



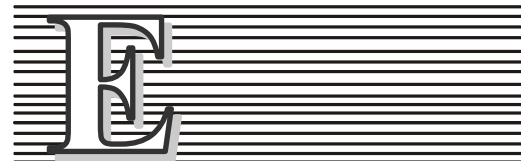
Economic Commission for Africa

# Report of the Third Meeting of the Committee on Human Development and Civil Society

May 2005



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**ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA**

Third Meeting of the Committee on  
Human Development and Civil Society

4-6 May 2005

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

**REPORT**

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# Acronyms and Abbreviations

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| ADF               | African Development Forum   |
| AfDB              | African Development Bank  |
| AGR               | African Governance Report   |
| ANEEJ             | African Network for Environmental and Economic Justice                |
| APRM              | African Peer Review Mechanism   |
| AU                | African Union   |
| CCG               | Centre for Corporate Governance                                       |
| CHDCS             | Committee on Human Development and Civil Society                      |
| CSO               | Civil Society Organization  |
| DPMD              | Development Policy and Management Division                            |
| ECA               | Economic Commission for Africa  |
| HIPC <sub>s</sub> | Highly Indebted Poor Countries  |
| ICFTU-AFRO        | International Federation of Free Trade Unions-African Regional Office |
| IGOs              | Inter-governmental Organizations                                      |
| IHRHL             | Institute of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law                        |
| ILO               | International Labour Organization                                     |
| IMF               | International Monetary Fund   |
| MDGs              | Millennium Development Goals  |
| M&E               | Monitoring and Evaluation   |
| NGOs              | Non-governmental Organizations  |
| NMJD              | Network Movement for Justice and Development                          |
| OATUU             | Organization of African Trade Union Unity                             |
| ODED              | Organisation de défense de l'environnement et développement           |
| PAC               | Partnership Africa-Canada   |
| PoA               | Plan of Action  |
| PPPs              | Public-Private Partnerships   |
| PRSPs             | Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers                                     |
| UNEP              | United Nations Environment Programme                                  |
| UNFPA             | United Nations Population Fund  |
| UNMEE             | United Nations Mission for Ethiopia and Eritrea                       |
| WFP               | World Food Programme  |
| WHO               | World Health Organization   |



## A. Introduction

1. The third meeting of the Committee on Human Development and Civil Society (CHDCS) was held in the United Nations Conference Centre in Addis Ababa, from 4 to 6 May 2005. The meeting, organized by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) was under the theme “Participation and Partnerships for Improving Development and Governance in Africa.”

2. The overall objective of the meeting was to find ways and means of strengthening participation and partnerships in development and governance processes with a view to enhance public transparency, strengthen external checks and balances on government and to improve efficiency and accountability in public service delivery. Particular emphasis was placed on scaling-up participation as an important strategy for ensuring a responsive national budgeting process, the provision of social services with focus on water and sanitation and effective stakeholder participation in the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) process.

### Participation

3. The meeting was attended by representatives of the following member States: Algeria, Angola, Burundi, Cameroon, Chad, Côte d’Ivoire, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Lesotho, Morocco, Mauritania, Namibia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Tunisia, Uganda and Zambia.

4. The following civil society organizations (CSOs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs), inter-governmental organizations (IGOs), religious organizations and private sector representatives also participated in the meeting: African Network for Environment and Economic Justice (ANEEJ), Barloworld Investments Namibia, Centre for Corporate Governance (CCG), Centre for Diplomatic Studies, Consumer International Africa Office, CIVA Innovation Management (CIM), International Confederation of Free Trade Union-African Regional Organization (ICFTU-AFRO), Institute of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law (IHRHL), Network Movement for Justice and Development (NMJD), Organisation de défense de l’environnement et développement (ODED), Organization of African Trade Union Unity (OATUU), Partnership Africa-Canada (PAC), Statoil ASA (Norway), Water Aid, and Zambia Investment Centre.

5. Representatives of the following international organizations also participated in the meeting: African Development Bank (AfDB), the Commission of the African Union (AU), International Labour Organization (ILO), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA), United Nations Mission for Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), World Bank, World Food Programme (WFP), and World Health Organization (WHO).

## B. Election of the Bureau, Adoption of the Agenda and Organization of Work

6. The Committee elected the following Bureau:

|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| Chairperson:             | Government (Côte d'Ivoire)                       |
| First Vice-Chairperson:  | Government (Zambia)                              |
| Second Vice-Chairperson: | Private Sector (Centre for Corporate Governance) |
| Third Vice-Chairperson:  | CSO (Consumer International – Africa Office)     |
| Rapporteur:              | CSO (Africa Institute for Corporate Citizenship) |

7. The meeting adopted the Agenda without amendments (see Annex I).

## C. Account of Proceedings

### Opening of the Meeting

8. The opening statements were delivered by H. E. Hassen Abdella, Minister of Labour and Social Affairs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and by Emile Ogwimba, a representative of the Commission of the African Union (AU). Mr. K.Y. Amoako, Executive Secretary of ECA, delivered a keynote address. The statement of the outgoing Chairperson was made available to the participants.

9. In his opening statement, H. E. Mr. Hassen Abdella, Minister of Labour and Social Affairs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, indicated that full participation by all citizens in socio-economic and political policy-making institutions and mechanisms that link human and financial resources and government was considered key to building and sustaining democracies, reducing conflict, and achieving human development and social equity. People's participation in policy-making leads to greater accountability, openness and transparency and builds up social reciprocities characterized by equity, inter-group tolerance, as well as inclusive, responsible and active citizenship. He stressed that bringing all stakeholders together to find common positions on how to scale-up participation and partnerships to effectively combine the resources of the private sector, the political capital of government and the goodwill of civil society was good for responding to the many development challenges facing Africa including those posed by globalization.

10. In concluding, the Minister reiterated the importance of participation of citizens in the national budget process, especially with respect to addressing the specific needs of the majority of Africa's population, who happen to be poor. An effective participatory approach would allow ordinary people to constantly interface with the government at both local and central levels on various matters. He expressed confidence that the meeting will come up with appropriate recommendations to ensure that governments allow all citizens to participate and articulate their needs in the formulation of such a vital policy instrument that will improve their social welfare and well being. He finally declared the Third meeting of the Committee on Human Development and Civil Society officially open.

11. Ambassador Emile Ogwimba, Director, Department of Political Affairs of the AU in his statement delivered on behalf of the Chairperson of the Commission, H.E. Alpha O. Konare, expressed the sincere apologies of the Chairperson for not being able to attend the meeting due to previous commitments. He informed the participants on the efforts made by the AU in assisting member States in their fight to promote good governance, the rule of law and respect for human rights. All these aspects were essential for promoting the sustainable economic and human development of the continent.

12. He noted with pleasure how the concept of civil society and its potential for contributing to Africa's development has rapidly and progressively achieved prominence in political and developmental discourse, particularly with respect to successive waves of democratization in African countries. With the advent of democratic regimes there was a growing interest for citizens to participate in economic, political and social decision-making processes. Interest in participation was particularly manifested in the process of planning, decision-making, implementation and assessment of public policies towards the attainment of sustainable development.

13. In conclusion, the representative of the African Union expressed AU's support and appreciation to ECA and the members of the Committee on Human Development and Civil Society (CHDCS) for their efforts and initiatives towards improving good governance, transparency and accountability for the well-being of the African people.

14. In delivering the Keynote address, Mr. K.Y. Amoako, Executive Secretary of ECA, highlighted the main objective of the meeting as enhancing dialogue on key issues related to the participation of stakeholders in addressing some of Africa's human development and governance challenges. The meeting gave special attention to actions required to strengthen the responses of governments on issues related to (1) participatory national budgeting, (2) the fostering of public-private partnerships for service delivery, and (3) recommending strategies for promoting effective stakeholder participation in the APRM.

15. Mr. Amoako further indicated that sustainable development critically depends on the existence of a vibrant and active citizenry and the private sector engaging with key decision-making forums and institutions as one of the principal means of influencing the development process. Despite this, partnership and participation often remained intermittent, ad-hoc and superficial whilst the understanding of how participation should be scaled-up and promoted across the dimensions of public policy formulation and implementation was still growing. Issues relating to the organizations, structures and processes suitable for participation, as well as critical capacity gaps also needed to be addressed more thoroughly to create a holistic, comprehensive, multi-sectoral and multi-player framework, including roles for the private sector, government, civil society and other stakeholders.

16. The Executive Secretary observed that the theme of the meeting, "Participation and Partnerships for Improving Development and Governance in Africa", aimed at addressing some of the most pressing challenges facing Africa. Expanding the political and civic space for popular engagement was indeed critical for deepening democracy and building the effective institutions that are required to adequately address the needs of the citizenry. The responsibility for expanding this space lies both with the State, which must protect political and civic freedoms, and with the stakeholders who have to seize and meaningfully engage in this space so as to invigorate the process.

17. In view of the above, the Executive Secretary noted that the national budget was one of the most important policy documents for governments and citizens as complex development challenges

are expressed in real budgetary terms and reveal a country's values and vision. In the realm of public service delivery, strategic partnerships need to be created between the public and the private sector, especially with regards to water and sanitation, where better performance in the supply, quality and effectiveness will have a major impact on poverty alleviation efforts. On the continental level, the APRM offers new opportunities for participation if governments genuinely encourage participation by civil society and other stakeholders in the process.

18. Finally, Mr. Amoako reminded participants of the fact that among other aspects, the meeting needed to revise the Committee's mandate and operational guidelines in light of new developments and particularly the changes taking place at ECA, which has shifted its programme focus quite significantly from development management to governance, as well as the changes taking place at member States level, in particular with respect to the adoption of NEPAD as a continent development framework. In this respect, Mr. Amoako indicated that the Committee's broad focus has made it difficult to identify appropriate host ministries in each country to follow up on the Committee's decisions. As a result, the institutional mechanisms for implementing the Committee's decisions at the national level are weak or nonexistent. Low attendance at meetings has further undermined the relevance of the Committee. Therefore, the Committee's operations should be re-examined with a view to making a proposal for it to become more relevant to present needs and realities and to settle on the most appropriate national government structure to serve as the host for the Committee's activities at the country level.

19. The statement of the Outgoing Chairperson was distributed to participants at the meeting. In the statement, the outgoing Chairperson reminded the participants about the main mission of the Committee, which was to help strengthen civil society and human development in Africa and to guide ECA activities. In this regard, and in his role as chair person of the Committee, he made some observations on the developments that have taken place during his Chairmanship and highlighted three key areas: the ongoing studies on monitoring progress towards good governance in Africa, soon to be published in the inaugural *African Governance Report* (AGR), the African Development Forum (ADF) particularly the pre-ADF symposium on Civil Society and Governance and the review of DPMD's work programme for the biennium 2006-2007. Accordingly, he recognized the importance of stakeholders' participation in the development process towards Africa's sustained growth. He especially underlined the need to prioritize and critically assess the operations of ECA in general, and DPMD by evaluating the activities and making appropriate recommendations for future actions. He spoke of the achievements and engagement of the Committee so far; he also highlighted the constraints and invited the Committee to examine some of the structural issues at hand.

20. Mr Amoako encouraged the Committee to be attentive and give proper consideration to the issues raised by the secretariat under the agenda items, the planned activities for the biennium 2006-2007 and address issues of low levels of participation at the meetings and the absence of national structures to follow up on the Committee's decisions at the country level. He finally expressed

sincere appreciation to the AU, AfDB, ECA and his Bureau members for their support and collaboration during his chairmanship and thanked the government of Ethiopia for its hospitality.

## Presentation of Background Papers [Agenda Item 4]

21. The first plenary session considered three background documents as follows:

### a. A Participatory Approach to National Budgeting

22. The Secretariat presented the document E/ECA/CHDCS.3/3 entitled “A Participatory Approach to National Budgeting: Some Key Principles and Lessons”.

23. The presentation identified elements of popular participation in the process of formulation, implementation and assessment of public policies at national and local levels, with particular emphasis on the national budgeting process. It emphasized that full participation by all citizens in socio-economic and political policy-making and in institutions and mechanisms that link human and financial resources and government was key to building and sustaining democracies, reducing conflict, and achieving human development and social equity. People’s participation in policy-making leads to greater accountability, openness and transparency and builds up social reciprocities characterized by equity, inter-group tolerance, as well as inclusive, responsible and active citizenship—all hallmarks of good governance.

24. It further indicated that donors, governments, NGOs and CSOs were increasingly adopting participatory approaches in assessing needs, implementing programmes and evaluating government policy impacts on development. As an alternative to top-down approaches, beneficiaries’ inputs at large offer an opportunity to get first-hand analyses of their priorities, constraints and opportunities. Participation in decision-making also provides concrete information on risk and vulnerability that is absent from much of the data on which policymaking is based.

25. The Secretariat acknowledged that increasingly, many countries have pursued new mechanisms to promote more direct citizen engagement in the process of governance, ranging from the creation of decentralized institutions to a wide variety of participatory and consultative processes in national and global policy deliberations. Major initiatives such as the enhanced highly indebted poor countries (HIPC) initiative, the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs), and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) have provided opportunities for partnerships that encourage greater stakeholder involvement in defining poverty reduction goals. Moreover, the ongoing debate on the need to engage stakeholders in decision-making processes has naturally raised the need to mainstream gender in economic policies and planning tools, contributing to a new emphasis on strengthening an understanding of macroeconomics from a gender perspective and promoting women’s participation in economic policy and decision-making.

26. In concluding the meeting, the importance of encouraging greater participation in decisions aimed at designing pro-poor activities was reiterated. This would also require governments to move away from traditional, centrally managed, closed budgetary processes, which usually concentrate on fiscal restraint, towards more equitable policy choices and ways to effectively raise resources and use them in a transparent manner. Participatory budgeting processes help promote effective use of public resources, deter corrupt practices and achieve more sustainable outcomes.

#### **b. Public-Private Partnership for Social Services Delivery: Water and Sanitation**

27. The meeting considered the document E/ECA/CHDCS.3/4, entitled “Public-private Partnerships (PPPs) for Service Delivery: Water and Sanitation”.

28. In presenting the document, a representative of the Secretariat indicated that effective partnership in the delivery of public services, especially water and sanitation was central to achieving MDGs in most African countries. He pointed out that the widespread and monopolistic dominance of the state in the provision of water and sanitation services in most African countries has contributed to the inefficiency and poor state of these services. Against this backdrop and the challenges presented ahead in their endeavour to meet the MDGs, governments have been under continuous pressure to consider alternative methods of water infrastructure and service provision through collaborative approaches involving, in some cases, local communities and/or building partnerships with the private sector. The rationale behind involving the private sector is to avoid the political pitfalls of full privatization, utilize new technology and expertise brought by private actors, share risks and gain access to increased capital to improve operating efficiency, and ultimately, make the sector more responsive to consumer needs.

29. The Secretariat highlighted the recent initiatives of the governments of Senegal, Ghana and Lesotho to undertake a series of successful reform programmes and pilot projects aimed at developing sustainable PPPs in water supply and sanitation services. The implementation of these programmes resulted in the following achievements:

- More water for more people (with annual raise of water production of 19 per cent in Senegal);
- Better financial sustainability for the private enterprises involved (SONES in Senegal);
- More equitable tariff systems that protect consumers and ensure adequate cost recovery;
- Better targeted subsidies schemes for poor consumers; and
- Drastic increase of coverage in water and sanitation in urban and rural areas. (The rural water coverage, for example, increased from 30 per cent in 1990 to 41 per cent in 2000 in Ghana, and sanitation coverage in Lesotho has risen from 15 per cent to more than 50 per cent in rural areas in 20 years.)

30. In conclusion, the Secretariat observed that making water services accessible in most African countries should not only be considered as a target of the MDGs, but also as a core responsibility of both national and local governments, to satisfy the legitimate rights of all citizens. Specific national policy measures towards these objectives should include:

- Strong political commitment from government to promote water supply and sanitation;
- Formulation of clear legal and regulatory systems that will give guidance and confidence to all partners especially, to private operators;
- Adequate institutional reforms especially aimed at decentralizing authority over water supply services and operational responsibilities from national to local government and communities;
- Adoption of appropriate PPPs contractual arrangements that are compatible with their socioeconomic constraints and objectives and address the specific needs of poor consumers; and
- Tariff levels and structures that helps all consumers, including those with low-incomes, by selecting judicious pricing systems.

### **c. Strategies for Promoting Effective Stakeholders Participation in the APRM**

31. The Secretariat presented the document E/ECA/CHDCS.3/5, entitled “Strategies for Promoting Effective Stakeholder Participation in the African Peer Review Mechanism”.

32. The APRM, in comparison with previous attempts aimed at creating participatory structures for including civil society in the African development process, was the first systematic continental framework for participation representing an additional accountability structure to representative democracy. Whilst formal structures of accountability are often associated with the political regime in power, the peer review has the potential to extend and deepen the public debate on national policy issues, thereby representing an opportunity for civil society to move from a position of confrontation to collaboration. Through the conduct of “shadow reviews”, civil society has the opportunity to act as an independent, competent and responsible player in the APRM process.

33. The most common criticism of the APRM process has been the lack of adequate consultation with domestic constituencies and the top-down approach taken by governments. Indeed, without adequate mechanisms to enhance participation, the peer review will fail to achieve its ambitious aim of engendering participatory democracy. There are five main levels or entry points for public participation in the APRM process, each requiring proactive strategies on behalf of the government to fully incorporate the voices of stakeholders: the inclusion of civil society in the institutional structures that are overseeing the APRM process; broad participation in drafting the Programme of Action (PoA); broad consultations during the country review stage; a final review of the report when tabled by the Heads of States Forum; and the monitoring and evaluation of the reforms recommended by the PoA. Civil society, on the other hand, must plan and strategize its responses to

the openings that the APRM offers in terms of adding value to the process in the areas of analytical skills, advocacy, civic education and mobilization of the public opinion. The best strategic approach for civil society is to constructively engage the government and public through sound research, dissemination and sensitization, advocacy, lobbying, and by monitoring and evaluating the APRM at every stage of the process.

34. The APRM was officially launched in 2003 and was open to all 53 members of the African Union. Although only 24 countries have signed up so far, four countries are currently being reviewed (Ghana, Kenya, Rwanda and Mauritius). The APRM is essentially a framework for systematic review of State performance by other states. Although the responsibility lies ultimately with elected African leaders, the process is expected to enhance accountability and transparency in the decision-making process and build trust in the pursuit of national development goals.

35. The Secretariat pointed out some key best practice areas for effective stakeholder engagement with the APRM. These included:

- Political commitment demonstrated by the government, which has to clearly affirm its belief and vision of fostering good governance;
- The management and leadership structures which have to be independent from political or other interferences;
- Education and sensitization of the public as key to a successful implementation of the APRM; and
- The strategic sequencing of each step of the process, promoting an early engagement of the public to demystify the NEPAD and APRM processes.

36. The Secretariat finally called upon the participants to take stock and examine the experiences of the countries already undergoing APRM in order to analyze the challenges to effective participation and make recommendations for countries embarking on the process.

## General Discussions on Background Papers [Agenda Item 5]

37. In the discussions that followed the above three presentations, the issues covered are summarised as follows:

### a. A Participatory Approach to National Budgeting

38. With respect to the above topic, participants made interventions and comments pertinent to the issues raised by the ECA secretariat during the presentation. These interventions included requests for clarification, observations and contributions towards the presentation and paper submitted prior to the meeting. The meeting agreed that citizens' participation not only in the

budget process, but also in all public investments, fiscal policy, trade, and other issues, was vital to achieving an equitable allocation of Africa's scarce resources and that participation is one of the fundamentals of democracy. Thus, a participatory approach to budgeting and development in general constitutes one of the key ingredients of good governance. However, the meeting acknowledged the fact that it was sometimes difficult to ascertain the representativeness of CSOs to be included in general policy debates, given their number, expertise and particular interest. The meeting observed that the planning and development of the budget was only one aspect of the budgetary process, which further includes the budget execution, monitoring and implementation, which must also involve CSOs. Given the divergent interests and motivations of donors, along with the concerns raised on the involvement of donors in the budget process, the meeting cautioned against the inclusion of donors as participants in the budgetary process.

39. The meeting expressed concerns about effective methods to aid CSOs participation in the national budget process, particularly when some local governments and communities were already involved and providing their input into the national budget. With regard to this, the possibility of forming district oversight committees was put forward as a means to facilitate CSOs participation and avoid budgetary matters being exclusively planned from the capital.

40. Participants were concerned about the term "national budget" in view of the fact that there were various forms of budget (state budget, economic budget and investment budget) and suggested that state budget should be the domain of government institutions and organs, whilst the public or economic budget should be more open to scrutiny and participation by other stakeholders, including the CSOs. The meeting also noted that the legitimacy of CSOs needed to be established prior to engaging them in the budgeting process.

41. The meeting acknowledged the fact that the Executive and Legislators still largely determine the budget, with little input from other stakeholders. Some countries had undertaken comprehensive reforms, introducing stringent performance indicators and a results-based approach to budgeting. Other measures undertaken by some countries included the obligation to publish all relevant documents regarding budget performance and execution, as well as the overall state of financial and economic affairs of the country. Some have even gone further and introduce a gender-based budgeting approach with the support of United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM). The meeting was informed about the efforts of some countries in tailoring their budgets according to the needs of the people and focusing on achieving MDGs. The private sector in particular, is becoming much more involved in shaping the budget as governments recognize its importance in contributing to the country's economy, whilst the private sector realizes that government budget has a major impact on their affairs. Governments are also seeking input from other stakeholders and the public at large through the media and other channels to ensure that public needs are met.

42. In response to the above concerns, the Secretariat emphasized the importance of having an appropriate legal framework for CSOs to enable them to effectively participate in national policy debates. Hence, a Freedom of Information Act is critical for CSOs to operate freely and access the necessary information to meaningfully contribute in the budgeting process without fear of prosecution or other recriminations. The Secretariat further explained that CSOs needed to ‘earn’ their participation through credible research and the publication of their budget analyses. This way, governments could not ignore CSOs and would ultimately have to act. On training issues and the demystification of the budget, the presenter suggested that leaflets or pamphlets should be published during and after the budget preparation and straight after the budget speech in parliament, written in simple language, accessible to all citizens, explaining the budget process and the meaning of allocations made. Considering the critical role of parliament in the budget process, parliamentarians should become more involved in the budgetary process at all levels, so as to be able to give meaningful input into the process. This way, government would open the democratic political space to ensure that budget decisions are based on a representative, bottom-up decision-making process, incorporating the views of citizens and constituencies as voiced by their representatives in parliament.

43. In addition, the Committee suggested that the CSOs themselves should be organized into specific groups. The criterion could be to request the appropriate syndicate to participate according to their national importance/coverage, by specific interest, or by their respective expertise. The experience of Senegal was presented, where most CSOs are syndicating to form stronger groups that are able to sign agreements with the government and receive subsidies and, by implication, be considered as effective partners in all public policy debates. Furthermore, the meeting gave suggestions on how governments could ensure that CSOs broadly represent citizens’ voices by registering those that conform to a number of criteria, including membership, geographic representation, structure and codes of conduct. Adopting federal structures in particular, would be especially helpful in ensuring an appropriate geographic representation whilst still enabling CSOs to speak with ‘one voice’. In this respect, the meeting encouraged all leaders and governments to adopt participatory budgeting as an acceptable mechanism in formulating national budgets.

#### **b. PPPs for Social Services Delivery: Water and Sanitation**

44. The discussion that ensued from the above presentation stressed the relevant experiences, and contributions of various countries. Some of the points raised during this meeting have been briefly summarized below.

45. Participants pointed out several reforms undertaken to make water and sanitation available to the population. In most successful cases, water policy has been adopted, a code of water established, a financially independent administrative body has been developed to oversee service delivery, and the extension of water to rural and urban areas has been achieved.

Mauritania was a case in point.

46. Participants focused on the involvement of the private providers in the water and sanitation sector. Since the private sector needs to recoup the money invested, higher tariffs often result and could, therefore, limit the access to water and sanitation facilities for poor people in rural and urban areas. The outstanding dilemma is to find the balance between the necessary involvement and profitability for the private sector and the access and affordability to allow the general population to benefit from the services.

47. Delegates stressed the importance of including all the different actors in PPPs. Some countries have not sufficiently facilitated the involvement of civil society. Accordingly, subsequent state reforms should prioritize inclusive regulatory frameworks. With the move from state monopolies to private ones, strong, open and transparent regulatory frameworks and institutions are vital and indispensable for effective PPPs.

48. The meeting focused on the accessibility of water for irrigation as an important tool for farmers to develop agriculture and fight poverty and hunger. Unfortunately, this technology is expensive and limited to rich farmers. It was suggested that ECA should explore the possibility to popularize PPPs and other initiatives to broaden access to irrigation technologies.

49. Participants underscored that some governments have strengthened NGOs' roles by providing support to them to enable their participation in various social programmes. Also, frameworks have been put in place to expand water provision through the creation of specialized institutions, building of dams and increased drilling systems.

### **c. Strategies for Promoting Effective Stakeholders Participation in the APRM**

50. In the discussions that followed the above presentation, the meeting was informed about the progress made by some countries with respect to poverty reduction on issues of good governance. Particular emphasis was placed on the issues of proper management and allocation of oil resources. In addition, the meeting noted that although Mauritania has not yet signed up to the APRM process, it was, however, involving all stakeholders in the national debates. While the meeting agreed on the fact that APRM should remain a voluntary mechanism that countries could freely adhere to, it questioned why only 24 countries have subscribed to it so far, and only four countries were on the evaluation process. The fact that the major countries, (referred to as "God-fathers") at the forefront of the NEPAD initiative have not yet carried out the APRM exercise has left many doubts. The delegate also noted that the subregional dimension of APRM is not fully explored in the APRM process. In this respect the meeting suggested that a subregional approach led by subregional organizations needed to be brought into the process in order for it to be more effective.

51. The meeting expressed concerns about why the AU was not undertaking some activities towards encouraging countries to accede to APRM. The meeting further noted that although the

APRM was a self-assessment instrument, there was a need to reinforce monitoring and follow up mechanisms to ensure that the recommendations that result from APRM exercises are properly implemented at both the country and continental levels.

52. The meeting observed that APRM was an indigenous initiative and was not expected to be an instrument of coercion of participating states. Although the voluntary accession principle was not an ideal means of encouraging countries to adhere to the mechanism, it underscored the importance of countries' ownership of the process. The meeting, while highlighting the pivotal role CSOs could play in the mobilization and sensitization campaigns through various channels, expressed concerns about the low level of awareness that existed among African citizens about the APRM process. It recommended more awareness campaigns and popularization through the media in order to improve understanding of the APRM.

53. In line with the AU position on the unconditional cancellation of Africa's debt, the meeting suggested that the results from the APRM could be used as one of the negotiation instrument for discussing debt cancellation.

54. The delegates expressed concern about the slow pace of the APRM process, which was attributed to the unfamiliarity of many countries with the processes and mechanisms of APRM, plus the fact that some countries were undergoing political reforms. In this respect, the meeting suggested that countries needed to take time to become familiarized with the mechanisms so as to enable them to be fully informed when they undertook the process.

55. The meeting noted the voluntary nature of the initiative and that the spirit of the exercise is to share experience and learn from each other rather than to penalize a country because it falls short of the accepted norms. What made the APRM unique was that it is an African initiative designed and implemented by Africans for Africans. The meeting was also informed that both Nigeria and South Africa have acceded to take part in the second round of the APRM exercise. However, the issue of them failing to lead the process has raised questions in some quarters.

56. With regard to the monitoring mechanism, the Secretariat further informed the participants that the APRM built mechanisms to put pressure on governments to live up to the commitments they have made. There were several levels of monitoring the implementation of the recommendation. These included:

- At the continental level: the results of APRM are forwarded to the Head of States Forum where they are reviewed and then presented to the Head of Government;
- At the national level: if all stakeholders participated in designing the plan of action, constituents would eventually demand that the recommendations be implemented and react through elections; and

- At the donors level: donors have considerable interest in the results of the review, and also in supporting its implementation, both financially and technically.

## Parallel Working Groups [Agenda Item 6]

57. Two working groups were formed to discuss the issues and make recommendations for review and adoption in the plenary. They discussed the following sub-themes:

Group 1: A participatory approach to national budgeting.

Group 2: Public-private partnership for social services delivery in water and sanitation.

58. The meeting decided to have the topic of APRM discussed in a plenary session.

## Presentation of Group Reports [Agenda Item 7]

59. The issue of “Participatory Approach to National Budgeting”, was reviewed under the Chair of Morocco and Sierra Leone as the Rapporteur. The group discussed extensively on issues related to participatory approach to national budgeting as a means of improving the quality and impact of the budget on the lives of people. The discussion covered a number of issues that will encourage greater participation in the national budgeting process: the core principles that should underpin a participatory process; the framework for promoting the effective participation of CSOs and other interest groups in the national budgeting process; the inclusion of criteria that could be used to guide the selection of CSOs and aid participation in the process; the nature of scope, policies and strategies that would allow all stakeholders to take a more active role in public policy formulation (the decentralization, national dialogue forum, local committees, etc); and finally, some general policy guidelines were suggested for promoting a participatory budgeting process. The importance of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) as an essential part of the budgeting process was also underscored, along with suggestions on what could constitute an M&E programme.

60. The core principles, which are aimed at finding the most effective way to come up with a representative budget that meets the aspirations of the people through an inclusive approach, should include take into account the following points:

- Political commitment is a necessary condition to ensure participation;
- The participatory process should aim at demystifying the National budget to generate better understanding of the purpose of the budget, in order to facilitate wealth creation through efficient allocation and utilization of resources;

- The budget should be based on a framework that includes the national development strategies and priorities as contained in PRSPs, Vision Statements, MDGs and Medium-Term Plans;
- The budget should reflect the values of society and serve to address the needs and priorities of society;
- The state should guarantee the participation of CSOs in the national budgeting process through a legal, regulatory and institutional framework;
- Civil society should aim to overcome its diverse nature and focus on a common agenda or position, so as to have a strong voice to influence policy decisions;
- Participation is essential to ensure that the budget is readily acceptable to a wider population and represents the legitimate interest and concerns of the citizens; and
- Address the need for core groups arranged around major issues.

61. The factors that would enable CSOs and interest groups to participate effectively in the national budgeting process include issues such as:

- Empowering all major stakeholders through capacity building, including training and education in general economic issues aimed creating better understanding of the budget process and its purpose and for people to understand the involvement of government in the everyday life of its citizens;
- Promoting greater access to information through, for example, legislative measures mandating government authorities to provide salient information;
- Establishing a frameworks such as national development plans, PRSPs, etc that stipulate the priorities, development goals and aspirations of the people;
- National budgets should be linked to the framework;
- Structures should be put in place to ensure participation;
- CSOs should be encouraged to discuss the national budget and present their views to government; and
- The legal framework should open up the participatory process.

In the ideal situation, every citizen should be able to participate in the budgeting process. However, the impracticality of consulting with every citizen necessitates the need to limit consultation with legitimate representative groups. This being the case, CSOs should prepare through networking arrangements, better information, research, and through organizing and capacitating themselves to engage in the budget process. In this context, the government should also take responsibility to facilitate CSOs engagement in the process through consultation with localized focus groups, including vulnerable groups, youth and gender organizations and the physically challenged. Expertise should be based on the following principles:

- Participation should be enshrined in the constitution;
- CSOs should be organized into groups reflecting the diversity of interests;

- The participatory process should be based on constant consultation with focus groups, which should come to the table with their own ideas and competencies; and
- Legitimacy, representativeness, expertise and capacity to interpret the budget, conduct research, advocate and influence the process, and have substantial outreach

63. With regard to the policies and strategies aimed at enhancing the participation of stakeholders, the meeting recommended the need for:

- A strong political commitment to openness through consultation by sector ministries and the legislature;
- Democratization of the decision making process to allow for decentralization;
- An awareness of the importance of information sharing and discussions;
- A process of consultation to be defined;
- Improving the quality of the budget by making use of expertise within the sector ministries, capacity building and openness within the government system; and
- Improving the participation of the legislature in the budgetary process.

64. In line with the above, some general policy recommendations and guidelines to improve participation in the budgeting process included the following:

- Legislation promoting participation;
- Commitment to openness and inclusiveness;
- Building capacity of government, the legislature and CSOs to engage constructively;
- Coordination mechanisms at the level of CSOs;
- A Charter imposing codes of good practices;
- Public information units within Budget offices;
- Strengthening the relationship between legislature and CSOs through confidence-building so as to draw on the strength of each other and reinforce their alliance;
- Legislation to ensure that decisions are made at the lowest level through decentralization;
- Disaggregated budget to ensure greater understanding at various sector levels and interest groups;
- Mechanisms to hold Parliament accountable for budget performance; and
- The concept of the budget should include the revenue side and seek to involve the people.

65. In order to make the budget an efficient development instrument, it was considered necessary to establish performance indicators and M&E mechanisms as a requirement for assessing resource allocation, budget performance and enforce accountability. In this respect, suggestions to strengthen M&E included the need for:

- Long-term development plans within which output is targeted by year, spelling out the deliverable or tangible outputs expected each year;

- Yearly targets to be published to facilitate M&E;
- Shadow reviews by CSOs of the budget process instead of waiting for the authority;
- M&E to be included as part of the budget law;
- Capacity building and commitment for M&E by all concerned;
- Clearly defined roles for M&E, and allocated funds;
- An independent body to carry out M&E in an objective manner;
- M&E should not be on an ad-hoc basis but collectively within a development paradigm that has inbuilt monitorial performance indicators;
- The result of M&E process should be subjected to a public debate; and
- Empowerment of CSOs and parliamentarians in their oversight roles.

66. With respect to the discussion on “*Public-private Partnerships for Service Delivery: Water and Sanitation*”, in addition to the issues raised in the guides provided by the Secretariat, the group also considered other pertinent issues. Concerning the key aspects of the regulatory and policy framework for PPP, the following were considered as important:

- The regulatory framework should embrace all stakeholders and actors on whom policies and laws will impact, i.e. state, private sector, civil society and consumers. Among the stakeholders, Civil Society is seen as an essential actor to assist with informing policy makers of notions they may not be aware of, in short have a bottom to top effect. Furthermore, the legal framework should consider and examine the issue of “*paying for what you use*”, i.e. consumers should only pay for resources used in order to make the water available, which would include water mobilization, purification and distribution. In addition, the state should also ensure that the necessary steps are taken to make sure that the poorest of the poor have access to drinking water without charge;
- The regulatory body should be established from a cross-section of stakeholders to ensure its autonomy/independence and funding sources for the regulatory body should be independent of the state. The recruitment of experts to serve on the regulatory body was also seen as key to enhancing this autonomy. It was further suggested that the selection of knowledgeable and capable staff should be based on merit;
- Capacity building is essential for constructive debates. All parties should be well informed and capable of conducting assessment from their perspectives and the information at hand, and providing adequate conclusions which ensure that everyone’s’ best interests are taken into account;
- Emphasis should be on a strong State – which is able to create an environment through which all stakeholders’ interests are taken into account;
- The regulatory framework should also be able to address the water sector covering the following:

- (i) Drinking water;
- (ii) Electricity generation;
- (iii) Water conservation; and
- (iii) Water for purification used in the production process.

- It was noted, that irrigation was an important aspect in most countries that have a lot of water but are not utilizing it properly. There is need to give this issue priority and it would be valuable to have illustrations where irrigation has been used efficiently on a large scale to benefit citizens.

67. In order to have an effective and efficient partnership the following should be adopted as norms:

- Transparency in the operation of PPPs;
- Accountability to the community;
- Responsibility to all stakeholders;
- Financial viability i.e. long term partnerships;
- Research on water resource management in every country should be conducted to adequately size up the feasibility and adequacy of the supply of water and other resources;
- Balance of affordability i.e. interest of private sector and the consumer; and
- Quality control, i.e. safety of the water supply to consumers.

68. The Committee noted the need to approach PPP with pragmatism and in the process, secure the interest of the poor. In this area, the Committee made a number of policy recommendations as follows:

- Laws to be created under the regulatory framework should be clear and predictable to regulate water companies. The PPP process was seen to be complicated, sensitive and required political will;
- A stable and fair tariff system;
- An examination of the financial impact to the consumer should be undertaken, especially in relation to low-level income consumers. It was also agreed that each country should do a study to gauge whether PPPs would be an efficient and effective way to distribute water before proceeding;
- An examination the issue of ownership, i.e. the type of ownership should be a product of consultation and should not be conditionality for financing. In addition, the provision of water, particularly of planning and costs should be regulated by the state. The consensus was that the private sector intervention should come at the delivery and management level;
- Ensuring safety and fair distribution of water is paramount;
- The determination of private sector partner(s) should be subject to an open tender system;

- The community should be engaged at supply and maintenance level;
- The financial and economic status of a country is crucial in the process of water management and distribution, and the issue of whether a particular country possesses the necessary resources that guarantee the flow of water requires further debate;
- Water management is very crucial – the need for maintenance of water facilities and reduction of loss of water through evaporation and leakages when being distributed must be addressed;
- Conservation and development of water resources; and
- Agreements between the state and contractor(s) should include efficiency in water supply and distribution.

69. The group also discussed experiences from different African countries. For example, in Mauritania, Nigeria and Sudan, the governments are not encouraging privatization of water supply. In effect these governments fully maintain control over the water supply. There are current studies being undertaken to examine whether engaging the private sector at different levels of water distribution would be viable. In Tunisia and Côte d'Ivoire, PPPs are not only encouraged, but in operation, and in Tunisia effective PPP strategies include water purification and recycling programmes, which benefit the agriculture sector, industry, tourism, irrigation and other fields. Whereas in Sudan the factors that have hampered the effective distribution of water have been identified as those pertaining to limited infrastructure, lack of water management utilities and ineffective water management to undertake the distribution of water.

70. The group reiterated the importance of PPPs as a viable alternative but all due care and attention was necessary for an effective and efficient partnership. While it was generally agreed that the private sector could be allowed to take on more technical projects, it was further suggested that the known technical aspects should be left to the State. Finally, the group encouraged a closer look at PPPs to also include the community as potential PPP partners.

71. In conclusion, it was suggested that a strong state is required in order to carry out some of the policy recommendations highlighted above, and to ensure that these proposals or priorities are enforced. However, building a strong state requires human and financial capacity, technical expertise and infrastructure. In addition to building capacity, states should also encourage communities to maintain the water facilities at their disposal.

72. The Committee was invited to reflect on the APRM process based on the discussion guide provided, as a way of facilitating the dialogue on APRM and to provide suggestions for effective participation in the process. The Committee observed that APRM is not fully appreciated in many countries and this is cited as the reason why many countries have not signed up to APRM. It further identified a number of issues regarding ownership of the process, lack of understanding among the general population of what is expected from APRM and the limited participation of civil society in the process. In addressing these challenges, the Committee suggested that the APRM be popularized

at the country level and be marketed as a self-assessment of the actual governance situation and as a channel for improvement instead of an instrument of criticism.

73. With respect to the mechanisms for the effective coordination of all key stakeholders and their participation, the Committee underscored the need for the identification of key stakeholders in the APRM process and establishment of their interests, roles and commitment. Participants made recommendations for actions at the national level, which included the following:

- Governments need to provide space to allow full participation in the process with necessary capacity;
- Policy-makers should engage in public sensitization on APRM and illustrate the relation between good governance and poverty reduction;
- Mainstreaming at the local level and promoting ownership of the process so as not to be seen as externally driven;
- CSOs should proactively engage the process through advocacy and documentation of their work as a learning tool for all stakeholders;
- Government should contribute toward creating an enabling environment for CSOs to be effective partner in the APRM process;
- CSOs and government should form partnerships in order to ensure the success of the process;
- Governments should put in place the mechanisms for implementing APRM as provided by the APR guidelines Secretariat. Each country should design the mechanisms according to the local socio-political context. (The Kenya delegate highlighted the different processes and levels of engagement of APRM in his country);
- CSOs should overcome conspiracy theories and build trust with governments to enhance transparency and openness in the APRM process; and
- The establishment of a CSOs desk at APRM/NEPAD Secretariat to facilitate the participation of CSOs.

74. In the discussion concerning the major drawbacks of the APRM process, participants highlighted a number of reasons including the low sign-up by governments and a lack of awareness of the APRM process at the country level. This is further compounded by the Founding Fathers of NEPAD failing to give good examples by not leading the process; the problems associated with the principle of voluntary accession and AU not driving the process vigorously enough.

75. On the issue of what should be done to encourage countries to sign up to APRM, participants underscored the need for stakeholders to be informed and sensitized about the benefits of APRM as an important step for CSOs to lobby/pressure government to sign up to APRM.

## General Discussions on Group Presentations [Agenda Item 8]

76. In the discussions that followed the group presentations, participants made further amendments and observations to the group reports, which were incorporated in the final versions.

## Statutory and Organizational Issues [Agenda Item 9]

77. The Secretariat introduced document “E/ECA/CHDCS.3/6” on issues pertaining to the “Statutory and Organizational Matters” of the Committee on Human Development and Civil Society (CHDCS). The Secretariat highlighted the objectives and the mandate and new developments of the Committee, the initiative to establish the African Centre for Civil Society (ACCS). The main focus and thrust of the 2004-2005 and 2006-2007 work programmes respectively and some of the achievements recorded so far in the implementation of the 2004-2005 programme of work were provided as information.

78. The Secretariat underscored the importance of taking a fresh look at the mandate and operation of the Committee with a view to provide suggestions on making it more effective and relevant. The continuity of ACCS as an institutional framework for providing prominence and legitimacy to CSOs’ work in the region was also at stake and suggestions from the Committee would be considered helpful in deciding on how to proceed.

79. In the discussions that followed, it was widely agreed that ECA undertake a consultative study to appropriately look at the sustainability/longevity of the Committee and generally examine the fundamental challenges of its organization and operational modalities. The Plenary also agreed that the use of questionnaires will be constituted in the study to seek informed opinions of the various key government ministries of member States on matters of co-ordination, organization and focal points in their respective Countries.

80. One of the major constraints was the crosscutting nature of the Committee’s work and the difficulty of identifying the most suitable host ministry. The need to establish focal points in all member Countries was also identified as fundamental to the Committee’s effectiveness. As a result, the Plenary agreed that ECA consult with appropriate government ministries or sections to identify focal points within government structures. Participants agreed to contribute to this process by providing contact details of the ministries in their respective countries that deal with crosscutting issues and more specifically, governance, including the diplomatic channel through which to consult in the identification of focal points.

81. The plenary widely identified the issue of low attendance of the committee meetings and the reversal of this trend as one of the major challenges facing the ECA. It was stressed that this should

be given particular attention, including popularizing the work of the Committee through Embassies in Addis Ababa and by all other available means.

82. The continued relevance of the ACCS, whose specific mandate was to provide an institutional framework for addressing the various organizational, resource and capacity building needs of CSOs in their endeavours to play a key role in the development process, must be reviewed against the new developments within the AU and other regional initiatives. In this respect, the ECA was best placed to determine the this relevance in the context of its own stance on the role of CSOs and the best available options including institutions for providing support to CSOs. The plenary agreed that further mechanisms for addressing the above-outlined hurdles should be explored.

### **Adoption of the Report: [Agenda Item 10]**

83. The report was presented by the Rapporteur and adopted with minor amendments.

### **Any Other Business: [Agenda Item 11]**

84. In addressing the difficulties faced by the CHDCS, the newly elected Bureau indicated its desire to help find solutions. In this respect, members requested the Chairperson of the Bureau to write to Management outlining actions that it could explore to make the Committee functional as defined in the operational guidelines adopted at its inaugural meeting of 1999.

### **Closure of the Meeting: [Agenda Item 12]**

85. The Officer-in-Charge (OIC) of DPMD acknowledged with great appreciation the high level of interaction during the deliberations, which contributed to the successful outcome of the meeting. She ensured the participants that ECA will consider all the suggestions and recommendations made by the participants to improve its work in general, and that of the Committee, in particular. In concluding, the OIC thanked all ECA professional and support staff for their respective roles in organizing and servicing the meeting.

86. The delegate from Consumer International gave a vote of thanks on behalf of the participants. He expressed appreciation to the Government and the people of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia for the warm hospitality shown to the participants since their arrival in Addis Ababa. He thanked ECA in general and DPMD, in particular, for organizing the meeting, which enabled an exchange of views and experiences in addressing issues of such importance to the continent.

97. In closing the meeting, the Chairman conveyed his appreciation to the organizers and delegates to the meeting and urged all parties to continue working together for the benefit of Africa. He then declared the Third Meeting of the Committee on Human Development and Civil Society officially closed.



# ANNEX I

## Agenda

1. Registration of Participants
2. Opening Ceremony
3. Election of the Bureau, Adoption of the Agenda and Organization of Work
4. Presentation of Background Papers
5. General Discussions
6. Parallel Working Groups (Two Sessions)
7. Presentation of Working Groups' Reports
8. General Discussions
9. Organizational Matters
10. Adoption of The Report
11. Any Other Business
12. Closure of the Meeting



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