fields in section 3, sections 4 and 5 outline OSISA's plans for its own initiatives concerning natural resource governance and food security in the face of climate change. Section 6 details significant collaborations with other bodies within the Open Society Foundations umbrella. The final section, section 7, explains *how* the organisation will go about its business through a look at theoretical considerations on effecting change, the development of particular kinds of relationships with relevant partners, and the organisational adjustments OSISA will make to best facilitate the proposed change.

2. The challenges: History and context

The regional overview and country analyses that follow provide the history and context for our work in the 2015–2018 period, and highlight *three common fields* of concern throughout the region:

1. Almost every country in Southern Africa faces a **democracy and governance deficit**, albeit in varying degrees. This is certainly true of the majority of countries, including those that routinely hold free and fair elections and experience alternation of power, but also for the more autocratic regimes in which elections are flawed or fixed. In many countries in the region, the ability of the independent media to play a strong, investigative and watchdog role to ensure that the three pillars of the state remain answerable to the electorate is severely curtailed by restrictive laws, overbearing state broadcasting institutions and partisan law enforcement agencies.

2. The majority of citizens in the region remain excluded from accessing crucial information to hold public officials accountable and to make important decisions. Despite the benefits of stability and, in many countries, the windfall of mineral wealth, the majority of the population of almost every country in the region remains excluded from any meaningful change to their **poor social and economic status**.

3. In almost every country in the region, the existing constitutional and legal frameworks and institutions **lack the ability to promote and protect human rights, guarantee the rule of law and ensure access to justice** for all citizens – especially the most vulnerable, disadvantaged and marginalised.

These three key challenges form the three pillars of our strategy for 2015–2018, and are discussed in detail in the following sections. It is important to note that women and girls – who are the majority of citizens in the region – are particularly affected by these challenges, as they systematically remain on the margins of political and socio-economic participation, unable to make meaningful contributions to decisions that affect their lives.

2.1 Regional overview

2.1.1 Democracy and governance

Southern Africa has a mixed record of building democratic and open societies. A small minority of countries have a history of multi-party democracy and strong state institutions, which have set the pace for democratic consolidation for others through regular elections and leadership rotation. Others have successfully resisted the pressure to democratise in the past 30 years, with dominant ruling parties – mainly former liberation movements – barely countenancing effective opposition parties, in many cases using violence and intimidation to maintain power. Between these two extremes, the majority of Southern African countries can be characterised as fledgling democracies that have made incremental and often unsatisfactory efforts to establish participatory institutions and institutionalise the separation of powers through checks and balances, but still have significant shortcomings and risks of reversals. Whilst many countries in the region can validly claim to hold regular elections, the quality of these elections remains generally poor with significant constraints on meaningful participation for marginalised groups. In addition, many elections are criticised as being fixed or flawed and election management bodies have yet to gain general credibility and the trust and confidence of citizens in most countries.

Beyond elections, democracy is constantly under threat with electoral outcomes not translating into social and economic outcomes for the majority of citizens in the region. Indeed, it can safely be said that even in cases where democracy has been successfully delivered, ensuring that democracy itself delivers remains an elusive goal, especially when one considers that the region is one of the most unequal in the world. The weak capacity of the Southern Africa state is seen as a key contributing factor. Corruption is endemic throughout the region with restrictive media laws stifling independent journalism. Access to information is needed so that citizens can hold political and economic elites accountable. Civil society organisations and social movements that seek to

mobilise and speak on behalf of the excluded majority face a cluster of obstacles: hostile governments that seek to regulate them and impede their work – sometimes very repressively; unpredictable and shifting donor priorities; the movement of leadership into international organisations, political parties or government; and 'crowding out' by better resourced international NGOs. Many NGOs in the region tend to focus on service delivery, filling the gaps left by states that are incapable of meeting the development needs of their citizens. Thus there is a proliferation of NGOs working on education, health, water and sanitation and livelihoods in the region. There are far fewer focused on policy and advocacy within these sectors, and even fewer that cover policy and advocacy on women's rights, media, economic justice, human rights and democracy-building and niche areas such as the rights of marginalised groups (indigenous people, people with disabilities and the LGBTI community). For most NGOs in southern Africa – regardless of the sector – there is a need to develop sharper advocacy skills in order to defend the existing spaces for work around transparency and accountability, and to push for greater political and social opportunities for civil society to flourish. Compounding the shortage of skilled advocates in the area of public policy within civil society groups is the absence of a systematic investment in leadership development.

Despite an extensive restructuring in 2001, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) has not been able to contribute to the democratic processes of its member states and is widely viewed as weak and ineffectual. The regional bloc has not consistently enforced otherwise progressive regional standards for credible and transparent elections, and failed to sanction errant members who have flouted commitments to democracy and the rule of law. Lastly, it has struggled to address unconstitutional changes of government. These factors create a real sense of a hapless organisation, which seems to place greater emphasis on historical ties and a shared history of political liberation, national sovereignty and regime protection than on a commitment to a democratic, integrated and progressive, transparent and well governed region.[1] However, if positively leveraged, the strong unity with the SADC does have the potential for radical change through the advancement of democracy and socio-economic development.

2.1.2 Social and economic justice
On the socio-economic front, exclusion, poverty, inequality and social and economic deprivations are pervasive throughout the region. High levels of inequality and poverty continue to increase, especially in countries that have had major governance and political challenges.

In the DRC, more than three quarters of the population lives on less than USD1.25 per day, while in Malawi, Zimbabwe, Zambia and Mozambique, more than half of the population live under these conditions. In Botswana, often regarded as a poster-child for development success, 20% of the population live in absolute poverty.[2]

Southern Africa is one of the most unequal regions in the world. Namibia, Lesotho, Botswana, South Africa, Zimbabwe and Angola are all amongst the top 12 most unequal countries as measured by the Gini coefficient. Equally, resource-rich and middle-income countries such as Botswana, Namibia, South Africa, the DRC and Angola have not been able to reduce inequality significantly, despite the consistently high levels of economic growth in these countries in the past decade. This has been compounded by the failure thus far of many Southern African governments to take advantage of the mineral resource boom to achieve meaningful economic transformation.

In all countries in Southern Africa, more than 50% of the population is between 15 and 29 years – a potential supply of labour and innovation, or of social turmoil and unrest if economic opportunities remain scarce.[3] This toxic mixture of poverty, inequality and large youthful populations poses a real threat to the stability of the region.

The interconnectedness of the region's economies coupled with the common socio-economic challenges faced by its countries and the poor progress in economic integration all require a regional response if real progress is to be made nationally. Through the Southern Africa Customs Union, Botswana, Namibia, Lesotho and Swaziland receive substantial cash transfers from South Africa. The utilisation of these revenues for socio-economic development has been rare, especially in Swaziland. In the past 20 years, whilst the region's civil society has developed strong capabilities in advancing traditional civil and political rights, there is a noticeable capacity gap within civil society in the area of policy and advocacy for socio-economic rights.

In the past 15 years education enrolment at the primary and secondary levels has increased throughout the region as part of the MDG drive. However, less than 30% of young children in the region are enrolled in pre-school or pre-primary education programmes.[4] Since most countries do not have policies that mandate free and compulsory enrolment into early learning centres, access to these programmes is skewed against children from low socio-economic backgrounds, children from rural areas, children under-3 (only 5% in 2003[5]), children living with HIV/AIDS, orphans, those with special needs and child labourers.

2.1.3 Human rights, access to justice and the rule of law
Yet another crucial regional trend is the inability by most governments in the region to effectively promote, protect and guarantee human rights and ensure equal access to justice for their citizens. It is common for governments in the region to utilise the law and legal processes to persecute minorities and perceived opponents. This is particularly the case regarding political, civil society and other activists and lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender/intersex (LGBTI) individuals. Common throughout the region, the weak accountability of political and economic elites permits them to abuse systems with impunity. Serious and systematic human rights violations often occur at the hands of state law or security officials with little effort to

hold those responsible to account. In Zimbabwe, Malawi, the DRC and Angola, holding those responsible for serious human rights violations including crimes against humanity – through national, regional and international mechanisms – remains an elusive but important priority.

Regionally, the SADC has shown its weakness and lack of commitment to the rule of law by disbanding the SADC Tribunal after it ruled against land seizures in Zimbabwe.

2.2 Places: Country analyses

When OSISA was established in 1997, Southern Africa offered bright prospects for successful democratisation and socio-economic development. However, since then, most of the countries in the region have experienced significant change and the prospects for development don't always look so encouraging.

2.2.1 South Africa

South Africa dominates the region's political and economic landscape. On the one hand, since attaining democracy the country has proved to be an exemplar in democratic practice, respect for constitutionalism and reconciliation, providing many useful lessons for other countries in the region. Its thriving economy also creates a strong brain drain in the region with the country experiencing one of the highest immigration rates in the world. Its economy maintains a strong footprint – not always a positive one – across the region, with South African corporations dominating the business landscapes in many countries in all sectors, including telecommunications, mining, manufacturing, energy, finance and retail. There are growing concerns that South Africa functions as a regional off-shore centre for sequestering the proceeds of corruption from other countries in the region. On the other hand, as the youngest country to attain independence in the region, South Africa can learn and benefit from the experience of other countries. This is especially the case regarding developing progressive socio-economic policies.

On the economic front, South Africa presents the paradox of being the second-largest economy in Africa, yet having the highest levels of inequality. At 34%, unemployment is at record high levels and disproportionately affects the youth and women, which constitute at least 70% and about 52.1% of the population respectively. This is exacerbated by a flawed education system that has thus far failed to deliver appropriate policy measures to equip school graduates meaningfully for the labour market. Concerns about the failure of the government to deliver basic services – such as housing, health, education, justice, safety and security, and water and sanitation – have been magnified by evidence of high levels of corruption and the mismanagement of resources by government officials and private actors, often the result of a lack of transparency in the allocation and implementation of public procurement contracts.

FIELD:
- Social and economic justice.

2.2.2 Zimbabwe

Although elections held in July 2013 (won by ZANU–PF with a two-thirds majority) were peaceful, there were significant concerns regarding the extent of their credibility and transparency.

Despite unveiling its new national development framework ZIM-ASSET, the government faces significant challenges in effectively opening up the political space, transforming the economy, unleashing the natural resource wealth of the country, tackling high levels of corruption, and providing basic services to the majority of the population. Socio-economic indicators remain gloomy with high levels of poverty and unemployment at over 80%, coupled with perennial food insecurity affecting up to 2.2 million people in rural areas in the southern and western half of the country.[6] It is important to note that the majority of those facing poverty and food insecurity in the country are women and children in rural areas, where opportunities are limited and services are least accessible. Access to early childhood education is highest in Zimbabwe, largely due to the introduction of early childhood development (ECD) A and B classes that have received substantial government backing as well as the introduction of reception classes. However, poor rural communities receive disproportionate access to education services. The majority of Zimbabweans, many of them unemployed, do not have access to even basic healthcare facilities and private medical care is unaffordable for most. To compound the situation, the government recently approved a 100% increase in healthcare fees. Despite far reaching recent constitutional changes providing for 50/50 representation of women in all public institutions, women face serious discrimination and disproportionate access to political, economic and social opportunities.

Although the newly adopted Constitution provides significant opportunities to expand democracy and improve the promotion and protection of human rights, its lack of implementation leaves draconian legislation that restricts free speech, association, assembly, fair trial and other fundamental rights intact. Despite some promising changes to the media landscape since the election of ZANU PF, it is clear that it will be a long time before the constitutionally guaranteed media freedoms gain respect throughout the state institutions.[7] Unresolved serious human rights violations during the 1980s and more recently between 2000 and 2009 continue to threaten the long-term stability of the country. While known perpetrators enjoy impunity, victims and their families have been left without any redress. Civil society organisations face systematic repression by law enforcement authorities, especially regarding their right to assemble and free speech. Women's organisations are at double the risk as they are already battling a decline in the funding resource base due to funders competing priorities at global levels.

FIELDS:
- Democracy and governance;
- Social and economic justice;
- Human rights, access to justice and the rule of law.

2.2.3 Zambia

Michael Sata's Patriotic Front won the 2012 elections and, regrettably, his presidency has been increasingly intolerant and repressive. Coming on the back of strong support from civil society and the youth vote, Sata's electoral victory held high hopes of significant political, social and economic transformation for Zambia.

The electoral promises related to more equitable distribution of the proceeds of Zambia's mineral wealth have yet to translate into real change for ordinary people. There has been no noticeable improvement in socio-economic indicators evidenced by a reduction in poverty, enhanced food security and improved delivery of basic services. Half of the population lives on less than USD 1.25 a day, that is in abject poverty, and again the majority of these are women and children. Access to health services is hampered by several factors, including inequitable distribution of healthcare facilities, poor financing of the sector and inadequate human resources.

Under what has turned out to be a highly intolerant rule, basic freedoms of assembly, speech, religion and association have been rolled back with selective arrests and prosecution of civil society activists, journalists and political opponents; police intimidation and brutality; systematic discrimination, arrest and prosecution of LGBTI individuals; and arbitrary exercise of power. The Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) has expressed serious concerns that the public sphere in Zambia is under threat, as indicated by government acts of intolerance and the continued existence of archaic laws used to suppress press freedom and the freedom of expression.[8] Zambia remains a patriarchal society with women facing prejudice and exclusion from the political and economic spheres. Although the country has made progress in increasing school enrolment, girls fare worse than boys in accessing equal education opportunities and completing school. Access to early childhood development and education (ECDE) remains well below 30%. A key challenge remains institutionalised violations of girls' rights through child-marriages – a serious challenge in Malawi, the DRC, Mozambique and Zimbabwe as well.

FIELDS
- Democracy and governance;
- Social and economic justice;
- Human rights, access to justice and the rule of law.

2.2.4 Malawi

In May 2014, Joyce Banda lost the presidential election to Peter Mutharika in an election overseen by the Malawi Electoral Commission that was characterised by poor organisation and incompetence. The period immediately preceding the elections highlighted the need to follow through on outstanding electoral reforms, including addressing significant shortcomings in the capacity of the country's election management body to conduct credible and transparent elections. OSISA supported civil society organisations and citizens in their efforts to monitor and observe the election to ensure its credibility and transparency.

Socio-economic indicators remain negative, with the country unlikely to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015, especially those related to poverty, gender equality, universal access to education, health and access to water. Maternal mortality remains disproportionately high at 620 deaths out of 100,000 live births and the high prevalence of child marriages exacerbates the low school completion rates for girls. HIV prevalence is on the increase. Access to early childhood education services remains very low and below 30%. Up to 1.8 million people require food assistance – the majority of whom are women and children in mostly rural communities – as a result of low crop production, drought, floods, input shortages, low food stocks, an unstable maize supply, a depreciating currency and high fuel prices, amongst other factors. The price of maize – the staple food – has increased by 162% as a result of the depreciating currency. LGBTI minorities suffer social and legal discrimination as a result of laws criminalising same-sex relationships.

FIELDS
- Democracy and governance;
- Social and economic justice;
- Human rights, access to justice and the rule of law.

2.2.5 Mozambique

In the past decade, Mozambique's economic fortunes have been good. Political stability, discoveries of significant gas and coal deposits and strong agricultural productivity have buoyed the country's economy, helping sustain economic growth above 8%. However, as in many other countries in the region, this sustained period of economic growth has not been accompanied by proportionate reduction in levels of poverty and inequality. It is estimated that only 30 to 50% of the population have access to healthcare services in Mozambique. The government is yet to make the requisite investments in this sector despite the minerals boom.

The discovery of minerals and the phenomenal increase in investment in the mining sector have resulted in disproportionate economic dependence on this sector and been accompanied by growing concerns regarding the transparency and accountability of contracts concluded between the government and multi-national mining companies. Poor regulatory frameworks have resulted in the wide scale exploitation and violation of the rights of mining communities. Women in particular suffer disproportionately with limited opportunities for employment and reduced access to land and productive resources. This is worrying especially because women in Mozambique, as in other Southern African countries are the majority of subsistence farmers, and they largely rely on this land and access to related resources for their livelihoods.

In the absence of progressive policies aimed at optimising the mineral resource wealth to create jobs, address socio-economic deprivation, reduce poverty and empower communities, it is unlikely that the country will reap the benefits of these discoveries. Public protest at government failure to deliver basic services has assumed violent proportions; recently, the main

opposition party, RENAMO, has resorted to violence to channel its grievances against the government.

FIELDS
- Democracy and governance;
- Social and economic justice.

2.2.6 Lesotho

Whilst the past two years of political stability have set new standards of political tolerance in Lesotho, the risk of backsliding to the divisive politics of the past remains high. In any event, ensuring inclusive political and democratic processes will remain a priority for the country in the coming years.

On the socio-economic front, Lesotho ranks 158th out of 186 countries on the Human Development Index (HDI). Maternal mortality is high at 490 deaths in 100,000 live births and the country has the third-highest HIV prevalence rate in the world. Access to early childhood education services has remained low at around 30%. This situation could perhaps be attributed to the lack of infrastructural support.

Paradoxically, although women make up at least 51% of the population, with most men working as migrant labourers in South Africa, women still suffer significant levels of discrimination and are under-represented in the public and private sector. The Red Cross reports significant numbers of women and girls facing serious challenges of food insecurity in the country, as in other countries in the region.

FIELDS
- Democracy and governance;
- Social and economic justice;
- Human rights, access to justice and the rule of law.

2.2.7 Botswana

Botswana is due to hold elections in late 2014, which are expected to be won by President Khama's Botswana Democratic Party (BDP). A key post-election issue will be maintaining alternative political voices and democratic space, especially for minority groups, in an environment of strong dominance by the ruling party.

Despite glowing praise for transparent management of the country's natural resources, recent reports have revealed strong concerns regarding transparency and accountability in issuing contracts to explore gas in ways that violate the environmental and health rights of indigenous San communities. Thus, whilst the country ranks high in the continental governance indices, there is growing evidence that these rankings mask significant shortcomings regarding the equitable participation of disadvantaged groups, particularly women and San communities, in politics and the economy.

A major worrying trend in Botswana is the co-option of civic groups – especially women's groups – by the state and government, leaving a void in sustained voice on issues affecting women. At least 20% of the population live in poverty, and again the majority of these are women and girls. Yet, this story remains untold as there are hardly any women's

organisations nor women's movements demanding accountability and amplifying women's voices in the country. This is also the case in other countries such as Angola, where key women's groups have remained co-opted and affiliated to political parties, especially the ruling party.

The country has also come under scrutiny for its failure to protect the rights and way of life of the San. The government is especially sensitive and reacts heavy-handedly to questions about its policies and treatment toward the San.

FIELDS
- Democracy and governance;
- Social and economic justice;
- Human rights, access to justice and the rule of law.

2.2.8 Democratic Republic of the Congo

Since the removal of Mobutu Sese Seko from power, the country has held two elections: in 2006 and 2011. Whilst the 2006 elections were considered to be relatively free and fair by regional and international observers, the 2011 elections failed the test of credibility and transparency and are widely considered to have been flawed and fixed. At 12%, the poor representation of women in parliament is one of the lowest in Africa, with serious negatives showing in the quality of life of women in the country. Yet, as in other countries in the region, Congolese women are in fact the majority of the electorate.

The government has not organised local elections since 2006 and has also failed to hold provincial elections in 2011 as required by the Constitution. Added to this is the growing concern that the current president may attempt to revise the Constitution in order to run for a third term. This is compounded by problems regarding the accuracy and credibility of the voter register and the independence, readiness and capacity of the country's electoral commission (CENI).

Related to these democratic governance deficits is the high level of corruption in all sectors of the economy and public life. The problem is exacerbated by a culture of impunity, a dysfunctional justice system and serious capacity weaknesses within key public oversight bodies. The impact of corruption and lack of accountability, especially in the management of the country's vast mineral wealth, manifests itself strongly in the poor economic and social development indicators of the country.

The DRC has one of the highest levels of maternal mortality on the continent – 730 deaths per 100,000 live births[9] – and achieving universal access to health services remains elusive for the majority of the population. With an estimated 8 million children out of school and 18 million people illiterate,[10] the DRC faces a challenge that is likely to translate into a major socio-economic crisis. Significantly expanding access, equity and quality of education is one of the most important priorities for the country. Equally important is the need to scale up strategies to get and keep girls in school, given the country's history of gendered gaps at all levels of education.

Ensuring equitable access to justice remains a challenge for the majority of DRC citizens because of corruption, the high cost of legal services, poor judicial infrastructure, and attitudes

and capacity constraints within the judiciary. This is especially worrying in a country where women and girls' bodies have been systematically used as battlefields by warring groups, and women and girls have no access to justice and or compensation. Many judicial decisions, especially those relating to compensation for victims of human rights abuses, including the systematic and widespread rape of women and girls, are not executed. Although there have been some nominal successes by OSISA, the Open Society Justice Initiative (OSJI) and others in supporting efforts to hold perpetrators of sexual and gender-based violence to account (including by supporting prosecutions), more work needs to be done. Prisons are overcrowded – the largest prison in Kinshasa was built for 1,500 inmates, but at present holds more than 4,700. In addition, 75% of the country's 18,000 prisoners are in pre-trial detention.[11] The national budgetary allocation to the justice sector is a paltry 0.53%, raising serious concerns regarding the government's commitment to the justice sector.

FIELDS
- Democracy and governance;
- Social and economic justice;
- Human rights, access to justice and the rule of law.

2.2.9 Swaziland

Little appears to have changed in Swaziland since 1997. All power vests in King Mswati III. Through a system of royal appointments and patronage, the king maintains total control of all state and many private-sector institutions. Political parties remain banned and the independence of key state institutions is questionable.

Economically, most people struggle to survive as subsistence farmers dependent on rain-fed agriculture. Poverty and malnutrition remain acute and widespread. The country still has the highest prevalence of HIV and AIDS in the world, with around a quarter of the population of just over a million living with HIV and AIDS. It is important to note that women and girls in Swaziland are disproportionately shouldering this burden of HIV and AIDS. Although most people also lack access to basic services, women and girls are particularly at higher risk, as traditional and cultural attitudes and practices discriminate against them. Women are regarded as perpetual minors and disproportionately suffer from the impact of HIV and AIDS, and from the lack of equal access to political and economic opportunities.

Systematic human rights violations at the hands of state institutions – especially law enforcement – targeting political, civil society and labour activists are prevalent. Freedom of speech and assembly is severely restricted and any opposition to the monarchy is met with heavy punishment. Swaziland has been described as a 'failed feudal state' with a raft of human rights violations, including arbitrary arrests and detention by security forces. The law, steeped in tradition and culture, entrenches the discrimination against women.

FIELDS
- Democracy and governance;

- Social and economic justice;
- Human rights, access to justice and the rule of law.

2.2.10 Namibia

Namibia is a functioning multi-party democracy. However, deep-rooted and systemic governance deficits prevail. The dominance of the ruling party, SWAPO, has allowed a culture of patronage and corruption to flourish – enriching a small, politically connected elite, while hampering ordinary citizens' access to basic services.

Although Namibia is ranked as an upper middle income country this image belies a much more malignant reality, characterised by chronic unemployment (almost 50%) and one of the highest rates of inequality in the world – its Gini coefficient has fluctuated between 0.59 and 0.63 since 2009. Gender inequality is of serious concern in the country, as women and girls bear the worst brunt of unemployment and widening inequality gaps.

The country is almost perennially drought-stricken and the United Nations (UN) World Food Programme estimates that as much as 20% of the population is food insecure. A recent survey by the Legal Assistance Centre in Namibia found that almost all of Namibia's 36,000 indigenous San people are dependent on food aid through the UN and other donor agencies, even as they struggle to retain what little remains of their traditional territories and lands.

Notwithstanding significant advances in the provision of treatment and care for people living with HIV, the country still has the sixth-highest HIV prevalence rate in the world. Despite its upper-middle-income status, Namibia still has a very high child mortality rate of 39 deaths per 1,000 live births – one of the reasons it ranks 128th out of 186 countries on the 2012 HDI. Violence against women and girls has also reached levels that are routinely characterised as an 'epidemic' by both government and civil society.

Corrupt and ineffective governance has led to complaints by the poor, indigenous peoples, LGBTI individuals, women living with HIV, youth and other vulnerable groups that they are subjected to systemic discrimination, harassment and denial of services.

FIELDS
- Social and economic justice;
- Human rights, access to justice and the rule of law.

2.2.11 Angola

With its vast oil wealth, Angola is transitioning rapidly from decades of war, destruction and poverty towards becoming a middle-income country. Its major challenges are poor political and economic governance, coupled with a very weak capacity of state officials and institutions to deliver public services. There is a lack of accountability and transparency throughout the public and private sectors.

Corruption is rampant and systemic, and the lack of transparency and accountability in the management of public resources allows for the illicit enrichment of the ruling oligarchs and their families, with just half a dozen families controlling

the wealth of the nation. Instead of advancing democracy, the electoral processes of 2008 and 2012 secured the political hegemony of the ruling party and President Jose Eduardo dos Santos. Indeed, the elections entrenched a serious democratic deficit by strengthening the monopoly of political power, further centralising and personalising political and economic control, increasing exclusion, and undermining meaningful and effective public participation. This has contributed to increased human rights violations and repression. The government has been criticised for its poor human rights record and for clamping down on civil society groups and political opponents. Media freedoms are severely curtailed by heavy-handed action by the security agencies, supported by restrictive state security and insult laws.[12]

Since 2004, Angola has enjoyed sustained and significant macro-economic growth spurred on by a rise in oil production and prices. Notably, however, this growth has not necessarily been accompanied by a reduction in unemployment or of poverty and inequality. On the contrary, the government is still failing to provide basic services to the majority of Angolans – more than 40% of whom live below the poverty line. As in other countries in the region, the majority of those affected by poverty are women, especially the mostly female headed households that have been a legacy of internal displacements in the rural areas during the civil war. Despite an abundance of fertile land and water, Angola is a net importer of food with severe food insecurity affecting almost 2 million Angolans and with over half a million children malnourished. Current access to education, and in particular early childhood development services, is slowly increasing. It nevertheless remains low, mostly due to the fact that government is not actively involved in policy and service delivery.

Women's organising in Angola has remained weak, with many of the strategic women's groups aligned to political parties, thus pushing party agendas rather than holding government accountable. Citizens have taken to the streets to demand better social services and a fairer share of the country's wealth, eliciting a violent response from the government.

FIELDS
- Democracy and governance;
- Social and economic justice;
- Human rights, access to justice and the rule of law.

For a summary of the fields of concern identified for each country in the region, see the table in Appendix 1.

3. Fealty to fields and places: Our response

Under OSISA's new structure, programmes have been consolidated into three clusters corresponding to the three fields of our strategy:

- Democracy and governance;
- Economic and social justice; and
- Human rights, access to justice and the rule of law.

3.1 Field 1: The democracy and governance cluster

From resource-rich but autocratic Angola, to poor and democratically fragile Lesotho, there exists a clear challenge to advance democracy and governance in a way that expands the choices and freedoms of people in these countries but also transforms their social and economic well-being. Across the region, there is a pervasive challenge of ensuring that electoral choices translate into legitimate and responsive governments, and this risks people losing hope and confidence in democracy. Beyond elections, the dividends of democracy are yet to translate into significant social and economic change for the majority of people, especially women. The capacity of the state to govern effectively, efficiently and accountably in the public interest remains weak in almost every country in the region.

Beyond holding regular elections, levels of intolerance for divergent views and opinions remain unacceptably high in many countries' political, ethnic and sexual minorities and women face severe and systematic discrimination. The ability of civil society and the media to operate freely without intimidation and harassment is a rarity in most of the countries in the region. Citizens remain excluded from accessing crucial public information needed to make informed choices and demand accountability from government officials. The full expression of freedoms of speech, assembly, association and religion and the constitutional protection against discrimination on any ground whatsoever remains elusive in many countries in the region,

During the previous strategy periods, OSISA made a significant impact in the area of democracy and governance, including in the development of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Guidelines on Elections and supporting election observation groups for strategic advocacy purposes, encouraging women and youth participation, supporting work with traditional authorities on improving local governance, as well as supporting work with regional media bodies and institutions that has seen a reduction in the death and harassment of journalists in the region.

More specifically, OSISA's work with parliaments focused on institution-building and strengthening of the oversight role of parliament by supporting strategic portfolio committees. On local government, OSISA support focused on rationalising the interface between local government and traditional structures; strengthening citizen skills on budget tracking; capacity building of elected officials, including councillors and mayors. Varied levels of success have been reached in this work. Opportunities abound in aligning different tiers of local government and traditional systems to ensure their healthy co-existence and effective discharging of their representative and law-making roles.

Cognisant of the absence of regional programmes that support political party development in the region – especially across political parties – OSISA sees an opportunity to develop neutral platforms for strengthening political parties on different aspects, including fund-raising; development of strategic plans; institutionalisation and managing change from liberation movements to modern political parties.

Several milestones have been reached in OSISA's work on supporting independent media and advocacy for media law reform to promote access to information, pluralism and diversity – not least the liberalisation of the airwaves which has seen an explosion in community and commercial radio in several countries, including Zambia, Malawi, Mozambique and Namibia; the emergence of new independent newspaper titles as well as the general expansion in freedom of expression. At the same time, several lessons have been learnt that inform this new strategy. For instance, it has become clear that focusing on access to information legislation without working on strengthening both the demand and supply sides of Access To Information (ATI) has serious limitations. ATI legislation without institutional frameworks for archival, documentation and retrieval of that information, and without propagating a culture of demanding information is meaningless. Further, OSISA and its partners have learnt that narrowly advocating

access to information as a media/journalistic right not only elicits resistance from governments but also limits the ability to see ATI as a cross-cutting right that can unlock several other rights that underpin socio-economic development.

In view of the various lessons learnt from the past, some significant shifts will be made in the current strategy. For instance, our work on elections will move away from just supporting observation towards ensuring the quality and integrity of elections through strengthening EMBs and developing tools for civil society organisations to monitor their own elections, while our approach to ATI will be broadened to look at both the demand and supply sides. Similarly, our work in supporting more women into politics and decision-making will also shift towards escalating competence development once they are elected into these positions.

3.1.1 Goals

Given the above, in the period 2015–2018 our goal is to strengthen democracy and governance as a critical entry point and catalyst for opening up society in the region. Our work in this area will prioritise:
- Inclusivity and quality in democratic processes;
- Media freedom and access to information;
- Public and private sector accountability.

3.1.2 Key areas of work 2015–2018

GOAL 1: Inclusion and quality in democratic processes
OSISA will work to:
- Ensure that political and democratic processes in the region are inclusive and that the quality of democracy improves.
- Ensure that Southern African citizens – especially women – are enabled to participate optimally, freely and meaningfully in electoral and other democratic processes.
- Support key stakeholders to ensure that political parties, candidates and elections management bodies (EMBs) in the region are transparent and that the EMBs, in addition, are independent and possess the technical capacity to deliver credible and transparent elections. This work will be particularly important in countries where recent elections have been either criticised as fixed or flawed or where the stakes are high for free and fair elections, for example, Zimbabwe, which holds its next elections in 2018, Zambia (2016), the DRC (2016) and Lesotho (2017).
- Support national efforts to reform electoral laws with the aim of expanding opportunities for public participation, especially of historically marginalised and disadvantaged groups such as women, youth and people with disabilities. These efforts will focus on countries with poor indicators in this area, including Botswana, the DRC, Lesotho, Malawi and Namibia.
- Focus on local government elections, supporting civil society efforts in encouraging participation of youth and women as candidates and voters. The DRC, Malawi, Mozambique and Zambia are decentralising and expanding local structures and provide an opportunity to strengthen local-level participation during elections and beyond.

- Continue to support networks of civil society organisations (CSOs) working to enhance the credibility and transparency of electoral processes in Southern African countries. Notable examples include AETA (Agir pour des Elections Transparentes et Apaisées) in the DRC, the Zimbabwe Electoral Support Network, and Malawi Electoral Support Network.
- Support citizens' (especially women's) participation in electoral processes through monitoring and observation, building on the successful experience of doing so in Malawi in the 2014 elections.
- Support building and enhancing of competence and skills of sitting women decision-makers across the region.

Given the constraints that *political intolerance* places on meaningful political participation, OSISA will:
- Promote intra- and inter-party democracy and tolerance.
- Support civil society organisations working on promoting political tolerance and democracy to ensure peaceful electoral processes and collaborative dialogues between and across parties on key national issues.
- Focus on countries with higher than normal levels of polarisation, such as Lesotho where we will support efforts of organisations such as the Council of Churches to facilitate peaceful political engagement; Zimbabwe where past elections have been repeatedly violent, and where violence continues to dominate internal party politics; and the DRC where past experience and the enduring conflict in the east creates a prospect of violence for the 2016 election.
- Continue to support the unbanning of political parties in Swaziland and the opening up of political space in that country, as well as supporting women's participation in decision-making.
- Support citizens' engagement with elected bodies and officials to ensure follow up and implementation of electoral commitments and promises, effective representation of the public interest, responsive legislative action, and effective oversight of the executive authority. This work will be focused on countries that have recently held elections, including Malawi (2014), Botswana (2014) and Mozambique (2014).

The notion of bringing government to the people is often undermined by weak and dysfunctional *local government structures*, particularly in resource-rich countries such as Angola, the DRC and Zambia, where the rhetoric about decentralisation and the constitutional devolution of power are often undermined by policy, practice, inertia and greed. OSISA will for the first time:
- Focus on supporting reform of policies and laws on decentralisation in Angola, Malawi, Mozambique and Zambia.
- Ensure that these policies are responsive to the gendered impacts of poverty and unequal beneficiation from natural resources.

- Support interventions that clarify the co-existence of traditional systems of government with local government in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland with the aim of expanding democratic practice.

Currently, Southern Africa has a strong network of *organisations that monitor parliaments* at institutional level with limited focus on how parliamentarians relate with their constituencies. Citizens are increasingly demanding more accountability from their elected representatives. The absence of mechanisms and institutions that keep them connected to the electorate is major challenge. In this regard OSISA will support citizen efforts to exercise oversight on their elected representatives in parliament.

Women's effective representation in parliaments is also a huge challenge in the region. OSISA will work in Zimbabwe, Swaziland, Lesotho and Botswana to support women already in parliament (as well as those intending to be elected) with skills and competence development so they can effectively participate in these spaces.

GOAL 2: Media freedom and access to information

The presence of an independent, diverse, and vibrant media is always a good indicator of a healthy democracy. When free and independent, the media is capable of exposing excesses both in the public and private sectors. Access to information on the other hand underpins citizens' right to know, and empowers them to demand accountability from office-bearers from a position of knowledge. OSISA will support several efforts aimed at strengthening media freedom and access to information as critical building blocks for democracy and good governance in the region.

OSISA's work on promoting *access to information* will involve:
- Providing support to multi-stakeholder groups advocating the enactment and implementation of access to information laws across the region, with emphasis on Angola, Malawi, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe.
- Providing foundation-wide collaboration to mainstream media freedom and access to information across all of OSISA's work.
- Supporting, in collaboration with the OSJI, catalytic efforts to advance the right to information, including strategic litigation.
- Providing support to civil society organisations to use existing access to information legislation, or provisions within other legislation, to access information in areas of high public interest – including health, education, elections, natural resources, policing, and public and private sector accountability – in Malawi, Zimbabwe, Namibia, Zambia and Mozambique.
- Providing support to civil society organisations, including academics and groups engaged in democratic oversight of the security sector, to prevent or limit the abuse of secrecy provisions in law and policy that limit public access to information.
- Enhancing public and private sector institutional capacities to ensure realisation of access, the establishment of sustainable community media, particularly community radio in remote rural areas in Malawi, Lesotho, Namibia and Zambia.
- Working closely with the Women's Rights Programme to ensure that community radio programmes are gender-sensitive and do not entrench patriarchal norms and values in communities.

As part of promoting *media freedom* and *freedom of expression*, OSISA will:
- Support national and regional organisations working on the monitoring, reporting and redress of violations on media freedoms, such as the Media Institute for Southern Africa (MISA).
- Support the Congolese Media Observatory (OMEC) in the DRC to document and report media freedom violations.
- Support efforts aimed at achieving the decriminalisation of insult and libel laws in Angola, Botswana, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Where media environments are restricted and *resistance to media freedom* is strong, for instance in Angola, Swaziland and Zambia, OSISA will:
- Provide support to independent, alternative and social media to ensure plurality of voices and diversity of opinion in the public domain.
- Support the development of alternative platforms for communication among marginalised indigenous communities in Angola, Botswana, the DRC and Namibia – including social media, community radio and print publications.
- Support training of CSO actors on the use of social media as advocacy tools.
- Build on the success of our work with the Women's Rights Programme in supporting young women to use social media for their advocacy and movement building.
- Promote the application of innovative information communications technology (ICT) tools for citizen monitoring, accountability and reporting in key areas, including elections, public service delivery in education, health and other sectors.

Reform of the media regulatory environment is essential to ensure that the media serves the public interest, especially considering that many countries still retain archaic colonial media laws and regulations. OSISA will support:
- Advocacy for broadcasting reform in Angola, Botswana, Swaziland, Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe to ensure full transformation of state broadcasters into public broadcasters.
- Licensing of community broadcasters in Angola, Botswana, Swaziland and Zimbabwe.
- Initiatives for media self-regulation in line with the Banjul Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression in Africa.

In order to *enhance transparency and accountability* in the public and private sector OSISA will:

- Support the setting up of robust investigative reporting media units in Angola, the DRC, Mozambique, Namibia and Zambia working in collaboration with the Mail & Guardian Centre for Investigative Journalism.
- Support targeted, tailored training on investigative reporting in Angola, the DRC and Mozambique, in view of the peculiar challenge related to the lack of transparency and accountability in the extractive sectors in these countries.
- Continue to support an annual regional journalism Summer School to strengthen skills in investigative reporting, ethics and digital reporting.
- Support the Forum for African Investigative Reporting (FAIR) in establishing an online platform aimed at advancing investigative reporting across the continent.

GOAL 3: Public and private sector accountability

Improving accountability requires multi-faceted action aimed at enhancing both the supply and demand side. On the *supply* side, the support envisaged will:

- Target public institutions tasked with investigating and prosecuting corruption – such as ombudspersons and anti-corruption commissions and with oversight of key public institutions such as Parliamentary Portfolio Committees on Public Accounts.
- Support the development and implementation of national policies to combat corruption in vital economic and social sectors including the extractive, health and education sectors specifically.
- Collaborate with the OSJI in supporting the use of litigation to fight corruption in the region.
- Support efforts by public and private sector institutions to expand access to education and health services by harnessing the natural resource wealth of several countries in the region, including Angola, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Zambia and the DRC.
- Support efforts that seek to document and establish the impacts of corruption on women and girls.

On the *demand* side, OSISA will:

- Support citizens' movements and civil society to hold public and private-sector institutions and officials to account, including through the use of ICT, litigation and advocacy.
- Collaborate closely with the cluster on Economic and Social Justice and the Natural Resource Governance Initiative in enhancing accountability in these sectors as a strategy to ensure equitable access and improving and monitoring budget transparency in key sectors.
- Support civil society and media organisations to hold public and private institutions (e.g. finance and economic planning, health and education ministries, judiciaries, election management bodies, state owned enterprises and private sector companies especially in the extractive sector) to account to through monitoring, assessing and reporting on decision-making, tracking public expenditure and advocating for policy reforms in key social sectors.

- Support CSOs working at the confluence of health and education rights and governance and accountability to undertake research in select Southern African countries facing acute service delivery challenges (Zimbabwe, Malawi, Mozambique, the DRC), to assess the impact of corruption on education and health, and advocate corrective measures.
- Provide institutional and technical support to anti-corruption bodies, such as the Southern Africa Forum on Anti-Corruption (SAFAC) and explore partnership with other actors working in this area such as Transparency International to effectively work on anti-corruption in Southern Africa.
- Monitor and expose corruption on key areas that affect citizens most, such as accessing identity documents, education, and health.
- Support efforts aimed at ensuring transparency and accountability in political parties especially with regards to political party finance.
- Focus on countries with upcoming elections during the OSISA strategy period including Botswana, the DRC, Lesotho, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

3.2 Field 2: The economic and social justice cluster

Freedom from want is as essential as freedom from fear. Economic and social justice are fundamental for the realisation of human rights and sustainable democracies, as reflected in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). Yet almost all governments in Southern Africa continue to fail in their duty to fulfil these rights. Inappropriate economic and social development policy frameworks, a lack of implementation of existing policies, poor governance of public finances and bad resource governance are at the root of this challenge. The failure of states to deliver socio-economic rights most severely impacts on marginalised groups, such as women and girls, amongst whom poverty and inequality is deepening in a region that paradoxically has in the recent past experienced rapid economic growth and a resource boom.

Exclusion, poverty, inequality, and social and economic deprivations are pervasive in every country in Southern Africa, regardless of that country's economic and democratic status. The region's high levels of inequality and poverty continue to increase, especially in countries that have had major governance and political challenges. Equally, resource-rich and middle-income countries such as Botswana, Namibia, South Africa, the DRC and Angola have not been able to significantly reduce inequality despite the consistently high levels of economic growth in these countries in the past decade. This has been compounded by the failure thus far of many Southern African governments to take advantage of the mineral resource boom to achieve meaningful economic transformation.

As a result, the feminisation of poverty and inequality is pervasive across the region. Women and girls are amongst the poorest of all demographic groups. They have the least access to formal employment and they remain largely in the informal sectors that are not supported or recognised in policy and practice. Women are often not included in policy-making processes, and their contribution to economic development is not acknowledged.

Equitable access to quality public services – especially in education and health – is fundamental to addressing inequality. However, in Southern Africa quality health and education remain a privilege for those who can afford private services. Public services in these sectors are commonly unavailable in most countries, and where available, tend to be of extremely poor quality with the poor and marginalised disproportionately bearing the brunt.

In the past two decades the health situation in Southern Africa received significant attention and spending channelled towards stemming the HIV/AIDS epidemic. In recent years, funding for HIV/AIDS has dwindled and although initial progress was achieved in reducing infection rates and increasing access to anti-retrovirals (ARVs), the scourge is far from being eradicated. Infection rates remain high and are on the increase whilst access to ARVs remains limited in several countries in the region. Important to note is that the HIV and AIDS epidemic has decimated women and girls more than men: with young women between 16 and 24 years of age having the highest incidence of infection. This is further worsened by the fact that there is very little articulation and understanding of health as a rights issue in the region. With high HIV prevalence, rising child and maternal mortality rates and an emerging increase in non-communicable diseases (NCDs), Southern Africa is far from attaining the health MDGs and equal access to healthcare for all.

The deterioration in health and education service delivery disproportionately affects and impacts women and girls in the region. Research has shown that where there are no social safety nets, women and girls become the safety nets: with girls for instance dropping out of school in order to work to support their younger brothers' education. Similarly, where hospitals have become overwhelmed and underperforming, women leave their economic and income-producing activities to nurse sick relatives at home. Maternal mortality has been rising steadily over the last decades, with the DRC, Angola, Zimbabwe and Malawi the worst affected in the region.

Progress has been made to achieve MDG 2 of universal primary education in Southern Africa, especially if measured by the number of children enrolled in school. Net enrolment rates have increased numerically;[13] the number of out-of-school children has been reduced significantly and gender disparities have also been reduced. However, this only tells a partial story. Millions of children are still out of school, especially in post-conflict countries, in particular the DRC, where over 7 million children are left out of the system. Children enter school only to drop out before completing primary school and the proportion of those starting school who reach the last grade is worsening. Education at all levels is

a gendered terrain and gender disparities become more pronounced at higher levels. While gains have been made to achieve gender parity in the region at primary level, the gains are lost at secondary and tertiary level with limited participation of girls. Child marriages and early pregnancies are major contributing factors, especially between the ages of 15 and 18 across the region.

In recent years, this paradox of economic growth, high levels of poverty and growing inequality has galvanised citizens to organise themselves into social movements to engage with the state and the private sector to demand transparency, accountability and improved opportunities for all. Our social and economic justice programming focuses on promoting equitable access to socio-economic rights by supporting the full participation and engagement of marginalised communities in economic governance and social development processes that shape and improve their well-being.

It has become clear that focusing on all the countries simultaneously with individual projects targeting each of these countries has not helped us to consolidate our work in terms of impact and monitoring. A *regional approach* to the work could yield far more reward than what we have done so far. We will explore a mixed approach combining a country and a regional approach.

3.2.1 Goals
In the period 2015–2018 our goal is to promote and support sustainable livelihoods and equitable access to basic services through rights-based approaches. Our work in this area will prioritise:
1. Equitable economic development and improving the quality and responsiveness of public policy;
2. Addressing structural barriers to equitable provision of health and education services; and
3. Strengthening and supporting social movements in this sector.

A key common factor that will underpin the above three priority areas is the gendered impacts as well as women's rights imperatives, as women are the majority of citizens that will be targeted.

3.2.2 Key areas of work 2015–2018

GOAL 1: Equitable economic development
OSISA will support and facilitate initiatives that enhance the interaction of often powerful and competing interests between the state, the private sector, CSOs and social movements in order to promote an economic development agenda that caters for the vulnerable and marginalised sectors of society.

Work within this goal will focus on two areas:
1. Economic and development policy reform by engaging macro-economic frameworks, fiscal, trade, investment and key sectoral policies; and
2. Promoting alternative policies that address the rights of marginalised groups.

In particular, OSISA will:

- Promote discourse on alternative frameworks and pro-poor and inclusive development policies at national, regional and global levels through the facilitation of research and policy dialogue. This work will target Malawi, the DRC, Lesotho and Angola.
- Support civic participation and democratisation in the development of policy frameworks and strategies aimed at reducing inequalities and promoting socio-economic rights, with a particular focus on research and the production of knowledge on the impacts of macro-economic frameworks on the poor and marginalised. We will work in Malawi, Zambia and Angola.
- Build capacity for sustained civic engagement in development processes through training on economic literacy in order to deepen and further develop key evidence-based advocacy on economic policy.
- Support discourse on financing for development by monitoring the effectiveness of financing models, resource governance, as well as supporting advocacy for financing mechanisms that work for the poor and marginalised in the DRC, Lesotho, Zimbabwe and Angola.
- Promote initiatives focusing on innovative finance for development through research and advocacy on pro-poor financing mechanisms, especially for key social sectors such as education and health.
- Support the monitoring of the effectiveness of development finance – in particular, official development assistance (ODA) and its impact on the rights and livelihoods of poor and marginalised communities. Focus will be on countries in which aid makes up a significant part of the national budget, such as Malawi, Lesotho, Mozambique and Zambia.
- Monitor and advocate against illicit financial flows by working proactively with the OSF Fiscal Governance Initiative, the OSJI, Global Witness and other regional and network programmes to push for more regulation and policy reforms that will address tax havens and evasions, and illicit transfers. Financial and technical support will be provided to platforms and individual CSOs with a focus on building the capacity to monitor trends, advocate and litigate at a national level in Zimbabwe, Angola, Mozambique, the DRC and Zambia.

GOAL 2: Equitable education and health services

Equitable access to quality public services in education and health is fundamental to addressing inequality. In order to ensure sustainable impact, the OSISA programme will focus on addressing structural barriers in these key social sectors. In the realm of education rights OSISA's primary advocacy premise is that access to quality and equitable basic education is a right that all people are entitled to. It is an enabler for the realisation of all other rights and it underpins the objectives of open societies – human rights, justice and the rule of law, democratic governance, and tolerance for diversity among others and it is fundamental to reducing poverty and inequality.

Across the Southern African region, there is greater focus on the need for improved school achievement, and early learning programmes for children aged 4–6 years are expanding. Nevertheless, there continues to be low access to services, with the poor and those living in rural areas the most deprived. The variable quality of service provision is compounded by weak co-ordination across the various government and non-state actors. In addition, although governments are now more aware of the importance of investing in early childhood development (ECD) – with demand growing as women enter the workforce – government funding of ECD continues to be limited; and there are no dedicated teams within government to co-ordinate national programming.

The implementation of health and education services continues to be sectoral (with a focus on nutrition or health or education) despite the fact that evidence points to the need for holistic programming. This is particularly important as a child's development in one domain influences development in another – for instance, a child's health and nutrition status will impact on their ability to learn. Additionally, services are largely being offered by inadequately trained personnel, often in an unregulated private sector, with negative impacts on quality. Furthermore, although the majority of governments recognise the critical role parents play in the lives of their children, there has nevertheless not been significant investment in developing and implementing policies and programmes designed to foster parenting. Children under 3 and those with special needs continue to be left out of national early childhood programmes.[14] The Education Programme strategy will be aimed at enhancing access, equity and quality within a framework of good governance to achieve education for all. Special attention will be given to resource-rich countries with significant investments in mining, such as Zimbabwe, the DRC, Mozambique, Angola and Zambia.

The programme will focus on two target groups for the period 2015–2018:

- Marginalised and excluded children – out-of-school children, children with disabilities and children from ethnic, racial and other minority groups will be targeted by supporting interventions aimed at promoting equitable education for all;
- Young children from 0–8 years and their caregivers – especially from poor, disadvantaged and marginalised backgrounds – will be targeted by support for multiple interventions that seek to increase access to quality early childhood development and education (ECDE).

The programme will:

- Promote and support the piloting of model interventions that can inform policy and practice with a view to increasing access and achieving equity and quality education for all, especially for marginalised groups in Angola, Malawi, Namibia, Zimbabwe and Botswana; and
- Support and strengthen education governance systems by engaging and supporting the state in the planning, financing, monitoring, implementation and delivery of quality services for all focusing on the ongoing work to support development of ECDE policies and special needs

education policies started in Zambia, Lesotho and Swaziland.

OSISA will work with countries in the region to advocate for health policy reforms and address structural issues in the health sector that present barriers to attaining equal access to quality health care and services. To achieve this, we will focus on:

- Integrating human rights concepts into the health sector by ensuring that the voices of communities, especially those on the margins, are heard and their right to health services is protected.
- Addressing policy and structural barriers to the equitable provision of health services by making the justice system more responsive to issues affecting the health sector.

GOAL 3: Strengthening and supporting social movements
In seeking to fulfil this goal, our approach is to:

- Amplify the voices and interests of marginalised groups (such as women, indigenous peoples, people living with disabilities and the poor) as well as economic justice networks and informal traders, with the purpose of enabling them to influence national and international development policy frameworks. Direct support will be provided to movements in Namibia, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Mozambique and Malawi.
- Strengthen organisations and civil society groups that are able to demand and promote rights-based approaches to providing health care and services. Given the dire situation in countries such as Zimbabwe, Angola, Mozambique and Malawi, we will support women's movements in the health sector to advocate and push for maternal health services.
- Support united voices and campaigns for education for all by working with early childhood development practitioners, civil society groups, advocates, parents, communities and researchers demanding quality education services. This work will focus on the DRC, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Swaziland, Malawi and Zambia.

3.3 Field 3: The human rights, access to justice and the rule of law cluster

While the rule of law, human rights and access to justice provisions are enshrined in constitutions and laws of countries across the region, violations occur routinely and systematically throughout the region. When politically expedient, human rights standards and the rule of law are often ignored and deliberately undermined by governments and public-sector agencies violating commitments to national, regional and international conventions. Governments ignore their own policies, laws and international conventions; whilst oversight by parliaments and the judiciary tends to be weak and unable to stem impunity, especially of coercive elements of the state machinery. This situation affects poor, marginalised, vulnerable and disadvantaged groups disproportionately – as these groups often have relatively limited means and channels to

demand and claim their rights.

In recent years, the region has seen a rising tide of *state-sponsored homophobia*, encouraged predominantly by religious leaders and politicians. Zimbabwe's President Mugabe has equated gay activists with pigs and dogs and has threatened to expel diplomats that champion gay rights. In neighbouring Zambia, two gay men have been in detention since May 2013 facing charges of sodomy; calls for their release and to have the charges dropped have gone unheeded. LGBTI individuals are now likely to face even more abuse, threats and discrimination as many politicians and lawmakers are speaking of modelling Ugandan and Nigerian anti-homosexuality laws, with a member of parliament in the DRC pushing for an anti-homosexuality law that mirrors that of Uganda.

Likewise *persons with disabilities* (PWDs) are largely discriminated against and their rights to education, employment and full participation in public and private spheres curtailed. While some progress has been made in the region to align laws with the spirit of the UN Convention on the Rights of Person with Disabilities (UNCRPD), PWDs face regular discrimination and abuse, and remain among the poorest and most vulnerable groups in Southern Africa. Research and jurisprudence on disability rights is still in its infancy with a promising collaboration with HESP to support a network of higher education institutions in the region.

Despite the adoption of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), and the International Labour Organisation Convention 169 on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Southern Africa's *indigenous communities* continue to face systemic assaults on their dignity and basic human rights. Forced evictions to make way for resource extraction, tourism and other development projects (without any benefit to the indigenous people's communities) are the most prominent of these abuses. Where indigenous people have managed to remain on their lands, they face encroachment and outright theft of their land by powerful ethnic elites who are allowed to fence of indigenous territories with impunity and sometimes in collusion with local government. This loss of land has a profound impact on their livelihoods, food security and cultural cohesion, giving rise to a host of social challenges. In all Southern African countries where indigenous peoples exist, their language and identity is disappearing at an alarming rate. Systemic racial discrimination has severely affected the ability of indigenous people to secure employment, access public services such as education and healthcare, and has left them severely impoverished and excluded from society.

Southern Africa remains deeply patriarchal and *women* face discrimination in all aspects of life. Although forming 52% of the region's population, women remain on the margins of socio-economic and political participation and their civil, political, social and economic rights are routinely and systematically violated in most countries. Women in Southern Africa continue to suffer many forms of violence and abuse – domestic, sexual, economic and emotional – with laws and policies failing to provide them with justice. In Namibia, Swaziland, Zimbabwe and others, levels of domestic violence have reached pandemic proportions and impunity of

perpetrators largely prevails, underpinned by cultural attitudes, unresponsive legal and judicial systems, and women's own lack of awareness and knowledge of their legal rights.

The poor and vulnerable citizens who constitute the majority of the region's population have limited knowledge of their rights and the laws that protect them, making them susceptible to abuse. *Legal aid and assistance* are not readily available, and where available, is often unaffordable. This has contributed to a rise in the numbers of pre-trial detainees in prison populations in almost all the countries in the region. Such prisoners often face torture and other abuses.

Citizens and *civil society* have remained weak relative to the state, with the state using both direct power through threats, arrests, torture and rule by law to deny citizens their rights. In addition, marginalised groups have been disempowered and suppressed through subtle forms of power that have entrenched patriarchy, heteronormativity, ethnic hegemonies and other forms of discrimination.

3.3.1 Goals

In its work on human rights, rule of law and access to justice, OSISA envisions a region in which laws are rights-based and are effectively implemented, where the rule of law prevails and the rights of the most marginalised groups in society are protected and empowered. OSISA expects by 2018 to have

- Strengthened the capacity of human rights, justice and rule of law systems and institutions to effectively protect the rights of marginalised groups.
- Supported legal reforms – including those addressing traditional forms of justice – aimed at promoting and protecting the rights of most marginalised groups.
- Supported the marginalised to amplify their voice and defend their rights when ignored, threatened or violated in Southern Africa.

In this regard tour goal is to:
1. Ensure that laws have norms that respect human rights.
2. Build accountability in justice delivery and oversight institutions to implement and protect the rights of the marginalised.
3. Empower marginalised groups to know, demand and defend their rights.

3.3.2 Key areas of work 2015–2018

OSISA's proposed interventions will consist of three interrelated categories:
- The legal framework;
- Systems and institutions; and
- The *targeted beneficiaries*, who are the disadvantaged and marginalised people at the core of the cluster's interventions.

GOAL 1: Human rights norms and standards

With weak legal frameworks and inaccessible justice systems, there is an increasing culture of disrespect for human rights in most countries in the region. Whilst most national constitutions of the countries in the region include Bills of Rights, there is no corresponding commitment in law and practice to see these rights realised. The region is marred by outdated, restrictive and discriminatory national laws and policies, most of which are relics of colonial legislation and are often in contradiction with both the national constitutions and the international laws to which the countries are party. Most countries in the region have dual legal systems incorporating formal and traditional justice mechanisms. Our work will focus on:

- Reform, harmonisation and implementation of laws especially in **Zimbabwe, Malawi, Zambia** and **Mozambique**;
- Litigation against human rights abuses in **Zambia, Botswana, Angola, Swaziland, Zimbabwe, the DRC** and **Mozambique**; and
- Advancing respect for constitutionalism and constitutional values throughout the region.

GOAL 2: Systems and institutions

Whilst the law is potentially an effective tool to protect the rights of marginalised groups where the laws are progressive, its consistent application is pertinent to ensuring justice and the rule of law. In many countries in the region, key systems and institutions such as parliaments, human rights commissions and others designed to promote and protect the rights of citizens are often weak and in some cases dysfunctional. OSISA will strengthen accountability and capacity to effectively implement and protect the rights of the people by:

- Supporting human rights oversight bodies – in particular human rights commissions throughout the region – to undertake their promotion and protection mandate;
- Providing support to justice institutions, bar associations, lawyers' and judges' organisations throughout the region;
- Promoting prosecutorial accountability with a focus on **Zimbabwe, Zambia** and **Malawi**.
- Promoting quality legal aid and assistance for arrestees and reducing arbitrary and excessive use of pre-trial detention.

GOAL 3: Empowerment of marginalised groups

The poor and vulnerable citizens who constitute the majority of the region's population have limited knowledge of their rights and the laws that protect them, thus making them susceptible to abuse. The organisations that represent them, where they exist, often have limited capacity to effectively advocate for and demand their rights. OSISA will continue to work directly with the affected communities and the organisations that represent their interests. We will focus on the following efforts:

- Building the capacity of civil society organisations, their networks and umbrella bodies to combat discrimination and exclusion;
- Supporting victims to pursue processes to hold perpetrators of serious human rights violations accountable; and
- Supporting the protection of human rights defenders throughout the region.

4. OSISA's initiative:
Natural resource governance

4.1 Context of the field

Southern Africa has significant deposits of some of the world's most strategic minerals, such as platinum, manganese, chromium, cobalt, titanium, diamonds, copper and gold. For many Southern African countries, raw materials are important export products and represent a significant part of state revenues. Raw materials are thus potentially a valuable asset for sustaining growth and reducing poverty and inequalities.

Since 2000, the price of minerals has been experiencing a strong and steady rise owing to an increasing demand from China and other emerging economies, following a 30-year period of commodity price stagnation. Although the expected duration of the commodity market boom is uncertain, it is likely that part of the rise will become permanent, generating stable extra revenues for a number of exporting countries in the long run.

However, in some countries the resource boom is threatening to turn into a *resource curse* – while the profits of big international mining corporations have increased sharply, the additional revenue available to producing countries has not resulted in significant progress towards development. An illustrative example of this is the widening inequality gaps among citizens even in countries that are posting high economic performance indicators. As highlighted earlier, women and girls have grown poorer, as countries have developed economically. This can be ascribed to the unbalanced nature of deals between foreign companies and governments in a mineral commodity context marred by corruption, tax avoidance and tax evasion. Moreover, the rapid increase of commodity prices has the potential to hamper the negotiation of long-term agreements and contracts, further adding to market uncertainty and price volatility.

OSISA believes that mineral resources will contribute to development only if extraction is done in a transparent and accountable manner along the entire value chain. In addition, while short- and long-term impacts have to be considered, short- to medium-term initiatives are more relevant. Current market conditions have created a momentum for policy changes that may not exist in a few years' time – and this momentum must be seized. The AU has responded to the resource curse by adopting the African Mining Vision (AMV). Most African governments are focusing on contract and fiscal reforms to increase mineral revenues, while the international campaign on transparency and accountability focuses on revenue with less attention to labour concerns and mitigation and management of social and environmental impacts. Key among these is the impacts on groups that wield the least power – women and girls – due to their historical positioning across the region.

OSISA sees the resource challenge as two-fold:
- How to institute a greater public dialogue and consultation – which includes the often marginalised groups such as women – on the future of the resource sector to promote transparency and accountability; and
- How to design strategies and policies to navigate the challenges that keep countries from optimising the benefits of mineral extraction.

The concept OSISA proposes will assist Southern African countries and peoples to optimise the benefits from resource extraction through transparent and accountable management. The proposed intervention is designed for long-term benefits for Southern Africa as a region, as well as individual countries. OSISA will continue to support efforts aimed at ensuring that the region's extractive sector provides sustainable development benefits and by:
- Strengthening institutions;
- Promoting accountability as well as informed and empowered populations who demand improved development outcomes;
- Improving governance systems;
- Negotiating (or renegotiating) better deals;
- Promoting value addition to minerals before they are exported; and
- Monitoring and evaluating the impact of extractive activities on the rights and livelihoods of vulnerable populations, especially women, and the environment.

In 2006, OSISA established the Southern Africa Resource Watch (SARW) as a fairly autonomous project. Since its launch, SARW has built knowledge and expertise establishing itself as an authority. SARW has dedicated a large proportion of its work to the promotion of revenue transparency and accountability by working with civil society, governments, parliaments, companies and communities, by:

- Working with civil society in the **DRC** to force government to implement the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI).
- Being part of the early efforts to convince the **Zambian** government to join the EITI.
- Providing support to expand the EITI to local levels in **Mozambique**.
- Providing capacity-building to CSOs to embark on the Publish What You Pay (PWYP) campaign, resulting in the **Zimbabwean** government setting up its own version of the EITI, the Zimbabwe Mining Revenue Transparency Initiative (ZMRTI).
- Working closely with the EITI secretariat.
- Collaborating with the Revenue Watch Institute.
- Working with government and mining companies in the **DRC** to push through the renegotiation of dubious mining contracts.
- Working closely with local civil society (ensuring effective representation of women's rights interest groups), mining ministries and parliaments on mining policy reviews currently taking place in the **DRC**, **Lesotho** and **Zimbabwe**.
- Partnering with the SADC Parliamentary Forum to build the oversight capacity of parliaments and parliamentarians (ensuring the effective representation of women's law-makers) over resource management utilising, among other instruments, the SADC Natural Resource Governance Barometer.
- Initiating an ambitious low-cost project (targeting especially women) to organise, mobilise and train mining communities on self-representation to be able to take their own initiatives to hold mining companies and governments to account.
- Working closely and supporting regional initiatives seeking to build voice and movements on gendered impacts of the extractive industries in the region.
- Producing publications from research reports to policy papers and advocacy reports. These publications have been well received by governments, civil society, academics, companies and international institutions. In an effort to make this information available to a wider audience, SARW has also developed a widely accessed website.[15] Establishing strong partnerships with the Economic Commission of Africa (ECA), the African Mineral Development Centre (AMDC), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning (IDEP).
- Working with the ECA and the UNDP to review the **Lesotho** mineral policy and has participated in the drafting of the AMV plan of action.
- Working with the UNDP Namibia country office on corporate social responsibility for mining companies and on the gendered impacts of mining on health.

4.1.1 Goals

For the 2015–2018 period, OSISA will continue to promote transparency and accountability along the value chain at national levels, promote the harmonisation of regional mining policies and support the implementation of the AMV in Southern Africa. OSISA interventions will be implemented through the Southern Africa Resource Watch Initiative, which has built sufficient capacity and knowledge of the field. Furthermore, in the past seven years SARW has also established collaborative relationships with other organisations in this sector.

In this sector, our goal is to prioritise:

1. Legislative frameworks and institutional constraints;
2. Transparency and accountability;
3. Mining contracts;
4. Corporate social responsibility;
5. Regional and continental initiatives;
6. Empowerment and capacity building;
7. Knowledge development.

4.1.2 Key areas of work 2015–2018

GOAL 1: Legislative frameworks and institutional constraints
Resource curses occur where institutions are weak. Because of the critical importance of the mining sector for the economy and the public budget, commodity-dependent countries need to develop 'world-class' public administration within relevant government departments. OSISA will:
- Support projects to review mining policies, build capacity of governments to regulate and monitor the resource sector.
- Focus on **Lesotho, the DRC, Zambia** and **Zimbabwe** where SARW has already established strong working relations with governments and parliaments.
- Support civil society and mining communities engaging with legal reforms in the extractive sector.
- Work with community organisations that we have established in **Zambia** (Mulysahi Resource) and the **DRC** (Fungurume Tenke Development and Natural Resource and Development) as well as support the creation of community organisations in **Zimbabwe** and **Mozambique**.

GOAL 2: Transparency and accountability
The kernel of many SADC countries' problems remains the absence of a transparent and accountable system of resource management and an efficient revenue collection and distribution system. Even in countries with relatively strong institutions and capacity to collect revenues (such as Botswana and Namibia), the challenge for revenue transparency remains, especially when it comes to redistribution. In SADC, the wealth that countries generate is transient and vulnerable to internal and external shocks. Internally it is vulnerable to misappropriation, with dire consequences for the majority of the population, especially women and children. The region is particularly susceptible to external economic shocks emanating from its linkages with the global economy and also due to illicit financial flows. OSISA will:
- Support action to increase civil society and mining communities' capacity – with special focus on women's groups' – to hold government and companies to account;

- Support and promote the EITI and the PWYP;
- Strengthen the capacity of civil society to participate in the EITI;
- Strengthen the PWYP campaign;
- Link country campaigns to global campaigns, focusing on Zambia, the DRC and Mozambique, the three countries that have joined the EITI;
- Work with the EITI secretariat and other organisations to lobby other countries to join the EITI, with a focus on Malawi, Lesotho and Zimbabwe;
- Support the dissemination of EITI reports in Zambia, DRC and Mozambique; and
- SARW will work with the EITI national Secretariat and PWYP chapters in all the countries that are members.

GOAL 3: Mining contracts

With the prospect of long-term commodity prices, the only way countries in the region will maximise revenues is by negotiating fairer deals (including the renegotiation of uneven mining contracts). The renegotiation of contracts has now been accepted as an option and it is also contained in the AMV. Reviewing of mining contracts also means changing the legislation and regulations. SARW has built sufficient expertise on this front through its role and active participation in the renegotiation of 63 mining contracts in the DRC. OSISA will:

- Support countries' efforts to engage in contracts' review process to audit, review and redress unbalanced mining contracts, with a view to produce contracts that are sensitive to beneficiation of the majority of the poor.
- Focus on the DRC, Zambia and Mozambique and any other country that engages in this process.

GOAL 4: Corporate social responsibility

Mining companies can play a positive role for development through investment of financial resources, job creation, and the transfer of technologies or skills development. Beyond these direct benefits, there is recognition that assessing the prospects of a company must go beyond the financial bottom line and examine the social, environmental and human rights policies and practices of the enterprise, especially toward host communities. Experience shows that extractive industries do not necessarily benefit local communities, especially women and girls, who tend to suffer the most from the negative impact of extractive activities. OSISA will:

- Work toward the development of a Comprehensive Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Model for Mining Companies through the consolidation of existing voluntary CSR initiatives and guidelines with a proven track record in terms of concrete contribution to local development (environment protection, decent working conditions, human rights, relations with local communities, local companies and human resources, training programmes, reinvestment of profits).
- Continue with its strategy of building civil society and communities' capacity to monitor companies' compliance with CSR, with a special focus on women's capacity.
- Ensure that CRS interventions are gender-sensitive to make sure that the services provided will make life easier for women and girls.

GOAL 5: Regional and continental initiatives

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the East African Community (EAC) and the SADC are in the process of producing regional policies to harmonise their mining policies. There is a recognition that mining activities in one country have an impact on other countries through pollution of water, destruction of biodiversity and destruction of infrastructure (roads and railways). At the continental level, the AU has adopted the AMV – considered today as a blueprint on how to turn mineral resources into development; in addition, an Africa Mining Development Centre (AMDC) has been established to support the implementation of the AMV. OSISA through SARW has positioned itself as a key partner to the AMDC to promote the domestication of key features of the AMV in SADC. OSISA will work with:

- The AMDC to support the popularisation and domestication of the AMV in Southern Africa.
- The ECA regional office based in Zambia to support the implementation of the SADC Mining Harmonisation policy.

GOAL 6: Capacity-building

Southern African citizens cannot leave the management of natural resources solely to governments and companies. Citizens formally and informally need to follow how their resources are being managed at all levels. OSISA will:

- Continue its capacity-building initiative of key stakeholders parliaments, civil society, media and communities from all ten countries, to be able to discharge their oversight role effectively with the view to ensuring that minerals benefit every citizen.
- Work with the Women's Programme to build women's organisations to engage with and advocate effectively for women's inclusion in the policy and beneficiation from extractives in Angola, the DRC, Zimbabwe and Zambia.

GOAL 7: Knowledge development

OSISA will promote and support rigorous research and thought-provoking publications, ranging from major reports to policy papers to briefing documents. These publications will provide up-to-date information, spark debate, generate media interest, increase public awareness and provide evidence for community and civil society advocacy campaigns. The areas of research will include:

- Understanding the changing geo-strategic nature of the region's mineral resources;
- Understanding the link between extractive industries and human rights, health and the environment;
- Understanding women's participation and the gendered impacts of the extractives;
- Investigating corruption and illicit financial flows in the extractive industries in the region's resource-rich countries – the DRC, Angola, Zimbabwe, Zambia and Mozambique;

- Understanding the level of domestication of the AMV in the region; and

- Understanding the relationship between resource governance and democratisation.

4.2 Our expected results

- Oil and mining legislation are revised in the DRC and Lesotho;
- Better understanding by the DRC and Zambia governments of the capital invested in the mining sector by private companies, and how to manage it;
- Lesotho and Malawi join the EITI; the DRC obtains its validation;
- Model of best practices of corporate social responsibility is published and popularised;
- Space for exchange of experience of governance of mineral resources between the DRC and Zambia is created;
- National platforms of civil society working in the natural resource sector in Zambia, the DRC, Zimbabwe and Lesotho is created;
- Mapping report on Swaziland's mineral resources is developed and published;
- Annual regional report on the state of the extractive industries using the resource barometer is published;
- Capacity of at least six SADC parliaments to monitor the extractive industries is increased;
- The Africa Mining Vision is introduced in all ten OSISA countries;
- Papers on key emerging issues in the extractive industries are published; and
- Mining communities in four countries are supported to independently engage mining companies and governments.

5. Shared frameworks

5.1 Food security in the face of climate change

As highlighted in the regional and country analysis, Southern Africa remains a food insecure region. The scarcity of food or poor management of its distribution dehumanises millions of people in addition to being a deprivation of one the most important and basic rights. For this reason, OSISA will work with others in OSF to unleash the regions potential to feed itself. OSISA's contribution to the shared framework draws on existing experience and capacities, and complements work already planned within the three clusters described above.

GOAL 1: Land governance

OSISA's experience with the extractive industries lays a sound foundation for working for justice in land governance. Key issues include:

- The large-scale purchase/leasing of land by large commercial interests and countries. This process has risks for both community and national level food security;
- Security of tenure for small-scale farmers, which is both a right and essential if farmers are to invest in increased productivity. Land rights for women is an enormous and often neglected aspect of this broader issue; and
- Protection of 'the commons' (often called vacant land) is important for cultural and economic purposes.

By 2018, OSISA will have: developed the capacity (itself and with partners) to monitor compliance with international and regional frameworks such as the Principles for Responsible Investments in Land of the FAO and the World Bank; identified and supported a network of actors monitoring land deals; strengthened advocacy for land policies that provide a better deal at both community and national levels; and provided information, advice and assistance to groups representing small-scale farmers. We will support partners such as the Institute for Agrarian Studies in Zimbabwe to monitor land deals and the impact of commercialisation in **Zimbabwe, Mozambique and Angola**.

GOAL 2: Promoting trade justice in the agriculture sector

The availability and cost of food are affected by complex interactions of trade, markets, credit systems, subsidies and macro-economic policy frameworks. Prices paid to small-scale farmers are affected by their access to storage, processing, credit and bargaining strength in the market. OSISA will:

- Together with the Soros Economic Development Fund (SEDF) work with farmer-based organisations and large produce purchasers to optimise production and access to markets at fair prices. This work will focus on **Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia** and **Zimbabwe**;
- Work with research institutions and social justice networks to assist governments to develop small-farmer friendly policies and practices, including support in accessing affordable inputs, spending on agriculture and food security and economic incentives to increased food production; and
- Develop instruments for monitoring policy development, budget allocations and actual spending for use in advocacy.

GOAL3: Supporting small-scale farmers' movements and strengthening community leadership

In the area of both climate change and food security, we will map existing farmer-based organisations (and especially women farmers) with a focus on Zimbabwe, Malawi, Mozambique and Angola, which all face severe perennial food security challenges, and facilitate interaction between them and the social justice and research institutions who are already our partners.

We expect that by 2018, there will be strong and growing social movements advocating food security and climate justice and shaping national and local responses to these critical issues that inevitably affect marginalised groups more acutely than privileged sectors of society in the region.

We expect that farmer-based organisations will be better organised and will amplify their voice in respect of influencing land policies, government agricultural policies, and ways of working with the large private sector to ensure both economic growth and a better share of that growth for the smaller farmers.

6. Significant collaborations

In addition to its ongoing partnerships with OSIEA, OSIWA, OSF-SA and the Africa Regional Office (Afro), OSISA works with a wide variety of OSF Network Programmes as well as cooperating on advocacy projects with the OSF policy centres in Brussels, London and Washington. The following strategic collaborations are envisaged in 2015–2018:

Public Health Programme (PHP): OSISA will collaborate with the PHP on projects including capacity-building initiatives for social accountability monitoring; health rights; and economic justice.

Open Society Justice Initiative (OSJI): Areas of collaboration will include litigation in respect of resource governance; international criminal justice; and access to information legislation.

Scholarship Programme: OSISA will continue partnering with the Scholarships Programme to support human rights and disability rights activists.

Education Support Programme (ESP) and **the Early Childhood Programme (ECP)** remain significant partners of OSISA's Education and ECDE Programmes.

Higher Education Support Programme (HESP): OSISA plans to retain is partnership with HESP on the law schools and disability project as described above, and to work with HESP on bridging the gap between science, policy and the lived realities of communities affected by food insecurity in the context of climate change.

Human Rights Initiative (HRI): OSISA will continue to partner closely with the HRI on disability, criminal justice, freedom of information and LGBTI projects.

Afro Research Unit: OSISA and the Africa Regional Office (Afro) will continue to work closely to ensure the implementations of the recommendations from the Afro Research Unit reports focusing on Democracy and Political Participation, Justice Sector and Rule of Law, Public Broadcasting and Public Service Delivery in Education in Malawi, Lesotho, Swaziland and Zambia. OSISA will also assess the viability of conducting research in Angola, Botswana and Zimbabwe. The outputs of all the reports will result in a comparative document on the SADC region to look at commonalities that exist in the region and how best to engage the SADC, the African Union and other pan-African institutions, donors and civil society. OSISA will collaborate with Afro in undertaking or supporting required research in relevant areas of its mandate where crucial knowledge remains lacking

OSISA will continue to collaborate with the other three OSF Africa Foundations (OSIWA, OSIEA and OSF-SA) and with the Africa Regional Office on initiatives including but not limited to parliamentary monitoring; access to information; criminal justice; public participation; election situation rooms; and improving investigative reporting.

7. Effecting change

7.1 The rationale and theory of change

OSISA believes that at the heart of the region's problem is the prevalence in many countries of a small rent seeking elite that has little interest in national development and is subject to weak or ineffective constraints. Corporate actors in the private sector operate without adequate accountability and often outside legal requirements, resulting in too little benefit to the public purse and unfettered negative social impacts on the population. In many countries government remains one of the easiest channels for accessing public resources for personal and group enrichment by both political and economic elites, and there is often a top-to-bottom failure of the institutions and systems established to prevent or limit such corruption.

Institutional capacity to limit these negative processes and outcomes is weak because the processes that could lead to delivering better social services, eliminating discrimination, strengthening courts, revenue collection, etc. are captured and under the control of the same elites whose primary interest is enriching themselves using public resources. For well-intentioned actors to push back and gain ground against those elites, there's a need for a multi-targeted effort that makes abuse of entrusted power and resources more difficult, that advances and supports efforts of individuals and groups leading initiatives to drive positive political, social and economic change, and helps the population understand how they are being negatively impacted and demand change. OSISA will position itself to stimulate and support such efforts and expects to encounter active opposition from political and private sector elites, as well as sectors of the population that do not yet, or will never, align with efforts to prevent diversion of public resources and ensure they are used to invest in public goods.

A combination of restrictive operational environments, capacity challenges and donor dependence has left civil society in the region unable to undertake the kinds of sophisticated advocacy programming that is required to challenge states or private sector institutions that continue to demonstrate strong anti-democratic tendencies, exhibit unaccountable and exploitative forms of governance and fail to deliver equitable access to justice, economic and social opportunities to the people.

OSISA works at both the regional and country levels, calibrating its responses to achieve the greatest impact. The organisation will support efforts to enhance the SADC's ability to contribute to and strengthen democracy in the region. OSISA will leverage the SADC's regional integration agenda to advance progress in equitable socio-economic policies in the respective countries. It will also support regional approaches to advancing the rule of law, access to justice and human rights, including campaigning for the reinstatement of the SADC Tribunal.

In addition, OSISA will also work to build and strengthen movements for social justice – at both regional and national levels – to ensure that there is sustained and amplified voice on issues affecting citizens.

In its 2015–2018 strategy, OSISA has identified three key challenges in Southern Africa:
- Democracy and governance;
- Economic and social justice; and
- Human rights, access to justice and the rule of law.

Our theory of change is that:

> *Supporting a range of partners to implement catalytic and context-specific strategic interventions will enable them to influence positive change in the attitudes and behaviour of citizens, civil society, the private sector and government, making government and the private sector as a whole more responsive and accountable to the needs of marginalised groups.*

OSISA recognises that its primary role is that of a grant-making organisation that supports regional and national actors themselves working – in often restrictive environments and facing significant capacity constraints – to address the main challenges facing the region. Over the years, OSISA has built up technical expertise to analyse, better understand and support our partners' programme and policy responses. We also deploy our technical expertise to support the advocacy efforts of our partners as well as take positions in our own name to promote and defend open society values.

OSISA recognises that, in many countries in the region, the overwhelming power of liberation movement governments has led to the capture of state and economic power by new elite alliances, which now requires that structural checks and balances (accountability mechanisms and actors) are

strengthened to control how they exercise power so that the benefits of new wealth are distributed to the margins of society and the most marginalised are protected and included. While in other countries where participatory democratic gains have already resulted in state control switching between different political formations, a stronger focus is required on the ability of the state to guarantee democratic governance, ensure human rights and justice, and deliver social benefits.

Varying degrees of capacity amongst its partners in civil society coupled with restrictive legal and political environments necessitates the provision of advocacy, technical and intellectual support by OSISA to partners in the design of programmes aimed at transforming the democratic, social and economic, and constitutional and legal landscape. Of necessity this transformative agenda requires for OSISA to keep an eye on the power dynamics at play; both visible power as exercised by the states, and invisible power as orchestrated by other interests that are indirectly controlling policy decisions. This is especially important as it is this transformative agenda that will ensure marginalised groups such as women, and minority groups such as LGBTI, indigenous peoples' lives are improved. In this regard, the deployment of high-level and high-quality programme and policy advisory support – in all areas of its work – remains an important element and strength in OSISA's war chest in supporting partners to create transformative change.

Our theory of change is based on a recognition that government accountability is primarily a political process, where technical factors serve to facilitate rather than cause change. This view of change as a political process fits well with a programme that supports civil society to engage in activities to strengthen accountability and public and private sector responsiveness.

Our approach is informed by the political economy of Southern Africa, where a relatively well-defined and limited elite exerts control over the political and economic spheres, using this control to extract rents, which they in turn use to maintain and consolidate control and disempower and marginalise others.

Our theory is based on the premise that by mobilising public pressure for change, the incentives for some decision-makers and persons with influence may shift from resisting change to favouring it. Likewise, by enabling citizens to influence decision-makers, they themselves become influential. Civil society organisations (CSOs) influence change by engaging directly with decision-makers, or by supporting or facilitating citizens to mobilise for change, through collective action or as individuals. OSISA is wary of commonly accepted assumptions, for example, that improved access to information, public awareness and a strengthened policy and legal framework necessarily in and of themselves lead to stronger accountability and improved service delivery.

OSISA recognises that there is relatively weak evidence of the impact that support to the demand side of accountability has had since the emergence of the governance agenda over the last two decades. There are numerous documented cases of courageous and effective individual and collective action in Southern Africa over this period, but it is also clear that large amounts of human and material resources have been expended with little demonstrable effect and that there are also cases where support to CSOs may have weakened accountability and bolstered existing power structures rather than shifting power.

OSISA recognises that the *supply and demand* dimensions of building democratic and tolerant societies are equally important. On the *supply* side, our support to governments in the region is expected to assist them to develop policies that expand democracy, achieve inclusive socio-economic development, and enhance rule of law, access to justice and human rights, especially for marginalised, disadvantaged and vulnerable groups. On the *demand* side, our support to civil society is expected to assist them to develop the capacity to participate in democratic and policy-making or reform processes, hold public and private sector institutions to account and promote and protect access to justice and human rights. See the diagram in Appendix 2. This work-in-progress is a simple depiction of our theory of change that we are continuing to refine.

We will leverage our comparative advantage as a key grant-making organisation supporting regional and national actors, by combining our intellectual, technical and programme capabilities with our grant-giving capacities to:
- Strengthen democracy;
- Improve the quality of governance;
- Enhance accountability of public and private-sector officials and institutions;
- Ensure respect for the rule of law;
- Promote and protect human rights; and
- Advance equitable access to justice, social and economic opportunities for disadvantaged, vulnerable and marginalised groups.

OSISA also recognises that change is based on complex and non-linear processes that unfold over (sometimes long) periods of time. Because one cannot assume that any particular action will necessarily have any particular effect (e.g. availability of evidence showing why change is desirable being likely to persuade policy-makers to push for change, or that availability of information will lead to strengthened accountability, which in turn will bring about improved services), it is important that actions and the impact they have on relevant stakeholders and their behaviours and practices are systematically monitored and documented.

This not only enables OSISA and its partners to demonstrate impact, but also supports learning of what has worked and what has not. Supporting and generating learning is the glue that binds OSISA's theory of change together because it is expected to enable us to succeed in an increasingly complex and competitive environment and retain what we consider to be our comparative advantage. It will also help our staff to master the regional, national challenges within their respective thematic areas that are necessary for succeeding in their efforts to advance open society ideals. OSISA will support learning by encouraging partners to build monitoring and documentation systems, and by facilitating exchange of experiences for mutual learning between partners. OSISA also

conducts its own political economy analysis within each of its programmes and jointly with its partners.

OSISA will develop a suitable monitoring and evaluation framework that enable the organisation to capture directly behaviour changes among targeted partners and decision-makers.

OSISA considers itself as a one of the key grant-making organisations in the region, working to promote democratic and tolerant societies. To discharge this mandate effectively, OSISA has over time built up human and technical capacities. We recognise that our success as a grant-making organisation is dependent and reinforced by our ability to:

- Properly identify, analyse and understand the open society challenges facing the region;
- Carefully and transparently identify and select appropriate partners;
- Effectively provide grants, technical and other advocacy support to them;
- Support and augment the advocacy efforts of our partners on issues relating to open society in the region;
- Develop and implement programmes to opportunistically address critical challenges in relation to which we have a developed expertise, possess a unique comparative advantage and can achieve tangible, time-bound and demonstrable results.

More specifically, in 2014, OSISA has undertaken comprehensive organisational restructuring aimed at improving its ability to help address the contemporary open society challenges facing the region. The changes are designed to align our operational capabilities with our strategy. They are also designed to rationalise and realign our staffing and the resources we aim to make available to our partners to address the substantive challenges the region faces, ensuring greater access to our support for our partners, and more efficient utilisation of resources. Some key elements of these changes are highlighted in section 7.4 'Adapting OSISA' below.

7.2 'Wicked problems'

Many of the problems facing the world today can be termed 'wicked problems'[16] – social or cultural problems that are difficult or impossible to solve because of incomplete or contradictory knowledge, the number of people and opinions involved, a large economic burden, and the interconnected nature of these problems with *other* problems. For example, poverty is linked to education, food security to poverty, the economy to food security, and so on. Problems such as climate change, inequality, human rights and good governance are typically dumped on policy-makers to resolve, or are written off as being too cumbersome to resolve holistically. Yet these are the problems – poverty, sustainability, equality, health and education – that plague the SADC region and affect the outcomes of the work OSISA does. Such 'wicked problems' cannot readily be 'fixed', given their indeterminate scope and scale. Mitigating these problems is not an easy, quick or solitary exercise and demands interdisciplinary collaboration for effective change.

There is a great need to bring theory, practice, personal and organisational development together to deal with the 'wicked problems' that civil society, donors, governmental and intergovernmental bodies are trying to address. The Southern African region is increasingly facing funding challenges and austerity measures. As countries in the region increasingly move from least developed to middle-income status, funds previously destined for the region are being diverted to countries and regions where needs are more urgent.

7.3 Developing partnerships

Developing successful partnerships is crucial to developing sustainable projects, as they can be a catalyst for innovation, ideas, resources and funding opportunities. OSISA acknowledges that it is not the only player in the field and cannot do everything, hence the need to look for opportunities to work with others in the field.

There are many different types of partnerships, and many different reasons that OSISA may want to develop them. Some partners will help generate ideas or develop content; others will assist in designing activities; some will be able to share their skills and knowledge to ensure success and yet others may be prepared to put resources into the activity. Partners can also assist in developing relationships with different audiences, hence supporting the advocacy component of our work.

While OSISA has in the past worked with a host of like-minded organisations, there has been no strategy or framework as to whom we regard as partners and how we frame our work with them. Most of the work OSISA has done in the past has been based on a donor–grantee relationship rather than that of a partnership. OSISA has entered into agreements on an *ad hoc* basis, either formally through memorandums of understanding or more informally by supporting work where we have a common outcome in mind. The result has not always been successful, as we may not necessarily have the same values or vision as the partner. It is therefore imperative that we develop a working framework for engaging a range of partnerships. It is also important to think through why OSISA wants to work in partnership – and why our potential partners may want to work with us.

OSISA's partners have traditionally and primarily been in civil society, given our historical mandate to strengthen civil society organisations (CSOs) as key players in achieving open society ideals in the region. The advent of the 'Engaging the State' policy widened this scope of partnerships to include strategic state institutions. OSISA has also since established partnerships with academic institutions, UN bodies, and others outside of civil society.

Our guiding principles for choosing and entering into partnerships have been primarily a shared vision and the potential to work together to initiate, design and engage in interventions that emphasise a mutually shared vision, goals, values and principles – and these have been forged at national, regional, as well as global levels. OSISA seeks partnerships that go beyond financial support to technical backstopping,

joint planning, and pulling together of energies, human and other resources, in tackling issues of shared concern.

The development of an institutional framework for strategic partnership engagement with a range of potential partners will enable a more selective and systematic approach to partnership and collaboration, thus assessing, strengthening and advising on relationships proactively rather than on an *ad hoc* and reactive basis as has been done in the past. By institutionalising Partnership Building and Management, OSISA aims to strengthen its key results areas of research, networking, facilitation and capacity-building, resulting in better and more effective delivery and impact.

7.4 Adapting OSISA

To effectively implement this strategy, OSISA has made important adaptations to its operations and programmes.

In June 2014, OSISA expects to complete the comprehensive structural review of all its policies and procedures launched in August 2013 with the aim of enhancing the organisation's fitness for purpose in implementing the strategy proposed for 2015–2018. Led by task teams comprised of staff members, the organisation undertook a participatory review of its entire programme and operational policies in the following areas:

- Thematic and country programmes;
- Organisational structure;
- Grant-making processes;
- Partnerships;
- Communications;
- Human resources;
- Information technology;
- Travel;
- Monitoring and evaluation; and
- Finance.

The task teams reviewed existing policies, identified gaps and challenges, and recommended required changes. The implementation framework of the structural review was endorsed by the OSISA Board in December 2013.

Under OSISA's new structure, programmes have been consolidated into three clusters corresponding to the three fields of our strategy:

- Democracy and governance;
- Economic and social justice; and
- Human rights, access to justice and the rule of law.

This structure will ensure better integration and synergies across and within programmes and across countries. It will address the challenge of proliferation of programmes, eliminate duplications, and ensure streamlining of interventions, internal collaboration and programme coherence necessary to address the 'wicked problems' outlined above. All staff job descriptions have been re-profiled and OSISA will migrate staff to the new structure.

As part of this organisational review, OSISA will also:

- Review grant-making policies and procedures to enhance integrity, efficiency and impact;

- Realign the budget to reduce and possibly eliminate operational projects in favour of expanding our support to the field;
- Review the proportions of the programme and operational budgets, taking necessary decisions to increase the latter and reduce the former;
- Undertake a job evaluation and remuneration benchmarking exercise aimed at aligning staff functions with new organisational requirements, managing talent and ensuring that remuneration scales remain competitive to enable management and the OSISA Board to make strategic decisions regarding staffing and budgets in the strategy period; and
- Complete its country review process to facilitate decisions on its country presence between 2015 and 2018.

Endnotes

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Appendix 1

Southern African countries and their fields of concern

Southern African countries	Democracy and governance	Social and economic justice	Human rights, access to justice and the rule of law
South Africa		X	
Zimbabwe	X	X	X
Zambia	X	X	X
Malawi	X	X	X
Mozambique	X	X	
Lesotho	X	X	X
Botswana	X	X	X
DRC	X	X	X
Swaziland	X	X	X
Namibia		X	X
Angola	X	X	x

Appendix 2

Supporting a range of partners to implement catalytic and context-specific strategic interventions will enable them to influence postive change in the attitudes and behaviour of citizens, civil society, private sector and government, making government and the private sector as a whol more responsive and accountable to the needs of marginalised groups.

Vision	A region in which the basic human rights of all its people, and in particular marginalised communities are protected, where both states and the private sector are accountable; and where all are able to actively participate in the social, political and economic sphere of public life, and enjoy equitable access to its resources, free from discrimination, exclusion and inequality.
Outcome	Increase participation by marginalised groups in inclusive and accountable political and democratic processes. / Improved access to legal, human rights and justice protections by marginalised groups / Increase participation and access to socio-economic opportunities for marginalised groups
Outputs	Citizen action / Influence on behaviour of elected reps, Govt officials, Judiciary & Private sector / Civil society strengthened
Process Outputs	Knowledge generated / Information dissemination / Capacity building
Process	Targeted strategic interventions Individual + Shared learning
Inputs	Selection, tailored individual support, grants