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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA



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DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

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GOVERNANCE AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION DIVISION

**UNITED NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME**

REGIONAL CENTRE FOR EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA

Workshop on  
**“Harmonizing APRM-NPoAs and other National Development Plans  
into a Common Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF)”**

Kampala, Uganda  
29-30 Septembre 2010

**AIDE-MEMOIRE**  
(DRAFT)

## **I- Introduction and Background**

1. Under the auspices of the New Partnership for Economic Development (NEPAD), the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) was launched in March 2003 as a self-monitoring instrument voluntarily acceded to by member States<sup>1</sup> of the African Union. The APRM takes a comprehensive view of all the aspects of a country's governance system by assessing the quality of governance, identifying deficiencies and reinforcing successful best practices approaches and methods with a view towards improving policy reforms in the participating African countries. The mechanism has been described as 'Africa's Innovative Thinking on Governance' and it is seen as a double contract between African governments and their citizens, on the one hand, and between Africa and its development partners, on the other. Above all, it provides a forum that speaks with an African voice to Africans, thereby enhancing ownership of the debate about development policy, security and governance issues.
2. So far, many of the acceded countries have conducted successful governance self assessments, which were validated by APRM Country Review Missions, using APRM survey instruments and methodology. These include Ghana, Rwanda, Kenya, South Africa, Mozambique, Uganda, Nigeria, Burkina Faso, Algeria, Benin, Lesotho, Mali Mauritius and Ethiopia. Several more formally acceded countries to the APRM process are at different stages of preparation for the country self assessment.
3. The fourteen (14) APRM participating countries that have undertaken the rigorous self-assessment resulted in the Country Review Report and a National Programme of Action (NPOA), which intends to address the deficiencies and challenges revealed during the self-assessment.
4. The NPOA is the key output of the country peer review process. According to the APRM Country Guidelines, the primary purpose of the NPOA is to identify governance areas that need to be improved and to mobilize the country's efforts in implementing the necessary changes to enhance its state of governance and socio-economic development. The NPOA established as a matrix, presents (i) the country's governance priorities; (ii) the activities to be undertaken to tackle identified deficiencies; (iii) the cost and timeframe of each activity; and (iv) the responsibilities of each stakeholder (government, parliament, civil society and the private sector) in implementing the programme. Thus, the NPOA has major implications for the national planning systems of APRM participating countries.

## **II- Rationale for Workshop**

5. Against this background, it is clear that the major value addition of the APRM mechanism as a whole largely depends on the quality of policy-priority setting that goes into the NPOA

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<sup>1</sup> As of today, 30 countries acceded to the process.

and its implementation. However, experiences from the APRM pioneer countries<sup>2</sup> suggested that the NPoA is the weakest link in the process and the real challenge is its effective implementation.

6. Initial studies by the UNECA, UNDP and the AfDB found the following key challenges to the NPoA formulation and implementation:
  - Discrepancies between the costs of the NPoAs and the information held by the relevant sector ministries and agencies;
  - Lack of clear links with the funding mechanisms such as the national budget and Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF);
  - Weak coordination between agencies responsible for costing the NPoAs and those responsible for financing the programmes; and
  - Difficulties in identifying the NPoA programmes and projects in the national budgets and thus its impact on the Medium Term Expenditure Framework. (MTEF).
7. These concerns came to the attention of the continental APRM strategic partners (AfDB, UNECA and UNDP) that there was an urgent need to explore synergies between the NPoA and other national development strategies in order to avoid duplication and consequently overstressing of scarce financial and human resource capacities of the APRM countries. From the perspective of the APRM strategic partners, the main objective is to ensure that the NPoA becomes an integral part of national planning and development processes.
8. In response to that, the strategic partners agreed on first to validate the findings of the initial analysis; second to investigate the costing and the budgetary links between the NPoA and the MTEF and Budgets; third to estimate the financing gaps; and finally to examine how to harmonise the NPoA with other existing National Development Strategies such as PRSP and MDGs.
9. Subsequently the UNECA, with the financial support of UNDP, initiated field missions in four APRM countries, (Ghana: April 2007; Rwanda: Sept 2008; Uganda: October 2008 and Benin: June 2009), to assess the costing of the NPoA, to trace the links between the NPoAs and other existing national development programmes with a view to provide technical assistance to harmonize the NPoA with on-going National Development Strategies. The main purpose was to explore the experiences, challenges and best practices of some leading countries in the process with a view to teasing out their lessons for the benefit of the countries that had yet to start their APRM journey.
10. The field reports examined in particular on how countries design, cost, integrate and harmonise their NPoA into pre-existing national development plans/programmes. In addition, in each country report, recommendations were made to accelerate the integration and harmonisation exercise of the NPoA with relevant development programmes.

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<sup>2</sup> Under the lead of the African Development Bank three country studies were conducted in 2007, in Ghana, Kenya and Rwanda.

### III- Synthesis Report

11. The final outcome of these four missions is a synthesis report entitled **“Harmonising APRM-NPoAs and other National Plans into a Common Medium Term Expenditure Framework: Experiences from Ghana, Rwanda, Uganda, and Benin.”** The report provided an overview of the challenges encountered in the designing, costing, implementing, harmonising with other development programmes, funding and monitoring of the NPoAs. Based on that, the report suggested strategic recommendations to ensure that the NPoA is linked systematically, in the coming years, to the PRSPs and Development plans in terms of funding and costing.
12. The main findings and recommendations of the Synthesis report were essentially concentrated around the following sub-themes: NPoA designing and Costing; Harmonisation and Integration; Financing and Budgeting; Implementation and; Monitoring and Evaluation.
13. Around the above sub-themes, the Synthesis Report highlighted major deficiencies related to the NPOA such as:
  - Arithmetic and typographic mistakes (estimated around 25% of the total cost of the NPoA);
  - Under-costing of the NPoA especially with respect to salaries and maintenance;
  - Duplication of NPoA projects with pre-existing national programmes/plans (estimated 25% of the cost of the NPoA);
  - Limited inclusion of NPoA projects in the MTEF and annual budgets;
  - Discrepancy between the planning life cycles of the NPoA from those of the pre-existing plans;
  - Difficulty to establish the sources of the funds used to implement the NPoAs;
  - Unawareness of some implementing agencies of their role in implementing the NPoAs; and
  - Limited capacity to collect data for monitoring the NPoA indicators.
14. Based on these deficiencies, the report suggested some critical recommendations, which can be summarised as follows:
  - Validation of the NPoA costs by the National Governing Council (NGC), Ministries of Finance and national planning bodies;
  - Ownership of Nona’s project by government Midas, either to implement, or to oversee its implementation by non-state agency;
  - Inclusion of all relevant expenditures (wages, salaries, and maintenance) in the costing.
  - Integration of the APRM-NGC into the national planning system;

- Definition of the NPoA activities by the TRIs while the government bodies should be given the responsibility of actually costing the activities, in collaboration with the TRIs and NGC;
  - Identification of lead implementing agencies for each NPoA activity;
  - Synchronisation of the NPoA and the N-PRSPs life cycles;
  - Inclusion of the NPoA projects in the MTEF and identify them as APRM projects;
  - Codification of the NPoA's activities in the MTEF to facilitate NPoA expenditure tracking, monitoring and evaluation of its implementation;
  - Integration of the NPoA into national development plans through sector strategic plans;
  - Ensuring funding of NPoA activities and avoidance of huge funding gaps;
  - Provision of necessary legal mandate to NGC in order to monitor and follow up on the implementation of the NPoA; and
  - Development of a monitoring mechanism of expenditures related to the NPoA by the National Planning body and the Ministry of Finance.
15. In addition to the above, the report pointed out two critical insights for the sustainability of the APRM-NPoA: that it should be an integral part of national governance improvement and socio-economic developments, which can be formulated as follows:
- The NPoAs should exclusively contain governance projects and programmes, and not be a capital investment programme; and
  - The Poverty Reduction Strategies should be integrated into the APRM, rather than the other way round.
16. The APRM Strategic partners would like to table these two challenges as an overarching discussion point during the meeting, in particular in relation to the establishment of a common NPoA framework.

## **VI- Objective of the Expert Meeting**

17. The Expert Meeting comes at a vital time for the APRM process. It will provide a real opportunity for APRM experts to address the key challenges and suggest concrete tools and ways which will make the NPoA a credible and operational document for the national socio-economic development. The credibility and sustainability of the entire APRM process hinges on its full incorporation into the national planning system.
18. The primary objective of the Expert Meeting will be to share country experiences by evaluating the links between the NPOAs and the national development strategies; secondly, it will seek to analyze the costing process and national financing instruments particularly the budget and Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF); and, finally, it will validate the findings and recommendations of the Strategic Partners' Synthesis Report.

19. During the meeting, the participants will discuss how to (i) improve capacity for the costing of the NPoA, (ii) enhance coherence between the NPoA and strategic planning processes, (iii) reduce financing gaps; and (iv) improve Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) of the NPoA with particular emphasis on expenditure tracking.
20. The meeting will assist the APRM participating countries' as to how:
- *To better design the NPoA;*
  - *To better cost the NPoA;*
  - *To better Integrate the NPoA into MTEF, annual budgets and National Development Plans;*
  - *To better monitor and evaluate NPoA implementation; and*
  - *To better mobilize and fund the NPoA.*
21. In the context of high-donor dependency of most APRM participating countries, it is obvious that the success of the NPoA implementation depends on the coverage of the additional funds needed. In this regard, a special session will be organized focusing on how to mobilize resources and the funding gaps for the NPoA: domestic public and private or external resources? This is crucial for observing the overall NEPAD and APRM principles.

## **VII- Expected Outcomes**

22. Since the expert meeting will bring together key national stakeholders engaged in the designing, costing, implementation and monitoring of the NPoA, the organizers expect the following outcomes:
- Synthesis Report findings validated;
  - A standard framework for the integration of the NPOA into the National Development Plans established; and
  - Better organized APRM countries in mobilizing funds for the implementation of the NPoA.

## **VIII- Participants**

23. The Meeting will invite around 50-55 participants from the 14 countries that have completed the peer review process. They will mainly be represented by the following:
- National Governing Councils;
  - National Focal Points;
  - Ministry of Planning/Finance; and
  - Individual Resource Persons with experience in APRM-NPoA process.
24. Beside national stakeholders, APRM Strategic partners and the APRM Secretariat will attend the meeting.

## **IX- Format of the Expert Meeting**

25. The meeting will be fully participatory in order to allow interactive dialogue, case studies, presentations by national experts, peer learning and sharing of best practices which will ensure knowledge sharing, a vital building block towards the effective designing, costing and implementation of the NPoA. Since this is a technical and a peer learning workshop, no resolutions or declarations are expected from this meeting.

## **X- Documentation**

26. The Summary of the Synthesis Report, together with the provisional agenda of the meeting as well as the Aide-Memoire, will be distributed and circulated prior to the meeting date and during the meeting. Other country case studies or resource documents will be widely distributed ahead of the meeting.

## **XI- Partnerships**

27. The Expert Meeting is being organized by the APRM Support Section of the Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP Regional Centre for Eastern and Southern Africa), in close collaboration with the African Development Bank (AfDB) and the Uganda APRM National Governing Council NGC-Uganda)

## **XII- Working language**

28. The Expert Meeting will be conducted in English and translation services into French will be provided.

## **XIII- Dates and Venue**

29. The Expert Meeting will be held from 29 to 30 September 2010 at the Imperial Royale Hotel, Kampala, Uganda.

## **XIV- Contacts**

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