



**UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA**

GOVERNANCE AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION DIVISION

**Training Workshop on “Enhancing the Role and Effective participation of
Parliamentarians in the APRM process.”**

12-14 November 2008
Dar es Salaam, Tanzania



Distr.: GENERAL

E/ECA/GPAD/APRM/Inf.1
November 2008

Original: **ENGLISH**

AIDE-MEMOIRE

I- Introduction and Background

Considered to be the most innovative and important element of African Union's NEPAD initiative, the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) was launched in March 2003 to address governance challenges facing Africa including systemic political rigidity characterized by executive dominance, political exclusion, especially in the executive and legislature, economic governance and conflicts, pointing to an urgent need to improve all aspects of good governance in the continent.

Thus, the primary purpose of the APRM is “to foster the adoption of policies, standards and practices that lead to political stability, high economic growth, sustainable development and accelerated sub-regional and continental economic integration.” The approach adopted to achieve this objective is through the sharing of experiences and reinforcement of successful best practice methods, including the identification of capacity deficits.

APRM is an instrument voluntarily acceded to by African states to assess the quality and status of governance in the participating countries. It is organized on a dual process of governance self-assessment by the participating countries and of external evaluation by the APR Panel culminating in a peer-review by the leaders of those countries.

Currently, 29 countries have acceded to the process¹ out of which only nine (9) have completed the peer review process. The slow progress of implementation of the process is due mainly to diverse challenges such as political, logistical, capacities of stakeholders, lack of information and knowledge of the process of relevant stakeholders.

II- Context- The Role of Parliamentarians in the APRM Process

The APRM is the first of its kind in the world. It takes a comprehensive view of peer review of all the aspects of a country's governance system. As an instrument for building broad-based consensus on the challenges of national development, the success of the APRM depends on the extent to which full participation in the process by all the relevant stakeholders (CSOs, media, trade unions, parliaments, women groups etc.) is achieved.

To that end, the process requires in particular the participation of parliaments, which are key institutions of democracy. The APRM's guidelines require that Parliaments should play a key role in the APRM as stakeholders in governance and development, and should form partnerships with civil society to improve its role both in the assessment and implementation phases of the APRM. However, due to the lack of regular consultations with civil society, the private sector and think tanks, parliaments have not been able to effectively assume this role. Despite their oversight role and other responsibilities, there is also limited consultation of parliaments by government ministries and agencies thus leaving them entirely out of the picture in the APRM self-assessment process.

¹ Algeria, Angola, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Djibouti, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mozambique, Nigeria, Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda and Zambia

Given their position within the political sphere, parliamentarians through their functions have the potentials to speed up and ensure successful implementation of the process at the national level. However, while APRM pioneers attempted to involve parliamentarians in their peer review exercises, the legislature appeared weak particularly in terms of participation and capacity to perform the mandated functions. They seemed to lack adequate information and unaware of the potential opportunities for involvement at all stages of the peer review process.

Recognizing that most African parliaments lack the needed technical capacity to effectively participate in the process, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), in collaboration with the UNDP Office in Tanzania and the Pan-African Parliament is organizing a training workshop on **“Enhancing the Role and Effective participation of Parliamentarians in the APRM process”**.

III- Scope and Objectives of the training

The overall objective of the training workshop is to enhance the participation and effectiveness of Parliamentarians in the APRM process in participating countries. By so doing, the Parliamentarians would be capacitated to oversee the implementation of the National Plan of Action (NPoA) in their respective countries.

The training will give an in-depth understanding of the rationale, structure, processes and expectations of their role in the APRM. The training will provide valuable learning opportunities for exchange of views, sharing country specific experiences and peer learning among Parliamentarians from both pioneer and newly acceded countries. It will also emphasize the need to build coalitions between Parliamentarians and civil society organizations to improve the level of citizen engagement in the APRM as a whole.

As such, the purposes of the training workshop are as follows:

- To define the role of Parliament and its structures in the self-assessment, review and implementation phases of the process;
 - To inform and empower MPs to ensure that the process would be credible and transparent;
 - To enhance the quality of National Country Reviews by incorporating the inputs of Parliamentarians in the national self assessment report;
 - To strengthen the relationship between MPs and their constituencies, using the APRM consultation process as a vehicle of outreach;
 - To highlight its role in the formulation, validation and implementation of National Programme of Actions; and
 - Establish MPs networks among Parliamentarians from APRM participating countries with a view of improving the continental oversight of the process through the Pan-African Parliament
-

IV- Contents of the Training Program

The Parliamentarians will benefit from expert knowledge, peer dialogue and exchange of experiences. In this context the training will try to answer to the following questions:

1. What is the role of Parliamentarians as articulated in the APRM base documents?
2. How can the APRM process, through a country self-assessment and NPoA implementation, assist Parliamentarians in better understanding their role within the governance system?
3. How can the oversight role of MPs be reconciled with the participatory role of the institution in the APRM process? In other words, is the legislature both a change agent and a stakeholder in the governance system of country in the context of the APRM?
4. Do the lack of resources and sufficient access to information - affect parliamentarians' role in the APRM process?
5. To what extent did the APRM National Governing Council facilitate the involvement of Parliamentarians in the pioneer countries and what lessons can be learned from them?

V- Format of the training

The training will be organized as a workshop using both plenary and breakout working group sessions. The plenary sessions will afford opportunity for expert presentations to be discussed and lessons learned. While, the breakout sessions will encourage peer learning and sharing and provide more in-depth analysis of some particular thematic issues. A write of the conference proceedings would be used as a manual/module for future training.

To that end, a combination of methods will be used as follows:

- Brainstorming/exchange/dialogue
- Formal Presentations by experts
- Working Group Exercises
- Case studies/Country examples

VI- Target Group and beneficiary countries

The primary target group of this training is Parliamentarians from the English speaking APRM participating countries. To date, Fourteen (14) English-speaking countries² acceded to the process. The total size of the target group is estimated at a maximum of 45 participants: parliamentarians, parliamentary staff, representatives of Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and ECA East and Southern Africa Offices.

² Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia

VII- Expected outcomes

The main expected outcomes of the training workshop are:

1. Enhanced capacity of the trainees MPs to participate effectively in APRM process at the national level so as to promote transparency and credibility, and;
2. Improved capacity of the MPs to oversight the implementation of the National Programme of Action.

VIII- Documentation

The provisional agenda for the meeting, together with the Aide-Memoire, will be circulated under the reference number: E/ECA/APRM.1/Inf.1 prior to the workshop date.

As background documents ECA will distribute APRM guidelines and basic documents of the APRM process. All workshop documents and the Workshop news will be available on the following site: <http://www.uneca.org/aprm>

IX- Working language

The meeting will be conducted in English and no translation service will be provided.

X- Visas

For those countries in which there is no Tanzanian diplomatic mission, a visa can be obtained upon arrival at the airport. UNDP Tanzania will assist participants in obtaining a visa upon arrival, *subject to prior submission of complete passport details and flight information to the Secretariats (ECA and UNDP Tanzania) by e-mail or fax. Participants should request visa assistance from UNDP Tanzania well in advance, as it will take at least two weeks to process visa applications and obtain approval from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Immigration Authorities. A fee of US\$50 is required.* Participants are advised to carry their letter of invitation with them as this document is needed when facilitating visas on arrival at Dar es Salaam International Airport.

XI- Date and Venue

The training will be held from 12 to 14 November 2008 in **Oceanic Bay Hotel** in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

XII- Contacts

Mr. Kojo Busia
Chief, APRM Support Unit
Governance and Public Administration Division (GPAD)
United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA)
P.O. Box 3005
Tel: +251 11 5 44 54 39
Fax: +251 11 5 51 19 53/55 41
E-mail: kbusia@uneca.org

Ms. Hodane Youssouf
Development Management Officer
APRM Support Unit
Governance and Public Administration Division (GPAD)
United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA)
P.O. Box 3005, Room No. 7S04
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Tel: +251 11 5 44 5245 (Ext. 35245)
Fax: +251 11 5 51 19 53/55 41
E-mail: hyoussouf@uneca.org
