



United Nations  
Economic Commission for Africa  
(UNECA)



United Nations  
Development Programme  
(UNDP)

## **AIDE-MEMOIRE**

National APRM Workshop on

**“Harmonizing the Mauritius National Plan of Action (NPoA)  
with the existing development strategies and Medium Term  
Expenditure Framework (MTEF)”**

Port Louis, Mauritius

23-24 April 2012

## **I- CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND**

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 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.

As at January 2011, 30 of the African Union's member countries (55 per cent) had signed up to the APRM, while 25 had yet to accede. Thus more than half of Africa by country was participating in some form in the APRM process. These countries constitute about 75 per cent of Africa's population. 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. Several more formally acceded countries to the APRM process are at different stages of preparation for the country self assessment.

The 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.

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.

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

Key challenges relate to the NPoA formulation and implementation as follows:

- 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).

To help delve further into these findings, the UNECA designed a series of studies in Benin, Ghana, Rwanda and Uganda, to – inter alia - examine more closely how to harmonize the NPoA into the MTEF and existing national plans. Subsequently, in September 2010 an Experts' workshop was held in Kampala to review and validate a synthesis document produced, which highlighted the experience of the four countries selected for the UNECA studies: Benin, Ghana, Rwanda, and Uganda. The experts' workshop, which was attended by representatives from 16 countries, made a number of comments and recommendations in response to the synthesis report. Those comments and recommendations have been included in a framework document which provides guidelines for APRM participating countries on how to harmonize the NPoA with existing development strategies so as to ensure its implementation.

## **II- OBJECTIVE OF THE WORKSHOP**

Against this background, the strategic partners, ECA and UNDP agreed to carry out a national workshop on how APRM countries can harmonize the NPoA with existing development strategies and Medium Term Expenditure Frameworks (MTEF). The purpose of the training workshop is to provide participants with information about best practices and procedures that could form the core process for harmonizing the APRM -NPoAs with pre-existing national plans within the context of a common medium -term expenditure framework.

Specifically, the purpose of the training workshop is to prepare participants to ensure the development and implementation of coherent NPoAs and the existing national development strategy by:

- Gaining/enhancing familiarity with and understanding of the major concepts, issues and skills that are required in the design and implementation of the APRM-NPoAs
- Identifying the competencies for successful harmonization of NPoAs with existing development strategies based on the ECA/UNDP guidelines;
- Practicing lessons and best practices based on case studies;
- Acquiring strategies for the systematic collection of data, information and coordination of Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) in the formulation of the NPoA;

- Exploring guidelines for engaging special circumstances (e.g. funding gaps); and
- Identifying approaches to monitoring and evaluation suitable to the country's planning system.

### **III- EXPECTED OUTCOMES**

The workshop comes at a vital time for the APRM process. It will provide a real opportunity for APRM experts to learn from the experiences of their peers and address the key challenges and suggest concrete tools and ways which will make the NPoA a credible and operational document for the national socioeconomic development. The credibility and sustainability of the entire APRM process hinges on its full incorporation into the national planning system.

The workshop 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.

Since the workshop will bring together key national stakeholders engaged in the designing, costing, implementation and monitoring of the NPoA, the organizers expect the following outcomes:

- NPOA harmonization framework findings validated; and
- Better organized APRM countries in planning and implementing, as well as, mobilizing funds for the implementation of the NPoA.

### **IV- FORMAT OF THE WORKSHOP**

The workshop 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.

### **V- DOCUMENTATION**

The framework for harmonizing NPOAs with national development frameworks, together with the provisional agenda of the meeting as well as the Aide-Memoire, will be distributed and circulated.

## **VI- PARTNERSHIPS**

The Expert Meeting is being organized by the APRM Support Section of the Governance and Public Administration Division of the Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and the United Nations Development Program, in close collaboration with the host country, the Republic of Mauritius.

## **VII - CONTACTS**

Mr. Kojo Busia, Ph. D.  
Senior Development Management Officer  
Chief, APRM Support Section  
Governance and Public Administration Division (GPAD)  
United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA)  
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia  
Tel. 251-11-544-5439  
Fax. 251-11-551-1953/5541  
E-mail: kbusia@uneca.org

Ms. Zemenay Lakew  
Program Advisor, NEPAD/APRM  
UNDP Regional Centre for Eastern and Southern Africa  
Johannesburg, South Africa  
Tel. No. 27 11 603 5000  
E-mail: Zemenay.Lakew@undp.org

Ms. Constanze Westervoss  
Public Administration Officer  
APRM Support Section  
Governance and Public Administration Division (GPAD)  
United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA)  
P.O. Box 3005, Room 7N19  
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia  
Tel: +251-11-544-5446  
E-mail: cwestervoss@uneca.org