



# OSISA Strategy

2015–2018

## Executive summary



### 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.

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# Executive Summary

## 1. Introduction

The 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, providing a focus on the three fields of concern common to the region. OSISA's planned responses to address these specific challenges are then detailed in section 3. After indicating how OSISA proposes to support the field, 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 change.

## 2. History and context

A regional overview and country analysis 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. The majority of citizens in the region remain excluded from accessing crucial information to hold public officials accountable and to make important decisions.
2. 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. Regionally, the Southern African Development Community (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.

These three key challenges form the three pillars of our strategy for 2015–2018. 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, and are unable to make meaningful contributions to decisions that affect their lives.

The table overleaf identifies the key challenges in the Southern African countries according to the three clusters.

## 3. Fealty to fields and places

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

### 3.1 The democracy and governance cluster

#### 3.3.1 Goals and key areas of work 2015–2018

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.

#### **GOAL 1: Inclusion and quality in democratic processes**

Our work in this area will, amongst other things, include:

- Ensuring that political and democratic processes in the region are inclusive and that the quality of democracy improves.
- Ensuring that Southern African citizens are enabled to participate optimally, freely and meaningfully in electoral and other democratic processes.

## 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

- Support key stakeholders to ensure that political parties, candidates and election 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.
- Supporting 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.
- Focusing on local government elections, supporting civil society efforts in encouraging participation of youth and women as candidates and voters.
- Building and enhancing of competence and skills of sitting women decision-makers across the region.

### **GOAL 2: Media freedom and access to information**

OSISA's work on promoting media freedom and access to information, will include:

- 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.
- 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.
- Supporting national and regional organisations working on

monitoring and reporting violations on media freedoms such as the Media Institute for Southern Africa (MISA).

### **GOAL 3: Public and private sector accountability**

Improving accountability requires multi-faceted action aimed at enhancing both the supply and demand side. To facilitate this, our work will include:

- Targeting 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.
- Supporting 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.
- Complementing efforts aimed at expanding access to education and health services and harnessing the natural resource wealth of several countries in the region.
- Supporting citizens' movements and civil society to hold public and private-sector institutions and officials to account.
- Support efforts that seek to document and establish the impacts of corruption on women and girls.

## 3.2 The economic and social justice cluster

### **3.2.1 Goals and key areas of work 2015–2018**

In the period 2015–2018 our goal is to promote and support sustainable livelihoods and equitable access to basic services through rights-based approaches. A key common factor that will underpin all three priority areas below is the gendered impacts as well as women's rights imperatives, as women are the majority of citizens that will be targeted.

### **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. This will involve promoting food security in the context of climate change, with a specific focus on women and children as the most impacted.

### **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.

The Education Programme strategy will be aimed at enhancing access, equity and quality within a framework of good governance to achieve education for all. The programme will focus on two target groups for the period 2015–2018: marginalised and excluded children; and marginalised pre-school children from 0–8 years, with a focus on early childhood development (ECD).

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, and on addressing policy and structural barriers to equitable provision of health services.

### **GOAL 3: Strengthening and supporting social movements**

In seeking to fulfil this goal, our approach is to support communities, CSOs and states 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.
- Strengthen organisations and civil society groups that are able to demand and promote rights-based approaches to providing health care and 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.

## **3.3 The human rights, access to justice and the rule of law cluster**

### **3.3.1 Goals and key areas of work 2015–2018**

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. Targeted groups include: the poor,

the LGBTI community, women and children, people with disabilities and indigenous peoples.

### **GOAL 1: Human rights norms and standards**

Our work will focus on: reform, harmonisation and implementation of laws; litigation against human rights abuses; and advancing respect for constitutionalism and constitutional values across the region.

### **GOAL 2: Systems and institutions**

OSISA will strengthen accountability and capacity to effectively implement and protect the rights of the people by: supporting human rights oversight bodies; providing support to justice institutions, bar associations, lawyers' and judges' organisations; promoting prosecutorial accountability; and promoting quality legal aid and assistance for arrestees and reducing arbitrary and excessive use of pre-trial detention.

### **GOAL 3: Empowerment of marginalised groups**

OSISA will continue to work directly with marginalised communities and the organisations that represent their interests. We will focus on: building the capacity of civil society organisations, their networks and umbrella bodies; and supporting human rights reporting and the protection of human rights defenders.

## **4. OSISA's initiative: Natural resource governance**

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.

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 by, amongst other things, 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

### **4.1 Goals and key areas of work 2015–2018**

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 AU's African Mining Vision (AMV) in Southern Africa.

**GOAL 1: Legislative frameworks and institutional constraints**

We will support projects to review mining policies, build capacity of governments to regulate and monitor the resource sector, with a focus on Lesotho, DRC, Zambia and Zimbabwe, where SARW has already established strong working relations with governments and parliaments. We will also support civil society and mining communities engaging with legal reforms in the extractive sector.

**GOAL 2: Transparency and accountability**

OSISA will support action to increase civil society and mining communities' capacity to hold government and companies to account, with special focus on women's groups.

**GOAL 3: Mining contracts**

We intend to support countries' efforts to engage in contracts' review process to audit, review and redress unbalanced mining contracts.

**GOAL 4: Corporate social responsibility**

We plan to 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 manpower, training programmes, reinvestment of profits). We will especially focus on ensuring 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**

OSISA will work with the Africa Mining Development Centre (AMDC) to support the popularisation and domestication of the AU's African Mining Vision (AMV) in Southern Africa, as well as work with the Economic Commission of Africa (ECA) regional office based in Zambia to support the implementation of the SADC Mining Harmonisation policy.

**GOAL 6: Capacity-building**

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. In addition we will continue to 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.

## 5. OSISA's shared frameworks

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 region's 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 in section 3.

## 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. Strategic collaborations are envisaged in 2015-2018 with: the Public Health Programme (PHP), Open Society Justice Initiative (OSJI), Scholarship Programme, Education Support Programme (ESP) and the Early Childhood Programme (ECP), Higher Education Support Programme (HESP), Human Rights Initiative (HRI) and the Afro Research Unit.

## 7. Effecting change

### 7.1 Theory of change

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.

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.

## 7.2 Developing partnerships

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. 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.

## 7.3 Adapting OSISA

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. 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.