



MINISTRY OF HEALTH



**NATIONAL HEALTH RESEARCH AUTHORITY
STRATEGIC PLAN 2018-2021**

**PROMOTING RESEARCH FOR
HEALTH IMPACT WHILE LEAVING
NO ONE BEHIND**

**REVISED AND ALIGNED WITH MOH MTEF,
AUGUST 2018**

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Foreword



The National Health Research Authority Strategic Plan (NHRA SP) is a very important document developed to operationalize the National Health Research Act No. 2 of 2013 and provide strategic direction for the improvement of the Health Research Environment in Zambia in line with Zambia's Vision 2030, the Seventh National Development Plan (7NDP), and the Ministry of Health National Health Strategic Plan (NHSP) 2017-2021.

The NHRA SP has been developed to complement the NHSP's transformative agenda on building robust and resilient health systems. It provides strategic direction on key thematic areas necessary to operationalize the Health Research Act and produce a conducive environment for production of quality research outcomes necessary for evidence-based health policy decisions.

The theme of the Strategic Plan, "Promoting research for health impact while leaving no one behind" speaks to both the 7NDP and the NHSP; with an emphasis on promoting health research through effective regulation, coordination, capacity building, and knowledge translation. The Strategy focuses on among other things, building internal systems for accountability as well as efficient delivery of services, developing regulations, building capacities of researchers and research institutions, developing the national health research agenda, and mobilizing resources for priority health research.

Zambia's national development agenda, as articulated through its Seventh National Development Plan (7NDP), places special emphasis on Research and Development (R&D). The 7NDP has allocated a specific outcome on R&D, development outcome no.10 to "enhance research and development" with two specific strategies: Enhance research and development and innovation capacity; enhance policy formulation and analysis. The first strategy focuses on developing a high-quality research base with a critical mass of highly qualified human resource, modern adequately equipped infrastructure and a technology development structure. When implemented, the first strategy will popularize science and technology for promoting and creating a national culture of research and innovation. Specific programs to address this strategic focus are: Laboratory infrastructure development; Infrastructure upgrading; Quality assurance enhancement; and Financing improvement.

The second strategy focuses on developing technologies and initiatives that will enhance the attainment of the 7NDP by strengthening capacities to produce evidence-based analytical studies that will adequately inform policy development and lead to subsequent paradigm shift. Specific programs to help attain this strategic focus include: Research quality assurance; policy review and analysis enhancement; diversification agenda research promotion; and system and capacity assessment. The Ministry of Health (MOH)

National Health Strategic Plan (NHSP) 2017-2021 has identified the “development of strong research capabilities” as one of the “critical factors for success” of the Strategic Plan. Health information management and research has also been cited in the NHSP as one of the “key pillars of a functional healthcare system,” informing investments in the health sector. The contents of the two documents quoted above indicate the importance that the Zambian Government attaches to research and development and therefore the importance of this Strategy document. I am confident that with support from cooperating partners and all stakeholders, there is sufficient political will and qualified and dedicated personnel to ensure that this Strategic Plan is effectively implemented. When implemented to the full, the Strategic Plan is expected to significantly contribute to strengthening health systems and health service delivery and contribute to better health outcomes through improved research capacity in Zambia.



Dr. Chitalu Chilufya, MP

Minister of Health

Preface

The National Health Research Authority Strategic Plan was developed as part of the National Health Research Council's (NHRAC) mandate to advise the Honourable Minister of Health on the application and implementation of National Health Research Strategic Plans, as provided for in the National Health Research Act No. 2 of 2013, Part II, Section 5 (1)(g). The NHRAC was officially inaugurated on 1st July 2015 by the late Minister of Health, Dr J. M. Kasonde and has the following Committees:

- 1) Finance and Administration
- 2) Risk and Audit
- 3) Research and Development

Among the functions of the R & D Committee is to facilitate preparation of the Health Research Strategic Plan to guide implementation of activities of the National Health Research Authority (NHRA) and its Council (NHRAC). The Research and Development Committee therefore worked with the NHRA Secretariat to develop this important document. Within the constraints of financial resources, the Strategic Plan development process was consultative and inclusive.

This Strategic Plan sets an important milestone in the operations of the National Health Research Authority as it provides direction to the nation with regard to the key focus of health research administration in Zambia. It provides for the Vision, Mission, and Core Values of the Research Authority and sets specific objectives to be achieved over a period of five years, 2018-2021. More importantly, the Plan has clearly articulated critical enablers and barriers to its successful implementation. Among the enablers or critical success factors are: Timely processing of the regulations by the Ministry of Justice and subsequent issuance of Statutory Instruments for the various regulations; timely release of the full grant from government; and support from Cooperating Partners.

I wish therefore, on behalf of the NHRA Council, to appeal to relevant authorities to assist in facilitating speedy processing of the regulations, without which it may be difficult to achieve the objectives of the Strategic Plan. I would also like to appeal to all Cooperating Partners to financially and technically support the implementation of this Strategic Plan.



Prof. Everist Njelesani

Chairperson, National Health Research Authority Council

Acknowledgements

This Strategic Plan will be implemented over the period from 2018 through 2021. This has been done to provide time for the development of the next Strategic Plan soon after the next MOH NHSP in 2021, because the NHRA SP must be aligned with the National Health Strategic Plan to ensure synergy.

I wish to sincerely thank and acknowledge the guidance and support of the National Health Research Authority in the development of this Strategic Plan. I thank the Research and Development Committee of the Council for their direct involvement in the development of the Strategic Plan. I would like to thank all the stakeholders who read and commented on this Strategic Plan. The document was read and commented on by health research institutions, researchers, research ethics committees, and institutional review boards.

I wish to pay special tribute to the Ministry of Health for their support and guidance during the process of developing this Strategic Plan.

Special thanks also go to the management and staff of the National Health Research Authority for all the efforts put into the preparation of this Strategic Plan.

It is my hope and trust that cooperative partners will supplement government efforts in supporting the operations of the National Health Research Authority in general and the implementation of this Strategic Plan in particular.



Dr. Godfrey Biemba

Director and Chief Executive Officer
National Health Research Authority

Acronyms

GHC	Global Health Corporation
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IPRs	Intellectual Property Rights
IRBs	Institutional Review Boards
KAPP	Knowledge, Attitudes, Perceptions, and Practices
KPIs	Key Performance Indicators
KRAs	Key Results Areas
MOH	Ministry of Health
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MTAs	Material Transfer Agreements
NHRA	National Health Research Authority
NHRAC	National Health Research Authority Council
NHRACo	National Health Research Advisory Committee
NHREB	National Health Research Ethics Board
NSTC	National Science and Technology Council
OHS	Occupational Health System
QA	Quality Assurance
QC	Quality Control
R&D	Research and Development
RECs	Research Ethics Committees
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats
ZAMRA	Zambia Medicines Regulatory Authority

1.0 Executive Summary

1.1 Background

The National Health Research Authority (NHRA) is a regulatory body that was established under the National Health Research Act No. 2 of 2013. The mandate of the Authority derived from the Act is to provide a regulatory framework for the development, regulation, financing and coordination of health research and ensure the development of consistent health research standards and guidelines for ethically sound health research. The National Health Research Authority is governed by the National Health Research Authority Council (NHRAC), appointed by the Minister of Health. The functions of the Research Authority may be summarized into five thematic areas:

- i. Research promotion
- ii. Research regulation
- iii. Research coordination
- iv. Research capacity building
- v. Research dissemination and knowledge management

Apart from the NHRA, the National Health Research Act also provided for the National Health Research Ethics Board (NHREB), responsible for regulating the Ethical Conduct of Researchers, Research Institutions, Research Ethic Committees (RECs) and Institutional Review Boards (IRBs).

The 2018-2021 National Health Research Authority Strategic Plan (NHRA SP) has been developed in the context of the Seventh National Development Plan (7NDP) and the National Health Strategic Plan (NHSP). The theme of the Strategic Plan, “Promoting research for health impact while leaving no one behind” speaks to both the 7NDP and the NHSP; with an emphasis on promoting health research through effective regulation, coordination, capacity building, and knowledge translation. The Strategy focuses on among other things, building internal systems for accountability as well as efficient delivery of services, developing regulations, building capacities of researchers and research institutions, developing the national health research agenda, and mobilizing resources for priority health research.

1.2 Strategic Direction

Mission, Vision, and Core Values

The Vision of the NHRA is a healthy research environment where all research is ethically conducted and all research products translate into improving the health status of the people of Zambia. The Mission is to promote, regulate and coordinate ethical conduct of quality health research and facilitate translation of all research products into evidence based policies and programs that improve the health of the people of Zambia and beyond. The NHRA work will be governed by the following Core Values: Integrity; Professionalism; Transparency; Efficiency; Confidentiality; Effectiveness and Accountability

1.3 Strategic and Implementation Framework and Key Results Areas

The critical factors for successful implementation of this Strategic Plan have been identified as follows: Continued political leadership and prioritization of health research; timely processing of the regulations by the Ministry of Justice and subsequent issuance of Statutory Instruments for the various regulations; timely release of the full grant from government; effective resource mobilization by the NHRA Council and management; filling

of the full complement of the NHRA staff establishment through attachment of more staff from the Civil service or through recruitment of more staff using NHHRA's own resources; full commitment and dedication to duty by all the staff at the NHRA; support from Cooperating Partners; cooperation from the research institutions, researchers, and research ethics committees and all stakeholders.

The Strategic Plan will be implemented through Annual Action Plans and Budgets. Each year, the NHRA management will prepare an Action Plan that will be reviewed by the Finance and Administration Committee of the Council and then approved by the Council. The current Strategic Plan has not been costed, but at the end of each year, a budget estimate would be prepared soon after the MOH Budget has been developed.

Seven Key Results Areas (KRAs) have been identified for this Strategic Plan. These are: Research Promotion; Research Regulation; Research Coordination; Research Capacity Building; Knowledge Translation; Organizational Development and Management; and Human Resource Management and Administration.

The main risks to the successful implementation of this Strategic Plan include: Long process of processing regulations through Ministry of Justice; inadequate staffing; inadequate office space; inadequate transport; overdependence on government support. Out of all these, the greatest risk is the long process of processing regulations; without the regulations, the NHRA cannot register and accredit researchers and research institutions and cannot charge fees.

1.4 Monitoring and Evaluation

The implementation of the National Health Research Strategic Plan will be monitored and evaluated based on Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) framed around the seven KRAs. These indicators will be monitored by the Committees of the NHRA Council and ultimately by the Council itself. The Plan will be reviewed at end-term in 2021 to inform the next Strategic Plan of 2022 to 2026.

1.5 Financing of the Strategic Plan

The Strategic Plan will be financed from the following sources:

- (a) Funds appropriated to the Authority by Parliament for the purposes of the Authority;
- (b) Funds raised by the Authority from charging registration, accreditation, and other fees for services provided by the Authority;
- (c) Funds raised by the Authority through projects implemented by the Authority;
- d) Funds from donations and special fund raising events

2.0 Background

2.1 The National Health Research Authority

The National Health Research Authority is a regulatory body that was established under the National Health Research Act No. 2 of 2013. The mandate of the Authority derived from the Act is to provide a regulatory framework for the development, regulation, financing and coordination of health research and ensure the development of consistent health research standards and guidelines for ethically sound health research. The National Health Research Authority is governed by the National Health Research Authority Council (NHRAC), appointed by the Minister of Health. The Council has the following Committees:

1. Finance and Administration
2. Risk and Audit
3. The Research and Development(R&D) Committee

Among the functions of the R & D committee is to facilitate preparation of the Health Research Strategic Plan. The R & D Committee therefore played a key role in the development of this Strategic Plan.

The functions of the Research Authority may be summarized into five thematic areas:

- i. Research promotion
- ii. Research regulation
- iii. Research coordination
- iv. Research capacity building
- v. Research dissemination and knowledge management

The specific functions of the Authority as provided for under the Act are as follows:

- (a) Regulate the conduct of research and monitor and evaluate all health research in Zambia;
- (b) Facilitate research and development in health research and provide oversight and coordination of health research;
- (c) Develop mechanisms for setting national health research priorities and strategies in accordance with the needs of Zambia;
- (d) Promote the translation of health research outcomes into policy;
- (e) Advise the Minister on all matters related to health research;
- (f) Identify and recommend to the Minister national health research priorities for incorporation in national health research strategic plans;
- (g) Advise the Minister on the application and implementation of national health research strategic plans;
- (h) Foster partnerships in product development and commercialisation of innovations in health research;
- (i) Harmonise, network and promote public-private partnerships in health research;
- (j) Register and accredit research institutions and health researchers;
- (k) Investigate reports of professional misconduct relating to health research and report the misconduct to the relevant professional association or statutory body;

- (l) Facilitate the development of health research capacity of individuals, institutions and systems by building quality human resources which are capable of responding to the essential research and health demands of Zambia;
- (m) Mobilise and disburse resources for health research;
- (n) Advocate for health research within society, and in the public and the private sectors;
- (o) Recommend to law enforcement authorities the prosecution of health researchers and research institutions that contravene this Act;
- (p) Collaborate with health researchers and research institutions outside Zambia;
- (q) Promote multi-disciplinary and inter-sectoral research collaboration in a bid to establish essential health research which is consistent with the national health research strategic plan; and
- (r) Do all such things as are connected with, or incidental to, the functions of the Authority under this Act.

Apart from the NHRA, the National Health Research Act also provided for the National Health Research Ethics Board, responsible for regulating the Ethical Conduct of Researchers, Research Institutions, Research Ethic Committees (RECs) and Institutional Review Boards (IRBs).

2.2 The Health Research Environment in Zambia

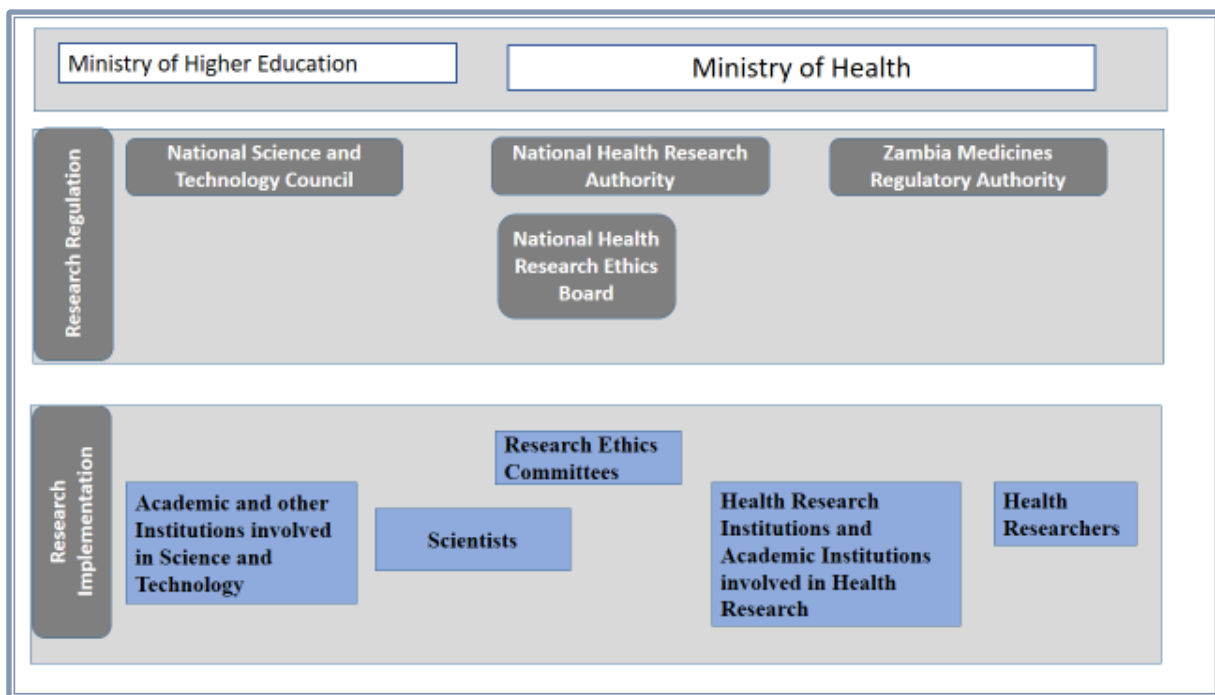
For this Strategic Plan, we will define a health research environment to include statutes, policies, research infrastructure and institutions which directly or indirectly influence the research process by either facilitating or slowing down knowledge production in the health sector. The health research environment is defined by the overall health research system in the country. At the core of a health research environment is government commitment to health research as shown by health research policies and legislation, health research financing, existence of an overall health research governance and management system and an institutional framework for health research.

Two Ministries are responsible for research governance and management in Zambia: The Ministry of Higher Education through the National Science and Technology Council (NSTC) and the Ministry of Health through the National Health Research Authority Council. The NSTC was established to promote science and technology so as to improve the quality of life in Zambia. According to the Science and Technology Council Act No. 26 of 1997, the functions of the NSCT are to: (a) Promote the development of an indigenous and environmentally friendly technological capacity; (b) Regulate research in science and technology in Zambia; (c) Register institutes and centres; (d) Advise the Government on science and technology policies and activities in Zambia; (e) Determine broad directions, stimulate co-ordination and initiate special projects in science and technology; (f) Promote and publicise broad national priorities in science and technology research; (g) Liaise with Government, industry and centres and institutes in science and technology; (h) Mobilise and distribute financial, human and other resources to management boards for science and technology research; (i) Recommend to the Government the establishment of-any new research institutes and centres; (j) Promote the use of science and technology in industry; (k) Ensure that gender concerns are integrated at all levels of science and technology development; (l) Collect and disseminate science and technology information including publication of scientific reports, journals and other such documents and literature; (m) Establish and maintain a relationship with corresponding scientific organizations in other countries; (n) Take all measures that are necessary to popularise science and technology; (o) Identify and determine national research and development priorities in science and technology; and (p) Do all such things

connected with or incidental to the functions of the Council under this Act.

Another important institution in the regulation of the health research environment in Zambia is the Zambia Medicines Regulatory Agency (ZAMRA) formed under the Medicines and Allied Substances Act No. 3 of 2013 to provide for: Registration and regulation of pharmacies, health shops and agro veterinary shops; Registration and regulation of medicines and allied substances; Regulation of the manufacture, importation, exportation, possession, storage, distribution, supply, promotion, advertising, sale and use of medicines and allied substances; Regulation and control of clinical trials. The latter role is the most relevant to the role of ZAMRA in the research environment. Fig 1 depicts the current research institutional arrangements in Zambia.

Fig 1 Research institutional arrangements in Zambia.



The policy governing health research in Zambia is the 2010 National Health Research Policy. This policy identified 16 issues that required attention in order to improve the research environment in Zambia. These are: Health Research Priority setting; Human Resource Development: Capacity, Knowledge and Skills; Linking Health Research and Decision-making; Partnerships in Health Research; Planning and Coordination; Dissemination of Health Research Outcomes; Health Research Data Sets: Ownership, Deposition and Access; Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs); Traditional, Complementary and Alternative Medicines; Health Research Ethics; Clinical Trials; Health Research Infrastructure; Institutional Arrangements; Legal Framework; Resource Mobilization; Monitoring and Evaluation. The National Health Research Authority was therefore put in place to fully address all the 16 issues identified in the Health Research Policy document. A lot still needs to be done to create a truly conducive research environment in Zambia. Currently, despite the establishment and operationalization of the NHRA, the NHREB, and RECs/IRBs, human resource capacity to conduct research, research financing, and research infrastructure (laboratories, equipment, supplies, transport, information and communication technologies, library facilities) remain major challenges to the improvement of the research environment in Zambia.

2.3 The Strategic Planning Process

A key principle of any Strategic Planning process is consultation and inclusiveness. The National Health Research Authority made every effort, within a limited time period and financial resources, to consult widely. The process involved the following steps: Initial conceptualization by the NHRA, initially operating from the MOH Research Unit, working in consultation with the Research and Development Committee of the NHRA Council; Strategic Planning Retreat by the National Health Research Authority management and staff; virtual consultation to wider stakeholders by circulating the Draft Strategic Plan for input; revision of the Strategic Plan incorporating stakeholders input; circulation of the Strategic Plan to the Research and Development Committee of the NHRA Council; Finalization of the National Health Research Strategic Plan by NHRA management; Approval of the Strategic Plan by NHRA Council; Approval of the Strategic Plan by the Hon. Minister of Health; Launch of the Strategic Plan by the Hon. Minister of Health.

The Strategic Planning retreat involved a number of key activities as follows: Introduction to the Strategic Planning concept and process; development of the Vision, Mission, and Core Values of the NHRA; a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) Analysis; identification of Key Results Areas (KRAs); development of Strategic Objectives, Strategies, Key Activities and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). Table 1 summarizes the SWOT Analysis.

Table 1 Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats Analysis

Strengthens	Weaknesses
Established by an ACT of parliament	Inadequate staff
Functional Governing Structures: The Council and NHREB	Lack of sustainable financing
The overall regulator of health research in Zambia (competitive advantage)	Lack of Transport
Firm knowledge base	Lack of Infrastructure (e.g. office space, bio banks, laboratory facilities)
Brand name: We exist	Lack of ICT infrastructure
Land ownership for infrastructure development	Inadequate office equipment
	Lack of a forum for fostering collaborations
	Long period of clearance for MTAs and special protocols due to lack of regulations and financial challenges
	Lack of Statutory Instruments for the operationalization of regulations
Opportunities	Threats
Initial Government Financial Support	Lack of competition
¹ Qualified staff and strong management team provided by government	Lack of own employees
Political will	Government over dependency
Already known by institutions, recognised and respected	Change of government
Stakeholder support	
Capital City (centrally located)	
Provided free office space	
Support from Global Health Corps with placement of qualified Research Fellows	

¹Please note that this was put under 'opportunities' rather than under 'strengths' because NHRA is currently not able to employ its own staff but is dependent on staff from MOH

3.0 Strategic Direction

3.1 Vision, Goal, Mission, and Core Values

Vision Statement: A healthy research environment where all research is ethically conducted and all research products translate into improving the health status of the people of Zambia.

Goal: To promote, regulate and coordinate ethical conduct of quality health research and facilitate translation of all research products into evidence based policies and programs in order to improve the health of the people of Zambia and beyond.

Mission Statement: To promote, regulate and coordinate ethical conduct of quality health research and facilitate translation of all research products into evidence based policies and programs that improve the health of the people of Zambia and beyond.

Motto: *“Promoting and Regulating Health Research in Zambia”*

Core Values

1. Integrity
2. Professionalism
3. Transparency
4. Efficiency
5. Confidentiality
6. Effectiveness
7. Accountability

4.0 Key Results Areas (KRAs)

The Strategic Plan identified seven strategic areas of focus or Key Results Areas (KRAs) as listed below. In addition, for each KRA the NHRA has identified a number of strategies as outlined below:

4.1 Research promotion

1. Set and implement the national health research agenda (research priority setting)
2. Implement and advocacy program for research
3. Set up a health research fund
4. Create a forum for health research collaboration
5. Sensitize communities, researchers, policy makers, health programs staff, and other stakeholders on the importance and other relevant aspects of health research
6. Develop guidelines for the conduct of research in traditional, complementary, and alternative medicine

4.2 Research Regulation

1. Register and accredit researchers, research institutions and research ethics committees
2. Setup and implement a Monitoring & Evaluation system for all researchers, research institutions and research ethics committees
3. Develop, disseminate and enforce research guidelines

4.3 Research coordination

1. Set up a database of all research, researchers, research institutions and research committee institutions
2. Set up a forum for research collaborations, coordination and networking within and outside the country
3. Maintain a research management information system

4.4 Research capacity Building

1. **Training:** Offer standardised certificate training courses for Researchers, Research Scientists, and Research Assistants
2. **Supportive supervision and mentorship:** Conduct regular supportive supervision and mentorship visits to research sites, research institutions, and academic institutions involved in health research.
3. **Facilitate exchange visits:** Local and international
4. **Build research infrastructure capacity:** Research laboratories, information and communication technologies, library facilities

4.5 Knowledge translation

1. Facilitate the publication of research results
2. Operate a Scientific Journal
3. Develop Policy Briefs
4. Train researchers in knowledge translation
5. Facilitate dissemination of research results (organise research conferences, dissemination/scientific meetings)
6. Maintaining a database of research findings for future reference and use

4.6 Organisational Development and Management

1. Mobilize financial resources through grant applications, training courses, registration and accreditation fees, donations/grants in-kind.
2. Mobilise human and material resources (e.g. transport, office equipment)
3. Develop and implement a Quality Assurance (QA) and Quality Control (QC) System

4. Put in place and implement an Occupational Health Safety (OHS) system
5. Put in place operational systems: financial management systems, procurement, human resource management, ICT
6. Build a strong corporate governance system that promotes transparency and accountability
7. Build a strong brand/organisational culture

4.7 Human Resource Management and Administration

1. Procure motor vehicles for logistical support to NHRA operations
2. Setup and implement a staff retention program
3. Put in place activities that will boost the morale of staff (e.g. staff retreat)
4. Develop and implement a staff retention system
5. Build local/internal human resource capacity through training, mentorship, and exchange visits
6. Conduct an annual salaries and conditions of service survey among similar organizations in Zambia to guide remuneration of personnel
7. Develop and implement a Professional Development Program
8. Develop and implement a human resource information management system

5.0 Strategic Objectives

Based on the seven KRAs, the following Objectives will be pursued:

5.1 Research Promotion

1. To set up and operationalize the National Health Research Agenda and Priorities for Action by December 31, 2019.
2. Set up and operationalize the Health Research Fund by December 31, 2020
3. Submit at least 3 Grant Applications Annually
4. Conduct at least one Research Advocacy Activity Annually
5. Hold at least one private sector resource mobilization engagement activity annually.
6. Identify and form at least three (3) Research Strategic Alliances through MOUs with local and global research organizations by December, 2021.
7. Undertake at least one study tour annually
8. To develop, disseminate, and operationalize guidelines in Traditional, Complementary, and Alternative medicine (TCAM) by December 31, 2020
9. Facilitate the conduct of at least one clinical trial in traditional, complementary, and alternative medicine by December 2021

5.2 Research Regulation

1. Start and operate registers of researchers, research institutions, research ethics committees and institutional review boards by December 31, 2020.
2. To set up and start implementation of a monitoring and evaluation system for all Research Institutions and RECs/IRBs by December 31, 2020
3. To conduct a national wide research ethics audit by March 31, 2019.
4. To draft and operationalize all research regulations through Statutory Instruments by December 31, 2021.

5.3 Research Coordination

1. To fully operationalize a database of all researchers, research institutions, RECs/IRBs, and all Research by December 31, 2019.
2. To set up a forum for research collaborations, coordination and networking within and outside the country by December 31, 2019.
3. To set up and maintain a research management information system by December 31, 2020.

5.4 Research Capacity Building

Develop and implement a national health research capacity building plan by December 31, 2021

5.5 Knowledge Translation

1. Host Health Research Conferences every two years
2. Start operating a Scientific Journal by December 2019
3. Maintain a forum for ongoing research dissemination by facilitating quarterly scientific meetings by December 31, 2021
4. Produce at least one Policy Brief annually
5. Train at least 30 researchers in knowledge translation by December 31, 2021
6. Mentor at least 30 researchers in knowledge translation by December 31, 2021

5.6 Organisational Development and Management

1. To increase the proportion of the operating budget covered by funds raised by the authority from fees, cooperating partners and other sources from 0% to 25% by December 31, 2021
2. To build a strong organizational brand and culture through adherence to the organisational core values and quality services.
3. To put in place and implement an Occupational Health Safety (OHS) system by December 31, 2021
4. To develop and fully operationalize management systems management: Financial management systems, procurement, human resource management, ICT by December 31, 2021
5. To digitalize all operations of the National Health Research Authority to increase efficiency and reduce use of manual processes by December 31, 2020
6. To build and support a strong corporate governance system that promotes transparency and accountability by December 31, 2021

5.7 Human Resource Management and Administration

1. To develop and operationalize a human resource capacity building and continuous professional development program for NHRA personnel by December 31, 2019
2. To recruit and/or have 30 personnel (57% of establishment) seconded to NHRA by December 31, 20121
3. To develop and implement a staff retention system by December 31, 2019
4. To develop and implement a Human Resource Information Management System(HRIMS) by December 31, 2019
5. To conduct a salaries and conditions of service surveys among similar organizations in Zambia every three years by December 31, 2021
6. To procure at least eight motor vehicles to facilitate smooth operations of the NHRA by December 31, 2021

6.0 Key activities

The main activities to be implemented during this Strategic Plan are outlined below, based on the Strategic Objectives per KRA:

6.1 Research Promotion

Activities for objective 1: To set up and operationalize the National Health Research Agenda and Priorities for Action by December 31, 2019.

1. Conduct Research Gap Analysis and wide stakeholder consultations
2. Hold a Stakeholders Consultation and Consensus Workshop
3. Finalize and disseminate the National Health Research Agenda

Activities for objective 2: Set up and operationalize the Health Research Fund by December 31, 2020

1. Secure seed funding for setting up the health research fund
2. Develop guidelines for the management of the funds
3. Set up a Business Development Unit
4. Mobilize Funds for Research Trust Fund

Activities for objective 3: Submit at least 3 Grant Applications Annually

Conduct Bi- Annual Grants Proposal Writing Meetings

Activities for objective 4: Conduct at least one Research Advocacy Activity Annually

1. Hold Research Advocacy for National Health Research Authority -Open Day
2. Hold sensitization meetings with parliamentarians in liaison with parliamentarian committee on health annually
3. Showcase NHRA Functions During Trade fair
4. Showcase NHRA Functions During Lusaka Agricultural and Commercial Show

Activities for Objective 5: Hold at least one Private Sector Resource Mobilization Engagement activity annually.

1. Hold Annual Cancer Resource Mobilization meeting with Private Sectors
2. Hold Annual TB Resource Mobilization meeting for Occupation Health workers with the Mines
3. Hold Annual Resource Mobilization meeting for Traditional Medicines

Activities for objective 6: Identify and form at least three (3) Research Strategic Alliances through MOUs with local and global research organization by December, 2021.

1. Identify and form at least three (3) Research Strategic Alliances through MOUs with local and global research organizations

Activities for objective 7: Undertake at least one study tour annually

1. Identify Research and Academic Institutions abroad for study tours
2. Undertake study tours annually

Activities for Objective 8: Develop and disseminate guidelines in Traditional, Complementary, and Alternative medicine by December 2018.

1. Review the draft guidelines on Traditional, complementary, and alternative medicine
2. Circulate the Draft Guidelines to all stakeholders
3. Hold a consensus meeting with all stakeholders
4. Finalize and launch guidelines on Traditional, complementary, and alternative medicine

Activities for objective 9: Facilitate the conduct of at least one clinical trial in traditional, complementary, and alternative medicine by December 2021

1. Hold a resource mobilization meeting for research in traditional medicine to coincide with the traditional medicine day
2. Conduct resource mobilization activities specifically for research in traditional, complementary, and alternative medicine

Activities for objective 10: Facilitate at least one research activity in traditional and indigenous knowledge and traditional health practices by December, 2021

1. Conduct a Knowledge, Attitudes, Practices, and Perceptions (KAPP) Survey on traditional and indigenous knowledge
2. Facilitate a study to determine the efficacy and possible use of some traditional health practices
3. Facilitate research on the Cultural Values (beliefs and Taboos) on traditional medicine
4. Conduct a Survey on indigenous Medicines Knowledge on Traditional Medicines

6.2 Research Regulation

Activities for objective 1: Start and operate registers of researchers, research institutions, research ethics committees and institutional review boards by December 31, 2020.

1. Develop registration and accreditation guidelines for researchers, research institutions, research Ethics committees and institutional review boards
2. Start and operate registers of researchers, research institutions, research Ethics committees and institutional review boards
3. Facilitate meetings of the National Health Research Ethics Board

Activities for objective 2: To set up and start implementation of a monitoring and evaluation system for all Research Institutions and RECs/IRBs by December 31, 2020

1. Develop a monitoring and evaluation system for all Research Institutions and RECs/IRBs
2. Implement a monitoring and evaluation system for all Research Institutions and RECs/IRBs

Activities for objective 3: To conduct a national wide research ethics audit by March 31, 2019.

1. Develop a checklist of the research ethics audit
2. Conduct a national wide research ethics audit

Activities for objective 4: To draft and operationalize all research regulations through Statutory Instruments by December 31, 2021.

1. Hold Regulations Drafting Meetings with Ministry of Justice and NHREB

6.3 Research Coordination Activities

Activities for objective 1: To fully operationalize a database of all researchers, research institutions, RECs/IRBs, and all Research by December 31, 2019.

1. Set up and operationalize a data base of all researchers, research institutions, RECs/IRBs, and all Research

Activities for objective 2: To set up a forum for research collaborations, coordination and networking within and outside the country by December 31, 2019.

1. Hold Multi-disciplinary and Intersectoral Research Collaboration Meetings
2. Participate in International Events; WHA, ICASA, EDCTP
3. Participate in Zambia Medical Association Annual General Meetings
4. Participate in Malaria and World AIDS Day Commemoration
5. Hold Media Liaison Meetings Annually

Activities for objective 3: To set up and maintain a research management information system by December 31, 2020.

1. Develop a research reporting system
2. Orient researchers on the research reporting system

6.4 Research Capacity Building Activities

Activities for objective 1: Develop and implement a national health research capacity building plan by December 31, 2021

1. Conduct a capacity building needs assessment
2. Develop national health research capacity building plan
3. Implement the health research capacity building plan
4. Implement a Research Assistants training program
5. Implement an Interns and Fellowships Program for both local and international students
6. Facilitate South to South and North to South Institutional Collaborations and attend or present at International meetings.
7. Offer support to the provinces: operations and implementation research capacity building
8. Develop and submit grant proposals for research and capacity building, including improving research laboratory capacities

6.5 Knowledge Translation Activities

Activities for objective 1: Develop and operationalize a Knowledge Translation Forum

1. Hold stakeholder consultations on development of Knowledge Translation Forum
2. Develop a Concept Note on the Knowledge Translation Forum
3. Operationalize the Knowledge Translation Platform including training of NHRA staff and Researchers from outside NHRA in knowledge translation

Activities for objective 2: Host Health Research Conferences every two years

1. Set up a Conference Organizing Committee (as a standing committee)

Activities for objective 3: Start operating a Scientific Journal by December 2019

1. Set up a Journal Editorial Board

Activities for objective 4: Maintain a forum for ongoing research dissemination by facilitating quarterly scientific meetings by December 31, 2021

1. Facilitate holding of quarterly Scientific Meetings

Activities for objective 5: Produce at least one Policy Brief annually

1. Develop criteria and process for the development of Policy Briefs in Zambia

6.6 Organisational Development and Management

Activities for objective 1: To increase the proportion of the operating budget covered by funds raised by the authority from fees, cooperating partners and other sources from 0% to 25% by December 31, 2021.

1. Submit Applications for Grants Funding
2. Charge service fees
3. Conduct other resource mobilization and advocacy activities

Activities for objective 2: Mobilise human and material resources for effective and efficient functioning of the authority

1. Continue the partnership with the Global Health Corporation (GHC) to second Senior Research Fellows to the NHRA
2. Sign MOU (s) with reputable research support or research implementation institution (s) abroad for material and human resources support
3. Join international research networking organization (s)

Activities for objective 3: Develop and operationalize QA and QC systems by December 31, 2021.

1. Develop and operationalize a quality assurance and quality control system for the NHRA

Activities for objective 4: Develop and operationalize financial, procurement, human resource, Information Communication Technology and other management systems by December 31, 2018.

1. Develop and operationalize the following documents:
 - a. Financial procedures manual
 - b. Procurement procedures manual
 - c. Human resource manual
 - d. Information Communication Technology Policy
 - e. Whistle Blower Policy

Activities for objective 5: Review and refine as needed the governing council charter and associated oversight committee's guidelines by March 31st, 2018.

1. Review and refine as needed the governing council charter and associated oversight committees guidelines.

Activities for objective 6: Build a strong brand/organisational culture through adherence to the organisational core values and quality services.

1. Officially launch the NHRA
2. Develop a NHRA Documentary
3. Develop and distribute NHRA Brochure
4. Develop and operationalize Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) in all Departments. This will also form part of the QA and QC System.
5. Identify and utilize a Corporate Attire

Activities for objective 7: Digitalize all operations of the National Health Research Authority to increase efficiency and reduce use of manual processes by December 31, 2020

1. Set up a NHRA website
2. Develop a Concept Note for the development of electronic platforms for the NHREB Ethical clearance; registration and accreditation of researchers, research institutions, research ethics committees and institutional boards; and human resource management
3. Mobilize technical and financial resources to implement the digitalization plan

6.7 Human Resource Management and Administration

Activities for objective 1: Develop and operationalize a human resource capacity building and continuous professional development program for NHRA personnel by December 31, 2019.

1. Develop a human resource development plan
2. Implement the human resource development plan

Activities for objective 2: To recruit and/or have 30 personnel (57% of establishment) seconded to NHRA by December 31, 2021

Activities for objective 3: Setup and implement a staff retention program by December 31, 2021.

1. Develop and implement a performance based reward system
2. Hold annual staff retreats
3. Conduct annual salary surveys to inform the compensation package and adjust salaries and conditions of service based on market conditions and the organization's ability to pay
1. Mobilize and set aside financial resources for staff emoluments
2. Open a staff salaries account to safeguard staff emoluments
3. Recruit and/or request for full secondment of staff from the Civil Service

Activities for objective 4: To develop and implement a Human Resource Information Management System (HRIMS) by December 31, 2019

1. Develop and implement a human resource information system

Activities for objective 5: To conduct a salaries and conditions of service surveys among similar organizations in Zambia every three years by December 31, 2021

1. Conduct a salaries and conditions of service surveys among similar organizations in Zambia every three years

Activities for objective 6: To procure at least eight motor vehicles to facilitate smooth operations of the NHRA by December 31, 2021

1. Mobilize financial resources for procurement of motor vehicles
2. Lobby for donation of motor vehicles
3. Procure motor vehicles

7.0 Implementation Framework

The critical factors for successful implementation of this Strategic Plan have been identified as follows: Continued political leadership and prioritization of health research; timely processing of the regulations by the Ministry of Justice and subsequent issuance of Statutory Instruments for the various regulations; timely release of the full grant from government; effective resource mobilization by the NHRA Council and management; filling of the full complement of the NHRA staff establishment through attachment of more staff from the Civil service or through recruitment of more staff using NHHRA's own resources; full commitment and dedication to duty by all the staff at the NHRA; support from Cooperating Partners; cooperation from the research institutions, researchers, and research ethics committees and all stakeholders.

The Strategic Plan will be implemented through Annual Action Plans and Budgets. Each year, the NHRA management will prepare an Action Plan that will be reviewed by the Finance and Administration Committee of the Council and then approved by the Council. The current Strategic Plan has not been costed, but at the end of each year a budget estimate would be prepared soon after the MOH Budget has been developed.

Seven Key Results Areas (KRAs) have been identified for this Strategic Plan. These are: Research Promotion; Research Regulation; Research Coordination; Research Capacity Building; Knowledge Translation; Organizational Development and Management, and Human Resource Management and Administration.

The main risks to the successful implementation of this Strategic Plan include: Long process of processing regulations through Ministry of Justice; inadequate staffing; inadequate office space; inadequate transport; overdependence on government support. Out of all these, the greatest risk is the long process of processing regulations; without the regulations, the NHRA cannot register and accredit researchers and research institutions and cannot charge fees.

8.0 Monitoring and Evaluation

The implementation of the National Health Research Strategic Plan will be monitored and evaluated based on Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) framed around the seven KRAs. These indicators will be monitored by the Committees of the NHRA Council and ultimately by the Council itself. The Plan will be reviewed at end-term in 2021 to inform the next Strategic Plan of 2022 to 2026.

The following logic frame summarizes the key indicators to be monitored over the period 2019-2021, which aligns with the MOH Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF).

2019-2021 MTEF Logical Framework

	Results Chain	Indicators	MoV	Base Year 2018 Yr 2019	Target		
					Yr 2020	Yr 2021	
Goal	To promote, regulate and coordinate ethical conduct of quality health research and facilitate translation of all research products into evidence based policies and programs that improve the health of the people of Zambia and beyond.						
Objective	Objectives: Research Promotion To set up and operationalize the National Health Research Agenda and Priorities for Action by December 31, 2019.						
		A National Health Research Agenda with national health research priorities is present, disseminated to stakeholders, and being implemented (No, In Progress, Yes)	NHRA Records Stakeholders' records	In Progress (Research Agenda developed)	In Progress (Disseminated and being implemented)	Yes	Yes
	To operationalize the Health Research Fund by December 31, 2020	A Health Research Fund Account is open, Guidelines for access to the Fund are available and disseminated to Stakeholders, and Stakeholders are accessing the Fund (No, In Progress, Yes)	NHRA Records, Stakeholders' records	In Progress (Account Open, Guidelines in Draft)	In Progress (Guidelines developed and disseminated)	Yes	Yes

Results Chain	Indicators	MoV	Base Year 2018		Targets		
			Yr 2019	Yr 2020	Yr 2020	Yr 2021	
Objective	Objectives: Research Promotion						
	To submit 9 (3 per year) Grant Applications by December 31, 2021	Cumulative Number of Grant Applications Submitted to Funders Annually	NHRA Records	3	3	6	9
	To conduct 3 Research Advocacy Activities (One Annually) by December, 2021	Cumulative Number of Research Advocacy Activities Conducted	NHRA Records	1	1	2	3
	To hold 3 Private Sector Resource Mobilization Engagement Activities (One annually) by December 31, 2021	Cumulative number of resource mobilization engagement activities held with the private sector	NHRA Records	1	1	2	3
	To identify and form at least three (3) Research Strategic Alliances through MOUs with local and global research organizations by December 31, 2021.	Cumulative number of MOUs signed between NHRA and a Research Strategic Partner in Zambia or outside Zambia	NHRA Records	0	1	2	3

Results Chain	Indicators	MoV	Base Year 2018 Yr 2019	Targets			
				Yr 2020	Yr 2021		
Objective	Objectives: Research Promotion						
	To undertake three study tours by December 31, 2021 (one annually)	Cumulative number of study tours undertaken internationally	NHRA Trip Reports	0	1	2	3
	To develop, disseminate, and operationalize guidelines in Traditional, Complementary, and Alternative medicine (TCAM) by December 31, 2020	Guidelines for Research in TCAM developed and disseminated to stakeholders (No, In Progress, Yes) A System for the coordination for research in TCAM set up and operational	NHRA Records, Stakeholders Records	In Progress (Guidelines developed)	Yes	Yes	Yes
	To facilitate the conduct of at least two clinical trial in traditional, complementary, and alternative medicine by December 2021	Cumulative number of research studies conducted in TCAM facilitated (funded) by NHRA	NHRA Records	No	In Progress (Coordinating structure in place, Research Centres for TCAM Accredited)	Yes	2
		NHRA Accounts Records	0	0	1		

Results Chain	Indicators	MoV	Base Year 2018	Targets	
				Yr 2020	Yr 2021
Objectives: Research Regulation To start operating registers of researchers, research institutions, research Ethics committees and institutional review boards by December 31, 2020 To set up and start implementation of a monitoring and evaluation system for all Research Institutions and RECs/IRBs by December 31, 2020 Objective To conduct a national wide research ethics audit by March 31, 2019. To draft and operationalize all research regulations through Statutory Instruments by December 31, 2021.	Registers for researchers, research institutions, research Ethics committees and institutional review boards are open and in use (No, In progress, Yes)	NHRA Records	No	In Progress (At least one register is in operation)	Yes
	A Research M&E System developed and in operation (No, In Progress, Yes)	NHRA Records	No	In Progress (M&E system set up)	Yes
	A national wide research ethics audit conducted (No, In Progress, Yes)	NHRA records	No	Yes	Yes
	All research regulations operationalized through Statutory Instruments (No, In Progress, Yes)	NHRA Records	No	In Progress	In Progress

Results Chain	Indicators	MoV	Base Year 2018		Targets		
			Yr 2019	Yr 2020	Yr 2020	Yr 2021	
	Objectives: Research Coordination						
	To fully operationalize a data base of all researchers, research institutions, RECs/IRBs, and all Research by December 31, 2019	NHRA records	In progress	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Objective	To set up a forum for research collaborations, coordination and networking within and outside the country by December 31, 2019	NHRA records	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	To set up and maintain a research management information system by December 31, 2020	NHRA records	No	In Progress (RMIS set up but not fully functional)	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Objectives: Research Capacity Building						
Objective	Develop and implement a national health research capacity building plan by December 31, 2021	NHRA records	No	In Progress (Needs Assessment completed, Capacity building plan developed)	Yes (Training, Supportive supervision, mentorship being implemented)	Yes	Yes

Results Chain	Indicators	MoV	Base Year 2018 Yr 2019	Targets		
				Yr 2020	Yr 2021	
Objective	Objectives: Research Knowledge Translation					
	Host Health Research Conferences every two years	Cumulative number of Health Research Conferences held by 2021 from 2018	NHRA records	1	0	2
	Operating a Scientific Journal by December 2019	Scientific Journal in operation (No, In Progress, Yes)	NHRA records	No	In Progress (All requirements for setting up the Journal in place, some manuscripts received and being processed)	Yes (First publications done)
	Maintain a forum for ongoing research dissemination by facilitating quarterly scientific meetings by December 31, 2021	Cumulative number of Scientific meetings held annually	NHRA records	3	7	15
	Produce at least one Policy Brief annually	Cumulative number of policy briefs produced	NHRA records	0	1	3
	Train at least 30 researchers in knowledge translation by December 31, 2021	Cumulative number of researchers trained in knowledge translation	NHRA training records	0	10	30
Mentor at least 30 researchers in knowledge translation by December 31, 2021	Cumulative number of researchers trained in knowledge translation	NHRA mentorship records	0	10	30	

Results Chain	Indicators	MoV	Base Year 2018 Yr 2019	Targets			
				Yr 2020	Yr 2021		
Objectives: Organizational Development and Management							
To increase the proportion of the operating budget covered by funds raised by the authority from fees, cooperating partners and other sources from 0% to 25% by December 31, 2021	Proportion of the operating budget covered by funds raised by the Authority	NHRA Financial Records	0%	5%	15%	25%	
Objective	To build a strong organizational brand and culture through adherence to the organisational core values and quality services.	Availability of QA and QC Manuals and QA and QC Committee meetings minutes	No	In Progress (QA&QC manual developed)	Yes (QA and QC manual in use)	Yes	
To put in place and implement an Occupational Health Safety (OHS) system by December 31, 2021	Occupational Safety Manual (OSM) developed and being utilized (No, In Progress, Yes)	Availability of Occupational Safety Manual and minutes of Occupational safety committee (OSC)	No	In Progress (OSM developed)	Yes	Yes	

Results Chain	Indicators	MoV	Base Year 2018		Targets	
			Yr 2019	Yr 2020	Yr 2021	
Objectives: Organizational Development and Management	To develop and fully operationalize management systems management: Financial management systems, procurement, human resource management, ICT by December 31, 2021	Availability of all management guidance manuals (No, In Progress, Yes)	In Progress (all manuals developed but not fully utilized)	Yes	Yes	Yes
	To digitalize all operations of the National Health Research Authority to increase efficiency and reduce use of manual processes by December 31, 2020	All NHRA operational processes digitalized (No, In Progress, Yes)	Availability of digital platforms for all NHRA operations	In Progress (some digital platforms in place and operational)	In Progress (some digital platforms in place and operational)	Yes

Results Chain	Indicators	MoV	Base Year 2018		Targets		
			Yr 2019	Yr 2020	Yr 2020	Yr 2021	
Objectives	Objectives: Organizational Development and Management						
	Number of New Council members trained or oriented in Corporate Governance	NHRA records	0	15	15	15	
	Number of management team members trained or oriented in Corporate governance	NHRA records	0	4	4	4	
	Cumulative Number of Council meetings	NHRA records	0	4	8	12	
	Cumulative Number of management meetings from January 2019	NHRA records	0	12	24	36	
	Percentage of primary ² target audience that know the services provided by NHRA	Survey report	TBD	50%	75%	85%	
To build a strong brand/ organizational culture	Percentage of secondary ³ target audience that know the services provided by NHRA	Survey report	TBD	25%	35%	50%	

¹ Primary audience includes health researchers, heads of research institutions, heads of research ethics committees, heads of academic institutions involved in health research, health policy makers, and health workers.

² Secondary audience includes health donors and general community members.

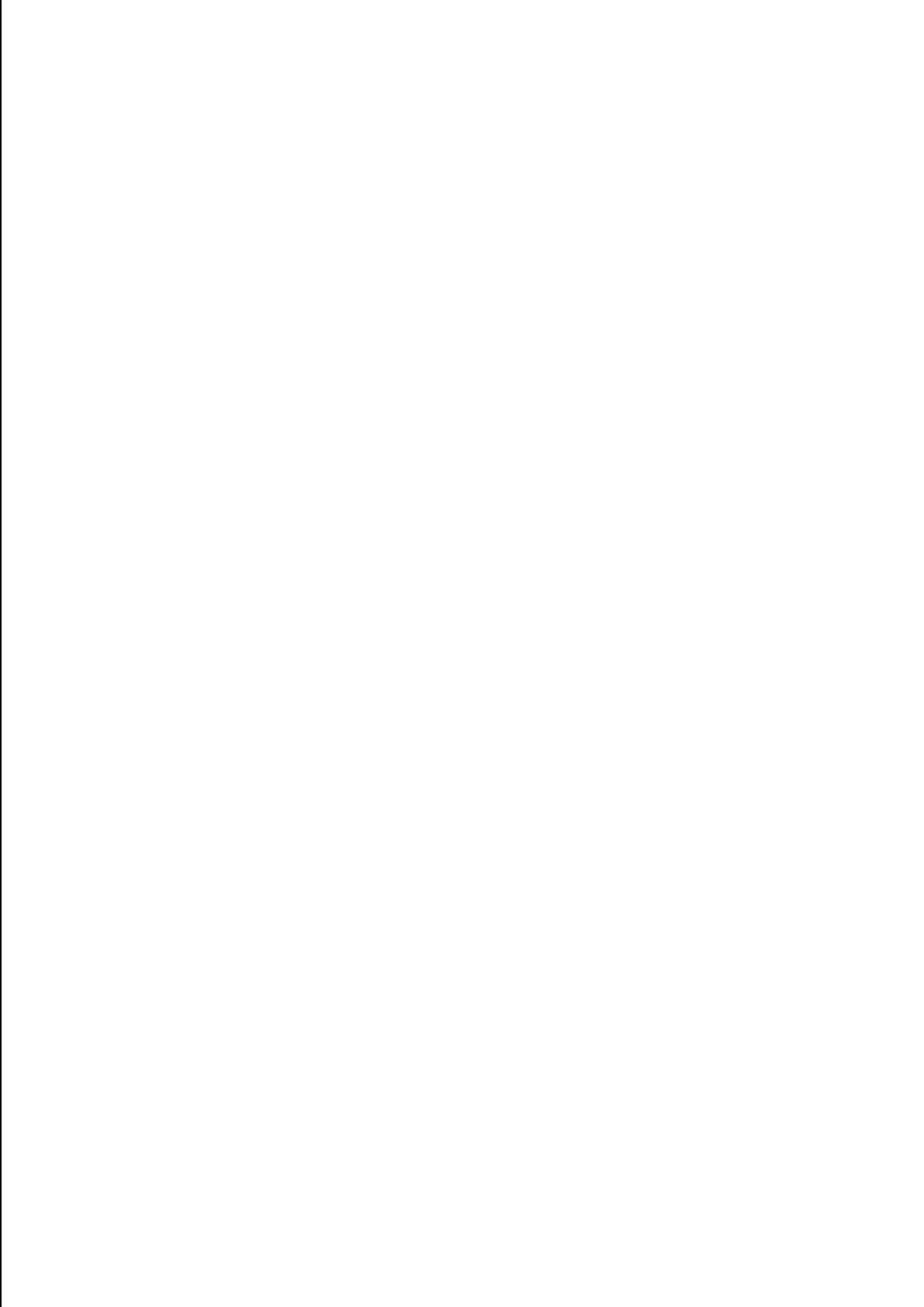
Results Chain	Indicators	MoV	Base Year 2018		Targets	
			Yr 2019	Yr 2020	Yr 2021	
Objectives: Human Resource Management and Administration To recruit and/or have 30 personnel (57% of establishment) seconded to NHRA by December 31, 20121 To procure at least eight motor vehicles to facilitate smooth operations of the NHRA by December 31, 2018 To develop and operationalize a human resource capacity building and continuous professional development program for NHRA personnel by December 31, 2019	Number of staff working for the NHRA	NHRA HR records	1	5	20	30
	Cumulative number of NHRA motor vehicles	NHRA Transport records	1	4	6	8
	Human Resource Capacity Building and Continuous Professional Development developed (No, In Progress, Yes)	NHRA HR Records	No	In Progress (Draft Plan)	Yes	Yes
	Cumulative number of staff trained (short-5-7 days) through NHRA sponsorship (with funds sourced by NHRA)	NHRA HR Records	4	7	10	15

Results Chain	Indicators	MoV	Base Year 2018		Targets	
			Yr 2019	Yr 2020	Yr 2021	
Objectives	Objectives: Human Resource Management and Administration					
	To develop and implement a staff appraisal and reward system by December 31, 2019	Staff Annual Performance Appraisal System (APAS) developed and operational (No, In Progress, Yes)	NHRA HR Records	In Progress (APAS developed, staff trained)	Yes	Yes
	To develop and implement a Human Resource Information Management System(HRIMS) by December 31, 2019	A Human Resource Information Management System (No, In Progress, Yes)	NHRA HR Records	No	Yes	Yes
	To conduct a salaries and conditions of service surveys among similar organizations in Zambia every three years by December 31, 2021	Salaries Survey conducted (Yes, No)	NHRA HR Records	No	No	Yes

9.0 Financing of the Strategic Plan

The Strategic Plan will be financed from the following sources:

- (a) Funds appropriated to the Authority by Parliament for the purposes of the Authority;
- (b) Funds raised by the Authority from charging registration, accreditation, and other fees for services provided by the Authority;
- (c) Funds raised by the Authority through projects implemented by the Authority;
- d) Funds from donations and special fund raising events.





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