

New NGO law: Key changes

On 2 March 2026, Law 2/26 was published, establishing a new legal framework for the activities of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in Angola. This law substantially repealed the regulatory framework previously established by Presidential Decree 4/15 of 23 March.

Law 2/26 applies to all NGOs conducting activities in Angola. However, it does not apply to private legal entities of an associative or functional nature, for which specific legislation sets out the rules.

For the purposes of Law 2/26, NGOs are defined as legal entities governed by private law that are voluntarily established and independent of the state and political parties. They must pursue social solidarity objectives in various fields on a non-profit basis and are prohibited from distributing profits or assets to their members, regardless of their legal form.

Key changes compared to Presidential Decree 74/15 of 23 March

The following are the main changes introduced by Law 2/26 in relation to previous legislation:

Authorisation to conduct activities

NGOs are now subject to mandatory prior authorisation, consisting of obtaining the formal authorisation required to conduct their activities in Angola.

The power to grant this authorisation lies with the body responsible for supervising, monitoring and evaluating NGO programmes and projects: The Institute for the Supervision of Community Activities (Instituto de Supervisão das Atividades Comunitárias - "ISAC").

The accreditation procedure will be defined by the President of the Republic in his capacity as Head of the Executive.

Powers of the body responsible for overseeing NGOs

The body responsible for overseeing, monitoring and evaluating NGO programmes and projects has, among others, the powers to:

- Oversee, monitor and evaluate the activities of NGOs in accordance with their programmes.

- Oversee domestic and international transactions carried out by or for the benefit of NGOs.
- Report to the Financial Intelligence Unit any suspicions that funds may derive from criminal activities or be linked to the financing of terrorism, while maintaining the confidentiality of reports and identities.
- Ensure appropriate measures are in place to prevent NGOs being used to traffic human beings, organs, biological material and associated information.
- Ensure NGOs are not used for sexual exploitation.
- Carry out other tasks assigned by law or their statutes.

Registration and status of NGOs

All NGOs, regardless of whether they are domestic or foreign, are required to obtain authorisation and register with the supervisory authority.

Following registration, domestic NGOs must submit a programme of activities or the organisation's objectives together with their registration application.

Foreign NGOs must submit their

constitutive documents from the country of origin for registration. These must be legalised by an Angolan consular authority and accompanied by a programme of activities planned for Angola.

Registration may be refused if the NGO's aims are incompatible with its nature or mission, or if they undermine national public order.

Approval of the registration automatically confers NGO status on the applicant organisation.

Accountability

NGOs are now required to:

- Be accountable to their members.
- Undergo independent external audits as required by domestic or foreign funders.
- Be audited by the Court of Auditors if they are financed with public funds.

Capital export and asset disposal

NGOs are prohibited from exporting any capital obtained in Angola, regardless of its source.

Visa extensions

Foreign NGOs operating in Angola may apply for visas to be issued or extended for expatriate staff employed by them.

NGOS ARE PROHIBITED FROM EXPORTING ANY CAPITAL OBTAINED IN ANGOLA, REGARDLESS OF ITS SOURCE.

The process must be accompanied by the documentation required by current Angolan legislation.

Compliance with legal requirements is essential to ensure the legality of expatriate staff's stay.

Suspension of NGO activities

An NGO's activities may be suspended for a period of 120 days, which may be extended. This can happen when there is strong evidence of unlawful acts or acts that are detrimental to the sovereignty, security or integrity of the state.

The following also constitute grounds to suspend an NGO's activities:

- The use of unlawful or immoral means to achieve its objectives.
- Carrying out activities that are incompatible with its statutory purpose.
- Involvement in acts that are prohibited by legislation on the prevention and combating of money laundering, terrorism, and the proliferation of weapons.
- Continuing activities during the period of suspension constitutes an offence of disobedience.

An appeal against the decision to suspend activities may be lodged in accordance with the general provisions of the law.

Staff recruitment and employment arrangements

NGOs must comply with the General Labour Law and other applicable legislation when recruiting and employing staff.

The duration of the employment contract may align with the programme or project implementation period set by the NGO.

Equal pay must be ensured between Angolan and foreign workers performing identical duties, except where otherwise provided for in applicable legislation.

Final note

Law 2/26 comes into force on the date of its publication, i.e. on 2 March 2026.

Existing NGOs must comply with the new requirements set out in Law 2/26 within 180 days, which may be extended once, failing which their activities will be suspended. Presidential Decree 2/26 entered into force on the date of its publication, 2 March 2026. ■