



CBNRM Governance Manuals

Annual General Meetings



Zambia Community-Based Natural Resources Management (CBNRM) Governance Manuals

*Preparing for and Managing a
CRB Annual General Meeting*

2023

Cover photo: Ed Selfe/Biocarbon Partners (top); North Luangwa
CRB elections, ILRG (bottom), verbal consent gained.

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ACRONYMS

AGM	Annual General Meeting
CBNRM	Community-Based Natural Resource Management
CDC	Community Development Committee
CRB	Community Resources Board
DNPW	Department of National Parks and Wildlife
FMC	Financial Management Committee
GM	General Meeting
RMC	Resource Management Committee
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VAG	Village Action Group

I.0 INTRODUCTION



The Government of the Republic of Zambia through the Department of National Parks and Wildlife (DNPW) under Community-Based Natural Resources Management (CBNRM) Section is responsible for monitoring, supervising and facilitating local level governance structures to support the implementation of the Wildlife Act No. 14 of 2015 that provides Community Resources Boards (CRBs) to be formed from representatives of the Village Action Groups (VAGs) through a democratic process. In accordance with the Bottom-Up-CBNRM Approach, chiefdoms are divided into zones which are referred to as VAGs being the “building blocks” or the implementing structures of the CRBs. The CRB Formation Guidelines describe the required structure of the CRB and the period for which it is elected

is specified in the Act. Organizing and managing the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the CRB is one of the responsibilities of the Board.

The AGM is the most important formal event for a CRB and is essential for good governance and ensuring that the VAGs are informed on the CRB affairs in a particular financial year and participate in the making of important decisions. It needs to be planned and conducted carefully. This manual provides guidance on what should be expected at an AGM.

Annual General Meeting is a meeting which is held once a year that provides an opportunity for the CRB membership to participate in important decisions regarding the governance of the CRB.

The AGM generally has two components and may take two to four days. The AGM must be conducted in each of the VAGs where the CRB representatives (Board Chairperson as well as representatives of the Financial Management Committee (FMC), Resource Management Committee (RMC) and Community Development Committee (CDC)) whose main objective is to ensure that the community has the proper information to make decisions.

Following this, the AGM conducts the formal business of the CRB comprising:

Day One

Review of work plan and budgets - the delivery and acceptance of reports (from FMC, CDC, and RMC for that particular year) against the approved budgets and work plans.

Day Two

The integration of key proposals and decisions submitted by VAGs about new work plans and budgets for the following year.

The DNPW through the CBNRM Section will inform the public of the dissolution, handovers, dates, procedures and for the election of new Board/VAG members.

1.1 BACKGROUND

The Board through the Technical Sub-committees is responsible for coordinating, supervising, and monitoring the implementation of the decisions by the VAG Sub-committees on behalf of the community members in the Chiefdom. However, day to day administrative functions are delegated to the Secretariat if the CRB has resources to employ full time staff. The Board is elected and holds office for three years as prescribed in the Wildlife Act. The Act requires a Board to consist of not more than ten members and not less than seven members of the VAGs. The Board also includes one representative of the local authority in the area and a representative of the Chief in whose area a Board is established.

The Board and the VAG Executive Committees hold office for three years, so every third AGM is held before the elections and leading to the dissolution of the existing CRB and opens to the start of the election processes to elect a new CRB. Since the CRB is made up of the VAGs within the Chiefdom, each VAG holds three Quarterly General Meetings and an AGM which is organized by the VAG Executive Committee during the last quarter. These AGMs all take place within the same month, mostly during the month of December of each year where the local community members through the VAG executive committees bring inputs to be consolidated during the CRB AGM.

1.2 AGM DURING A NON-ELECTION YEAR

The DNPW is responsible to ensure that the AGM for a non-election year is organized by the Board members with support from the Secretariat. Representatives from DNPW under CBNRM Section attend the AGM to provide technical support and monitor compliance. The planning of the event and compiling of reports need

to begin well in advance of the AGM. The VAG AGMs will follow the following steps:

1. The VAG Sub-committees will hold their respective meetings first.
2. The VAG Chairperson will call for the VAG Committee meeting where the Sub-committees will present their respective reports to be discussed (progress, challenges faced and the way forward). The VAG Committee will compile a full detailed Financial, Project and Resource Protection Progress report for presentation at the VAG AGM.
3. The VAG Committee Members who constitute the CRB will attend the CRB AGM and present their consolidated VAG AGM reports to be included in the CRB Annual Work Plan and Budget for that particular year. They will represent their VAG members at this meeting.

I.3 AGM DURING AN ELECTION YEAR

Every third year, the Executive Committees of the VAGs and the Board must be re-elected. One month before the Board's term-of-office ends, DNPW dissolves the Board in writing so that the process for nominating and electing a new Board can begin. Before the AGM, it is the responsibility of the Board to prepare the reports to be presented at the AGM. During the CRB AGM the Chairperson announces upcoming dissolution of the Board and the elections in line with the stipulated processes outlined in the CRB Formation Guidelines. The AGM takes place first and then the elections.

I.4 QUORUM FOR THE AGM

Unless otherwise defined in the Constitution, a quorum for an AGM is 60%. This means that 60% of the collective VAG community members need to be present in order for the AGM to meet the quorum requirements. However, a CRB may specify that where the quorum is not attained, the Chairperson will set another date for the meeting and provide the necessary publicity. If the quorum is not

attained the third time, the meeting may proceed as though the quorum was attained. This should be specified in the CRB Constitution, nonetheless.

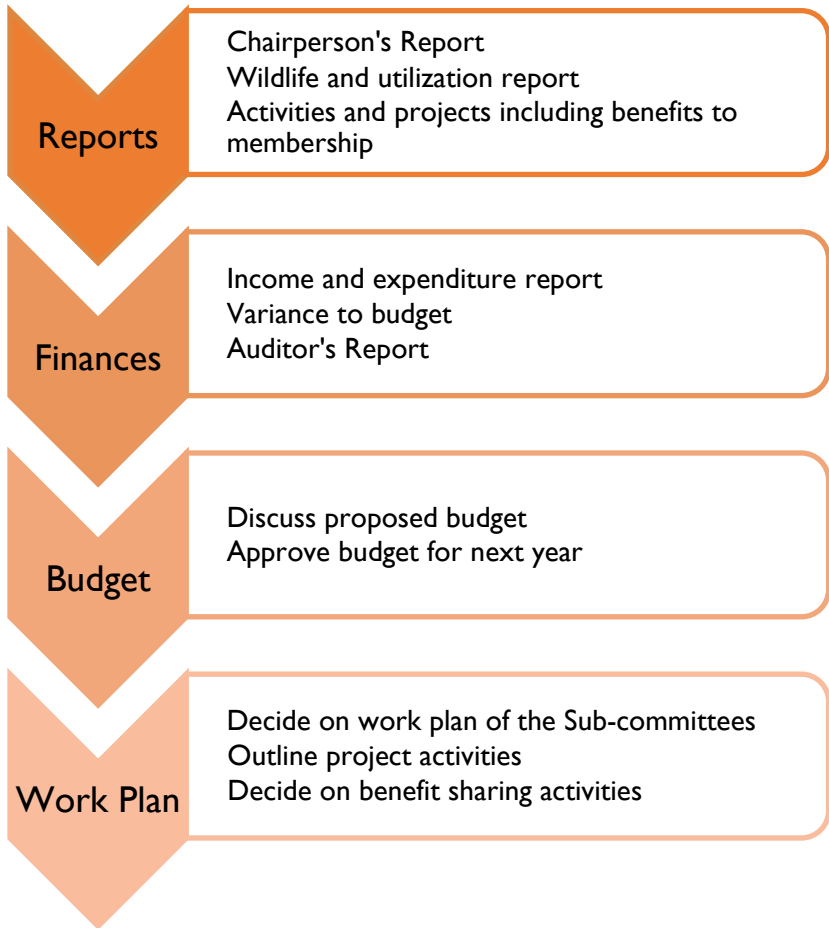
Quorum for a meeting is the minimum number of members that must be present for the meeting to make a decision and for it to be properly constituted.

The agenda of an AGM should be compiled in advance of the AGM and if possible circulated to the membership so that they know what to expect of the meeting. The agenda should provide details of each of the components of the meeting and who will be responsible for presenting. The agenda provides the structure to the AGM, so it is very important that the agenda is compiled and followed. It is the duty of the CRB Chairperson to make sure that through the Technical Sub-committees this happens. The VAG Chairperson will, through the VAG Sub-committees for each VAG, ensure that the community members are well informed of the agenda, time, date, and venue of the AGM.



Generally, each VAG has a CRB representative hence the CRB AGM will be conducted by the CRB Chairperson accompanied by the CDC, FMC, RMC, and the Secretariat. In all the VAGs the local community for that particular VAG can expect to be involved in the following activities at an AGM:

1. Get and review reports from previous year:
 - The Chairperson's Report about the CRB overall performance (activities of the past year, including the performance of the staff members); and
 - The RMC Report on the wildlife/resource protection (animal offtake, encroachment, human wildlife co-existence, the use of the quota and the income earned from this).
2. CDC Report on the progress of community projects (status, challenges and agree on collective measures to be taken).
3. FMC Report by providing a detailed Financial Report on the income received from various sources as well as a detailed report about expenditure with reference to Annual Work Plan and Budget. Also included in the Financial Report should be information about the variance of the expenditure from the approved budget.
4. Receive an Audit Report and accept (or reject) the Financial Report on this basis.
5. Agree how to spend money in the following year (approve the budget).
6. Agree on a Work Plan for the next year.
7. Amend the Constitution when necessary.



2.0 PLANNING THE AGM

The holding of AGMs by the CRB and the VAGs is a compliance requirement of the DNPW. This means that it is one of the events that must take place in order to retain the status of the CRB.

Compliance means adhering to a rule which is part of a law, policy, or regulation of the government.

2.1 WHERE AND WHEN

Each VAG/CRB has a central and convenient place where the AGMs and General Meetings (GMs) are usually held. Thus, the venues of the CRB AGMs are usually in the same place where each VAG usually conducts GMs.

The date of the AGM needs to be decided well before the planned meeting so that this information can be shared with all the VAG Committees, and they can then plan and hold their VAG AGMs before the CRB AGM to ensure VAG input into the CRB meetings. It is recommended for the Chairperson to issue the notice of the meeting at least a week in advance to allow the members to prepare for the meeting.

2.2 COMPILE THE AGENDA

The agenda must cover all the topics to be presented and discussed at the AGM and should also indicate who is going to speak on each point. If possible, the agenda should be shared with the participants at least seven days before the AGM so that they know what to expect. Each of the individuals presenting a part of the agenda, should be notified so that they can be well prepared for their presentation.

2.3 PREPARE THE REPORTS

Each of the reports presented at the AGM must be formally prepared since copies of these reports need to be submitted to DNPW.

Since several people may be responsible for compiling the report, it is important that the person presenting the report is part of the group that prepares the report and is well informed on the contents of the report.



3.0 DECISIONS TO BE MADE AT THE AGM

3.1 APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL REPORT

Although the Financial Report has been compiled by the FMC, it needs to be reviewed and formally accepted by the membership at an AGM. Ideally, copies of the Financial Reports should be provided to the members at the AGM so that they have access to all the details in the report.

If this is not possible, then the most important parts of the Financial Reports should be copied onto flipchart sheets and displayed while the review process is underway.

3.2 APPROVAL OF THE BUDGET

Checking that the allocation of funds to the various budget lines and activities is appropriate is a very important function of the AGM and this must be done during quarterly GMs. This means that the CRB/VAG Committees should not use all or most income on operational costs such as its own sitting allowances, and travel expenses. Each budget submitted for approval at the AGM should include all sources and amounts of income, a CRB operational budget that covers salaries, equipment purchases and running costs, and an amount to be spent on community benefits.

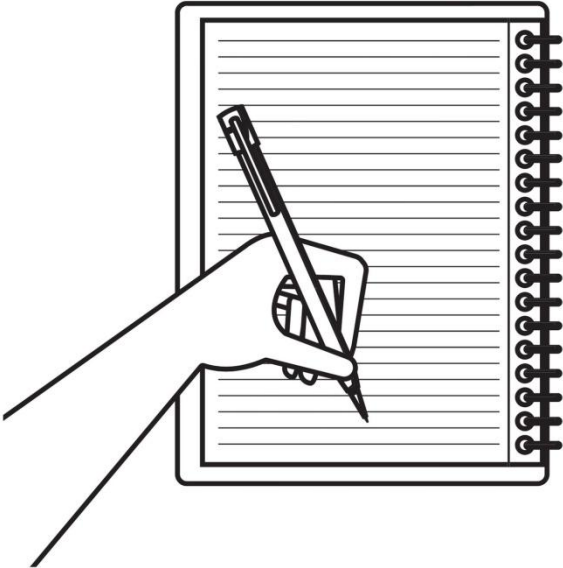
Linked to the budget approval is the approval of funds for community benefits or new projects. It may also be necessary to allocate funds to ongoing projects.

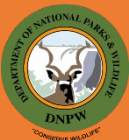
3.3 MINUTES OF THE AGM

The decisions made at an AGM need to be recorded in the AGM minutes book. The minutes and copies of all the reports presented at the AGM must be submitted to DNPW after the AGM. The

Secretariat is responsible for taking minutes and writing them up in an acceptable format for submission to DNPW.

The decisions made at the AGM will inform the management actions throughout the year that follows. The minutes for an AGM should be signed off by the Chairperson and the minute taker. The minute taker should have the ability to listen and properly document the meeting decisions as the records will influence the Board's decisions. Signed minutes cannot be changed, however any decision that requires amendment should be amended at an extraordinary GM and any such changes countersigned.





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