

ORG MID-YEAR IMPACT REPORT



**HERE'S WHAT WE'VE
DONE SO FAR!**



JUNE 2026

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A Message from ORG's Team

At the heart of every milestone in this report are the people, organizations, and communities we are privileged to serve. Over the first half of this year, we've witnessed the strength, resilience, and generosity that define communities across The Bahamas. Together, we have created opportunities and supported local initiatives that strengthen good governance and the social fabric of The Bahamas - bridging the gap between people and understanding; knowledge and action; and ideas and change.

This report reflects not only the work accomplished, but also the partnerships, voices, and shared commitment that made it possible. We are grateful to our community members, partners, volunteers, and supporters whose contributions continue to help us make true impact.

As we look ahead, we remain dedicated to listening, learning, and working alongside our communities to build a stronger and more equitable Bahamas for all.

STAFF HIGHLIGHT!



Ari Wells,
Senior Manager of Outreach
Bahamas 40 Under 40
Honoree!

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The Organization for Responsible Governance (ORG) is a non-profit organization committed to creating dialogue, insights, and solutions around accountable governance, education, and economic development in The Bahamas.

Our Mission:

To promote the principles of good governance, while actively engaging government, citizens, the private sector, and civil society

Our Vision:

To create an environment that fosters and sustains greater economic and social opportunities for all Bahamians



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Featured Impact Stories



Pathway to the Polls



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Ahead of the general election, ORG's "Pathway to the Polls" campaign equipped Bahamians to vote with confidence through resources like educational brochures, videos, insight tools, workshops, and an interactive simulation booth.



To ensure voters received accurate information, we engaged election officials and connected youth voters directly with candidates to address common questions and concerns about the voting process.

By strengthening informed civic participation, "Pathway to the Polls" empowered Bahamians to become more aware, think critically about the voting process, and feel confident and prepared to make their vote count on election day!



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VOTER INSIGHT TOOL WORKSHOP!



As part of Pathway to the Polls, we built a Voter Insight Tool to walk people through critical areas of thinking and key questions that matter ahead of this year's election. Designed to prepare voters for the polls by providing clarity on where political parties and candidates stand on national issues, our team brought the free resource to life during a joint workshop with the Ministry of Youth, Sports, & Culture (MYSC). The event had young Bahamians use the tool to explore the political landscape, engage with candidate/policy priorities, and highlight the national issues most important to them.

VOTER EDUCATION YOUTH PANEL!



HOST SHAD FER!

ORG and the MYSC also coordinated a youth-focused voter panel discussion, hosted by local artist and entertainer Shad Fer. Three participants - Tezel Lightbourne, Trei Bethel, and Kenrick Stubbs - gave perspectives on why voting matters, the importance of critical thinking in decision-making, and creating space for young people in political engagement and national development. This insightful conversation highlighted youth not just as the future of the nation, but as the “now,” showcasing that their voices matter in voting, elections, and so much more.

Some of our “Pathway to the Polls” wins include:

Creating partnerships with More94FM , Our News, Bahamas at Sunrise, Cepigel Cafe, & Signarama



Designing, acquiring, and installing our first ever ORG billboard!

Hosting multiple Voter Simulation Booth popups at community events



Producing a voter education Crash Course Video



Elevating Caribbean Voices in Environmental Governance

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In April, ORG took a leading role in advancing environmental rights across the Caribbean through its participation in the Fourth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP4) to the Escazú Agreement in The Bahamas. ORG has promoted the Agreement since The Bahamas signed on to the region's first legally binding environmental treaty, focused on access to environmental information, public participation, and access to environmental justice. ORG sees these three pillars as opportunities to strengthen transparency, accountability, and protection for communities and environmental defenders.

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ORG, The Nature Conservancy Northern Caribbean Programme, and the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) co-hosted a COP4 side event, bringing together environmental advocates, civil society organizations, and regional stakeholders to discuss the practical realities of advancing Escazú in the region - highlighting challenges, insights, and opportunities. It drew participation from across the Caribbean and six Family Islands, with the Save Exuma Alliance (SEA) supporting the in-person attendance of many Family Island non-profit leaders.

60+

Regional environmental advocates gathered to advance Escazú

6

Family Islands represented at ORG co-hosted side event

ORG's engagement at COP4 reinforced our commitment to transparency, accountability, and inclusive decision-making. We'll continue working with the organizations that participated in the side event to advance the Escazú Agreement, elevate Caribbean stakeholder voices, and advance environmental justice throughout the region.



Shaping Tomorrow's Integrity

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In December 2025, ORG led “Integrity Week,” our national campaign in observance of International Anti-Corruption Day - strengthening public awareness of transparency, accountability, and ethical governance in The Bahamas. Guided by the theme "Shaping Tomorrow's Integrity," we encouraged Bahamians to recognize integrity as both an individual and institutional responsibility.

We promoted our Integrated Anti-Corruption Framework, shared educational content, and engaged the public through interactive polls and discussion prompts that encouraged reflection and dialogue on fairness, trust, and accountability. ORG also coordinated a virtual cross-sector roundtable, bringing together leaders from civil society, media, and the environmental field to identify practical ways to strengthen a culture of integrity across the country. Together, these initiatives expanded the national dialogue on integrity.

Integrity Week Virtual Roundtable: “Shaping a Future of Integrity for The Bahamas”

As a highlight of Integrity Week, ORG coordinated a virtual roundtable called “Shaping a Future of Integrity for The Bahamas.” We created a platform for cross-sector dialogue on the role of integrity in building a stronger nation. Hosted by Bodine Victoria, the discussion explored what integrity means in everyday life, how it is reflected (or lacking) in our institutions and industries, and the practical steps needed to foster a more transparent, accountable, and sustainable Bahamas.

The panel brought together diverse perspectives from journalism, environmental stewardship, civil society, and governance, featuring Latesha Gibson, Environmental Scientist and Project Manager; Rachel Knowles-Scott, Reporter with The Nassau Guardian; Ashleigh Sean Rolle, Writer and Social Commentator; and Matt Aubry, ORG Executive Director.

By bringing together respected voices from across sectors and sharing the discussion with the wider public, ORG helped elevate the national conversation on integrity while encouraging greater public engagement in strengthening good governance.

Roundtable Host Bodine Victoria!



Integrity Week Activities:

- TV Interviews
- Virtual Roundtable hosted by Bodine Victoria
- Social Media Highlights
- Press Release & Story Publications
- Partnership Participation

Social Media:



7k

Views

105

Interactions

TV Appearances



12+ Media Placements over 2 weeks!



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Promoting Transparent Legislation



Our Work in Policy

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ORG has carved a place for ourselves as a sought-after voice in policy advocacy. From our Outreach Team bridging the gap between governance and people by building public understanding of legislation and the ways they affect every Bahamian; to our Executive Director acting as a trusted and responsible source, providing media and other civil society members with commentary on public policy matters; and board member/renowned economist Therese Turner-Jones regularly lending her expertise to national financial legislative matters, championing ORG's positions on policy reforms, and participating in ORG-led initiatives such as educational roundtable discussions.



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We continue to strengthen democracy by creating accessible tools that encourage critical analysis; curating safe spaces for open discussion; leading the charge for reform with policy assessments and recommendations; and empowering Bahamians at every level to better understand the issues shaping The Bahamas and participate meaningfully in the policymaking process.

12+

letters to the editor, press statements, & editorials released on policy-related items

20+

media appearances discussing policy-related items

7

detailed policy statements on environmental assessments, budget analysis, & public consultation developed & released

4

virtual roundtables incorporating policy discussion hosted

ORG's produced independent assessments and advocacy on the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), the Public Disclosures (Whistleblower Protection) Bill, the Procurement Act, proposed Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) regulations, campaign finance reform, the 2026/27 National Budget, the proposed National Planning Institute, NPO regulations, and the Independent Commission of Investigation. We also participated in national policymaking through our role on the National Development Plan Steering Committee and the Disaster Risk Management Authority's Non-Governmental Consultative Committee, ensuring national reforms benefited from evidence-based analysis, constructive dialogue, and greater public participation.

Breaking Down the Numbers: Helping Citizens Understand VAT

Therese Turner-Jones,
ORG Board member,
Economist,
Development Finance
Expert



Dr. Leo Rolle,
CEO, BCCEC



Don Sargent,
Assistant Manager
of
Communications,
MOTIA



As national conversations intensified around Value Added Tax (VAT) and its impact on Bahamians, ORG created a platform for informed, constructive discussion through its public webinar, “Impacts of VAT.”

The event brought together a distinguished panel of economists, business leaders, academics, and policy experts to examine VAT’s long-term effects on the Bahamian economy, household finances, governance, and national development. Moderated by journalist Rachel Knowles-Scott, the discussion provided citizens with balanced perspectives on one of the country’s most debated public policy issues.

Dr. Keisha Ellis,
Executive
Director of
Hands for
Hunger



**Rachel Knowles-
Scott**
Host & Journalist

Community- based Grassroots Engagement & Education

Launching the Civic Education Committee

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Jodi Minnis-Rolle,
Curatorial
Director, NAGB



To strengthen civic understanding across The Bahamas by curating practical, accessible, and locally relevant education, ORG assembled a five-member, multidisciplinary committee representing academia, media, arts and culture, finance, and environmental education. This Civic Education Committee has:

- ***expanded cross-sector collaboration to bridge governance principles with everyday life for Bahamians***
- ***established a foundation for ongoing civic education programming to strengthen governance literacy across The Bahamas***
- ***hosted our first Civic Education Committee webinar: “Why Media Matters to Democracy,” led by Ava Turnquest***



Nicholas Higgs,
Managing
Director, BDB

Dr. Ian Strachan,
Professor,
University of
The Bahamas



Dr. Ancilleno Davis,
Professor, UB
North Campus



Ava Turnquest,
Journalist,
Digital
Editor, The
Tribune

“Democracy doesn’t work without an informed public, and that starts with Bahamians knowing how to navigate the media landscape with confidence!” - Ava Turnquest

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Investing in Youth to Strengthen Governance

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ORG, the United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office (UNRCO), and the National Youth Assembly (NYA) delivered a powerful Youth in Governance Workshop. Through interactive training, young Bahamians were equipped with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to become civic leaders and advocates, strengthening their understanding of good governance and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This created an inclusive space for young voices to be informed, empowered, and meaningfully participate in national development.

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**schools & youth
organizations
engaged across
New Providence**



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Bridging Citizen & Government Communication

Listening to Eleuthera:

Community Voices on Development

In February, ORG's Outreach Team visited Eleuthera to connect with residents and gather their perspectives on development taking place across the island. We routinely advocate for public consultation that is inclusive, fair, and representative as a critical component of good governance.

Our "My Island, My Solutions" initiative promotes public consultation that includes underrepresented communities like those on the Family Islands, seeking to make feedback from these communities accessible for decision-makers. We believe such input is essential in conversations about national development and sustainability.

During this particular trip, the team hosted community focus groups in Central, South, and North Eleuthera and conducted on-the-ground surveys to hear directly from residents. The sessions created space for open conversation where community members shared their ideas, concerns, and hopes for the island's future.

The feedback gathered has been curated into an open report, available for viewing at orgbahamas.com/activecitizens. ORG is ensuring the perspectives of Family Island residents are included in national discussions.



401

community surveys
completed across
North, Central, &
South Eleuthera

Creating Opportunities for Two-Way Dialogue: Political Candidate Conversations



In the lead-up to the general election, ORG strengthened civic engagement by creating opportunities for informed, two-way dialogue between voters and political candidates. Through a session co-hosted with the MYSC, we provided a neutral platform that encouraged critical thinking, meaningful discussion, and informed participation in the democratic process.



This event:

- ***featured a panel of speakers, including Dr Trevor Johnson (FNM), Natasha Turnquest (Independent candidate for Long Island), and Lester Gibson (COI).***
- ***facilitated structured dialogue using ORG's Voter Insight Tool and educational resources to encourage informed engagement.***
- ***created an inclusive space that empowered participants to connect directly with candidates and critically examine national issues to make informed voting decisions.***

Building Capacity for Local Organizations



1,400+

organizations identified nationwide for outreach & relationship-building!

Map4Good Bahamas, a first-of-its-kind initiative to build a national digital database of nonprofits and faith-based organizations across The Bahamas, continues to gain momentum. ORG has expanded the network to strengthen connections across the sector. Registration and outreach efforts are growing the platform, increasing the visibility of organizations, and creating new opportunities for collaboration. These include:

"Map4Good on Da Road," launched, creating expanded engagement in local communities across multiple islands, with hundreds of touchpoints through email, phone, and in-person.

Established a partnership with Novio Group for technical support to create the Map4Good database and map platform (beta launch in July 2026)!



Equipping NPOS with Powerful Skills & Tools

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ORG continues to support Bahamian nonprofit organizations, particularly those working in the environmental sector, through training and strategic partnerships that build organizational capacity and expand opportunities for civic participation.

The launch of our Community of Practice initiative in January strengthened the capacity of nonprofit and community organizations. The pilot workshop brought together recipients of the UNDP's Global Environment Facility (GEF's) Small Grants Programme for a day of peer learning and ongoing collaboration. ORG will be upscaling the program in the latter half of the year.



Vanessa Bethel, ORG's Senior Manager, delivered a workshop for BREEF, equipping its team with strategies to strengthen governance systems and long-term effectiveness. She also served as the keynote speaker at the Women's Political Leadership Project, hosted by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the Organization of American States (OAS). Here she highlighted the importance of inclusive leadership, civic engagement, and empowering women to lead in public life. These engagements demonstrate ORG's growing reputation as a trusted partner in leadership and organizational development.

Building on this momentum, we launched the fourth round of our nonprofit capacity-building program in June, introducing a dedicated cohort model for the first time. Over the next seven months, participating organizations will progress through a series of interactive training sessions, practical tools, and mentoring designed to increase good governance, leadership, and organizational effectiveness. By investing in organizations through an extended learning journey, ORG is helping to build a stronger, more resilient nonprofit sector equipped to create lasting impact throughout The Bahamas.

Enhancing Civil Society Participation in Regional Matters



In March, ORG continued to elevate the voice of Bahamian civil society in regional policy discussions by creating opportunities for meaningful participation and advocating for more inclusive decision-making. In partnership with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, we facilitated consultations that enabled Bahamian nonprofit organizations to submit recommendations to CARICOM and the Organization of American States (OAS) Heads of Government, ensuring local perspectives helped inform regional priorities.

ORG also participated in the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) Group's Civil Society Forum in Asunción, Paraguay, joining government, multilateral, private sector, and civil society leaders from across Latin America and the Caribbean to advocate for more meaningful public participation in development decisions. Together, these efforts strengthened ORG's role as a regional leader advancing inclusive governance and amplifying Bahamian voices on issues that shape the country's future.

2026 Media Highlights

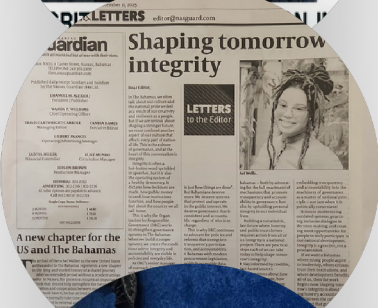


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60+

media placements
across TV, radio,
online, & print



26

content pieces
written & distributed
to media



1

major radio ad produced by
More94FM, aired across
multiple stations for "Pathway
to the Polls" campaign



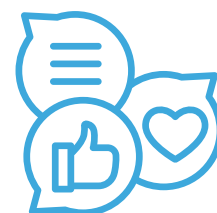
1

major PSA produced &
aired on Our News for
"Pathway to the Polls"
campaign



435k

views and
interactions on
social media



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Thank you



We Couldn't Do It Without You!

The Bob Coughlin Foundation

Templeton Religion Trust

GEF Small Grants Program

Inter-American Development Bank

Bahamas Protected Areas Fund

Commonwealth Foundation

Dionisio D'Aguilar

Rupert Roberts, Supervalu

More94FM

Office of the Prime Minister, SDG Unit

CANARI

Troy D'Arville

Bodine Victoria

The Nassau Guardian

The Tribune

Shad Fer

Cepigel

Chappell Whymms

Ministry of Youth, Sports, & Culture

Aletronic Media

United Nations

ALIV

Catch-a-Fire

Caribbean Bottling Company

United States Embassy, Nassau

One Eleuthera Foundation

Organization of American States

Global Giving

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Disaster Risk Management Authority

Rotary

Leon Levy Foundation

Diane Phillips & Associates

Therese Turner-Jones

Our News

ZNS News

Eyewitness News

Hillside House

Aetos Holdings

