



Economic Commission for Africa

# The Role of Parliament in APRM

Information on how parliamentarians  
can participate in APRM

2011







Economic Commission for Africa  
Governance and Public Administration Division

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## Table of Contents

1.	Introduction .....	1
2.	The African Peer Review Mechanism .....	2
	2.1 APRM explained .....	2
	2.2 APRM structure .....	3
	2.3 Types of Peer Review .....	4
	2.4 Stages of the base review .....	5
	2.5 Stages of periodic review .....	7
3.	Role of Parliament in APRM.....	10
	3.1 Reasons for parliamentary involvement in APRM.....	10
	3.2 Overview of entry points for parliamentary involvement .	10
4.	Parliamentary Involvement in Preparatory Phase (Stage One)	12
5.	Parliamentary Involvement in Self-Assessment (Stage One) ...	16
6.	Parliamentary Involvement in Stages Two-Five .....	20
7.	Parliamentary Involvement in Monitoring and Evaluation of NPoA .....	22
8.	Contact and Further Information .....	24
	Annex I: APRM Participating Countries .....	25
	Annex II: APRM Cross-Cutting Issues .....	26



# 1. Introduction

This booklet has been designed by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) to provide Parliamentarians across African continent with information on the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) and to outline their role in it.

Parliaments and Parliamentarians alike are key stakeholders in APRM process. However, experience has shown that National Parliaments have had limited access to information on APRM and therefore have only been partly involved in the review process. Consequently, Parliaments have experienced difficulty in fulfilling one of their key roles during the process, i.e. assessing and validating the National Plan of Action.

Against this background, this booklet serves to inform Parliamentarians on the breath and scope of APRM. It helps to clarify the role of Parliament in the process and to provide basic guidelines and tools on how to effectively participate in APRM.

The booklet has been divided into different sections explaining the content of APRM; structure of APRM; types and stages of the peer review process; and the role of Parliament in APRM.



(From left) Prof. Hasa Mlawa, Chair of APRM Tanzania, H.E. Amb. Seif Idd, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Tanzania, Mr. Oscar Fernandez-Taranco, Resident Coordinator of the UNDP in Tanzania, Hon. Fred Jachan Omach, Uganda's Minister of State, Planning and Finance at the Parliamentarian training workshop in Bagamoyo, Tanzania, November 2008.

## 2. The African Peer Review Mechanism

### 2.1 APRM explained

The African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) is an instrument voluntarily acceded to by member States of the African Union as an African self-monitoring mechanism. Participation in the process is open to all member States of the African Union.

APRM functions by monitoring the progress of participating countries towards adopting and implementing NEPAD's priorities and programme on democracy and governance. Its mandate is to ensure that the policies and practices of participating countries conform to the values, codes and standards contained in the Declaration on Democracy, Political, Economic and Corporate Governance (2003).

When joining APRM, African countries are at different levels of development; it is with this in mind that each country is assessed (Peer Review) and a country Programme of Action is developed to ensure progress towards achieving agreed standards and goals.

APRM focuses on four thematic areas:

- **Democracy and Good Political Governance:** This theme focuses on the constitution of member States and analyses the constitution to find out if it reflects a democratic spirit; provides for accountable governance; promotes political representation, allowing all citizens to participate in the political process in a free and fair environment.
- **Economic Governance and Management:** This theme focuses on stimulating good economic governance, including transparency in financial management. This is considered a precondition for promoting economic growth and reducing poverty.
- **Corporate Governance:** This theme focuses on promoting ethical principles, values and practices that are in line with broader social and economic goals that benefit all citizens.



It serves to promote a sound framework for good corporate governance.

**Socio-Economic Development:** This theme focuses on promoting democracy, good governance, peace and security, as well as, the development of human and physical resources. This ultimately will support the poverty alleviation efforts undertaken by the Government.

## 2.2 APRM structure

### *At the Continental level:*

**Forum of Heads of State and Government:** This is the highest decision making body of the APRM. It is composed of the heads of state and government that have acceded to the APRM. The Forum conducts the external peer review process.

**Panel of Eminent Persons:** The Panel is composed of seven highly regarded persons who are dedicated to the ideals of the APRM. The Panel oversees the peer review process.

**The APRM Continental Secretariat:** The Continental Secretariat provides technical support to undertake the analytical work as part of the peer review process.

**Group of Independent Experts (Peer Review Team):** The group of independent experts is made up of 15 to 20 African experts and is headed by a member of the Forum and coordinated by the Continental Secretariat. The group is responsible for conducting the external country review.

**Partner Institutions:** The APRM has three technical partners that provide support services, advice and technical assistance. These are the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), the African Development Bank (AfDB), and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Experts from these institutions participate in country support and country review missions.

### *At the National level:*

**The APRM Focal Point:** The Focal Point acts as a liaison between the country and the Continental Secretariat.

**National Governing Council:** The National Governing Council is responsible for managing the APRM process at the country level. It is made up of representatives of the state, the private sector and civil society.

**Technical Research Institution:** Researchers and research institutions support the production of the Country Self-Assessment Report and the National Plan of Action.

## **2.3 Types of peer review**

APRM process consists of periodic reviews of policies and practices of member States. There are four different reviews that constitute the APRM:

- The first country review is the base review which is carried out within eighteen months of a country becoming a member of the APRM process. As African countries are at different stages of development, the purpose of the base review is to assess a country's progress towards achieving the agreed standards and goals;
- This is followed by a periodic review that takes place every two to four years. The purpose of periodic review is to assess progress made in the area of Governance and Socio-economic Development and to evaluate the impact of APRM in the country concerned;
- In addition to these, a member country can, on its own, ask for an ad hoc review which is not part of the periodically mandated reviews;
- Early signs of political or economic crisis in a member country would also be sufficient reason for undertaking a special review. Such a review can be called for by participating Heads of State and Government in a spirit of helpfulness to the Government concerned.

Since its inception in 2003, APRM has been fielding only base reviews. Some countries are due for periodic review and the APRM Secretariat is currently drafting the methodology for this exercise. In the following section, the stages of both the base review and periodic review are outlined.

## **2.4 Stages of the base review**

The base review consists of the following five stages:

### *Stage one: Preparation and Self-Assessment*

The first stage of the process entails initial negotiations with the Continental Secretariat on the country review mission that is soon to follow. The country signs a memorandum of understanding which sets out the scope of the review. Once the country is informed about the applicable guidelines, it appoints a national APRM Focal Point and a National Governing Council to drive the process, and develops its research and consultation programme.

Thereafter, the country conducts a self-assessment which involves a study of political, economic and corporate governance, and development environment of the country, based largely on up-to-date background documentation prepared by the APRM Secretariat and material provided by national, subregional, regional and international institutions.

This stage ends with the production of a country self-assessment report (CSAR) and a National Programme of Action (NPOA) based upon the recommendations of the self-assessment.

### *Stage two: External Country Review*

The Peer Review Team will visit the country and assess the integrity of the country self-assessment and hold in-depth consultations on the major governance issues with the Government, officials, political parties, Parliamentarians and representatives of civil society organizations (including the media, academia, trade unions, business and professional bodies).

### *Stage three: Preparation of Country Review Report*

Based on the information collected during the preliminary research, the review mission, the CSAR and the NPoA, the Continental Secretariat of the APRM and the Panel draw up the country review report. The draft report is first discussed with the Government concerned. The aim of this discussion is to ensure the accuracy of the information and to provide the Government with an opportunity to react to the findings and put forward its own views. The responses of the Government will be appended to the report but the content of the report remains unchanged.

### *Stage four: Submission of Country Review Report to the African Peer Review Forum*

The report is submitted to the Forum of Heads of State and Government of the APRM member States. It is at this stage that the real peer review begins. This peer review is based on a constructive dialogue that promotes learning, discussion and mutual enrichment through best practices. The report is considered and adopted by the Forum of Heads of State and Government.

### *Stage five: Presentation and Official Publication of the Report*

Within six months after the report has been considered by the Forum, it is formally and publicly presented to key regional and subregional structures such as the Pan-African Parliament, the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, the envisaged Peace and Security Council, and the Economic, Social and Cultural Council (ECOSOCC) of the African Union. The report is then made public.

## 2.5 Stages of periodic review

Periodic review consists of the following five stages<sup>1</sup>:

### *Stage one: Preparatory Phase*

The periodic review is initiated two to four years after a country has undergone the peer review process. As part of the preparatory phase, the country submits a progress report on the APRM process in the country, which also includes a consolidated report on progress in the implementation of NPOA.

At the continental level, the APRM Secretariat prepares a background report focusing on the implementation of the APRM process in the country. The two documents will feed into the issues paper which will guide the following review mission.

### *Stage two: Country Review Visit*

The Country Review Team will visit the country and focus the work on creating a deep and focussed understanding of key issues concerning Governance and Socio-economic Development. The Team will meet with different stakeholders responsible for APRM implementation, namely the Government Department responsible for APRM implementation, the APRM National Focal Point, the National Governing Council and other key persons/organizations identified in the issues paper. The mission concludes with a final validation workshop involving a broad variety of stakeholders including government officials, political parties, and members of Parliament and representatives of civil society

### *Stage three: Preparation of Country Review Report*

The Country Review Team will prepare the country review report under the guidance of the APR Panel. The country review report includes the main findings from the review mission and analyzes their implications for the country's governance and socio-economic development.

<sup>1</sup> The methodology for the periodic review is in draft form and can be subject to change APRM Secretariat, (2010). Draft methodology for periodic reviews in countries that have undergone the peer review process.

Furthermore, the report discusses recommendations of how the country's Programme of Action can be improved to accelerate the promotion of best practices and standards, and address more effectively the challenges identified during the Mission.

#### *Stage four: Adoption of the Report by APR Panel*

The APR Secretariat submits the draft country review report to the APR Panel. After approval, the report is sent to the government of the country for consideration. The government has an opportunity to react to the main findings in the report and to put forward the government's views on how to address the identified shortcomings, including modifying the draft NPoA, if necessary. The government's comments are appended to the APR Team's Report.

Thereafter, the country review report is presented to the Forum of Heads of State and Government where the actual peer review process will take place.

#### *Stage five: Public Release of APRM Country Review Report*

The final APRM report is published immediately after the peer review and then launched in the country reviewed. Thereafter, the final APRM report is formally and publicly presented to key regional and subregional structures such as the Summit of the African Union, the Pan-African Parliament, the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, the Peace and Security Council and the Economic, Social and Cultural Council (ECOSOC) of the African Union, as well as the Regional Economic Community of the region of which the country reviewed is a member.

Following this, the country will start the implementation of the NPoA. The country will also prepare annual progress reports on its implementation to the Forum until a new cycle of review takes place.



*(From left) Ms. Amessandra Tisot, Acting Res. Rep. of UNDP-Addis Ababa, Mr. Abdoulie Janneh, Under-Secretar-General and Executive Secretary of ECA, Hon. Mr. Laroussi Hammi, third Vic-President, Pan-African Parliament (PAP) at the Parliamentarian workshop held in Addis Ababa, May 2010.*

## **3. Role of Parliament in APRM**

### **3.1 Reasons for parliamentary involvement in APRM**

- Parliamentary involvement in APRM has been a weak aspect to date. Yet, it is Parliamentarians who are needed to participate in the process. Parliaments are critical in ensuring the success of APRM. They can influence government decisions and policies.
- Parliamentarians at the national, regional and continental levels owe their countries and African people the responsibility of exercising their role to facilitate public ownership of APRM. By participating in APRM process, Parliamentarians have the opportunity to improve governance and create a culture of accountability, ethics, inclusiveness, participation and transparency in public political life in Africa.
- Participation of Parliamentarians will ensure improved partnership and cooperation between citizens, civil society and Parliament.

### **3.2 Overview of entry points for parliamentary involvement**

The visual scheme in figure 1 demonstrates the various APRM stages and entry points for Parliamentary involvement during the base review. As can be seen in the scheme, a significant part of APRM process consists of the self-assessment at stage one. This stage consists of two phases, preparation and the actual self-assessment. Consequentially, the national Parliament is mainly involved in stage one, and to a lesser extent in the latter four stages of APRM.

The following chapter provides guidelines and tools on how Parliaments can effectively participate in APRM. As APRM has been fielding only base reviews, the chapter is focused on Parliamentary involvement in the base review. The guidelines and tools are based on a Workshop organized by UNECA, in collaboration with the United Nations Development



Programme (UNDP) Office in Tanzania and the Pan-African Parliament (PAP) Secretariat in South Africa, on the theme: Enhancing the Role and Effective Participation of Parliamentarians in APRM Process. The workshop was held in Bagamoyo, Tanzania, from 12 to 14 November 2008. In line with the recognition of the pressing need for more active engagement of African Parliamentarians in APRM, the Workshop produced the Bagamoyo Plan of Action for African Parliamentarians on APRM which charts a road map for action by African Parliaments and Parliamentarians, enabling them to transform themselves into drivers of democracy and good governance both in their countries and collectively at African regional and continental levels, as conceptualized and elaborated in APRM. The following chapter builds on the Bagamoyo Plan of Action and elaborates on the role and tasks of Parliament in the five stages of APRM base review.

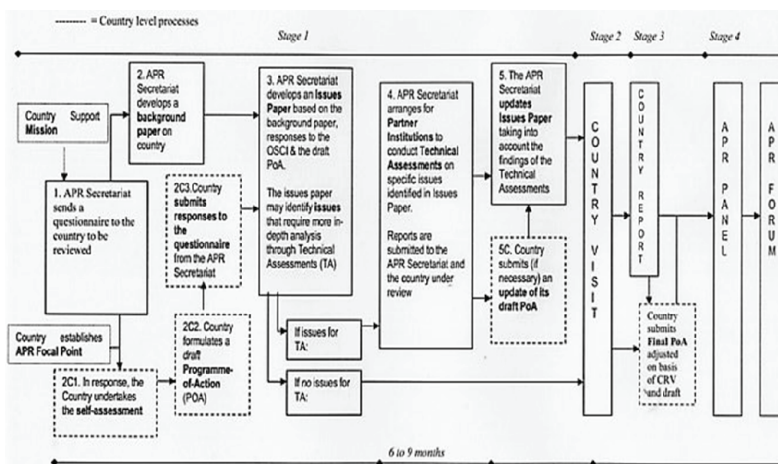


Figure 1: APR Processes

Source: NEPAD/APRM/Panel3/guidelines/11.2003/Doc8

## 4. Parliamentary Involvement in Preparatory Phase (Stage One)

### *Step 1: Collect and study information on APRM*

The first and foremost step Parliamentarians should take is to learn and understand more about the processes of APRM. There are various ways of doing this. One such way would be to visit websites that host comprehensive information on APRM. The content of relevant websites is incorporated in chapter eight of this pamphlet. Relevant information can also be obtained by contacting the APRM Secretariat or APRM support section hosted at the UNECA, details of which can also be found in chapter eight. Attending sensitization workshops on APRM can be another tool to understand and learn more about the process.

### *Step 2: Ensure sustainability of APRM country process by passing legislation and cultivating political support for the process*

Experience has shown that in some cases after a country has acceded to APRM, the actual self-assessment process does not commence. For various reasons, there is delay in the actual initiation of the APRM process. Parliament can ensure the start of APRM process by passing requisite legislation to give legal force to APRM country processes.

Another strategy is to associate APRM with political leadership or eminent political personalities. Cultivating political support at the highest levels of political actors in the state ensures sustainability of the country processes. Algeria's implementation of APRM is an example of this. The successful implementation of APRM was based on the political will shown by the head of state. APRM requires purposeful leadership as illustrated by the examples of the "Nyong'o and Machel factors" in Kenya; the "Rosario factor" in Mozambique; the "Mbeki factor" in South Africa; and the "Kagame factor" in Rwanda in moving the APR country processes in their respective countries forward. It is important for top political leadership to "buy into" APRM and the rest of society is likely to fall in line; enabling APRM to become part of a national culture.

***Step 3: Seek for equitable representation in the National Governing Council and have an active role in it***

The National Governing Council is responsible for managing APRM process at the country level. It is made up of representatives of the state, the private sector and civil society. The National Governing Council is an important actor in the APRM country process and presents a platform for influencing country processes. Parliamentarians should seek equitable representation in the Governing Council and play an active role in it. For example, the make-up of the National Governing Council in Uganda was as follows: nine from civil society; four from Government ministries; three from statutory bodies; one from the private sector; one from the trade unions; and three from Parliament, with the members/commissioners' electing their Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson. In Algeria, the National Governing Council included Parliamentarians from all parties, even the opposition. As the power and dominance of the executive are characteristic in most African states, Parliamentary representation in the National Governing Council is a good way to balance this and provide another platform for representing citizens' voices.

***Step 4: Request the National Governing Council to submit reports on its activities for Parliamentary consideration***

Parliamentarians should request the chairperson of the National Governing Council to submit regular reports to the national Parliament. In this way it is possible for the entire Parliament to remain updated on the APRM country processes.

***Step 5: Develop strategic partnerships with civil society***

National Parliament must develop strategic partnerships with civil society organizations. The technical expertise from civil society can strengthen Parliament's engagement in the country process. Furthermore, it can ensure and generate broad-based support for the process. In this regard, Parliament should look beyond engaging with solely formal NGOs and establish linkages with local charities, faith-based organizations, trade unions, social movements and ethnic associations. National Parliaments should develop a strategic partnership that is non-confrontational in

character. It is important to identify and complement the strength and advantages which civil society could bring to the process. Parliament should draw on its shared functional role with CSOs as interest lobbies that represent distinct needs/demands of their constituencies, and as watchdogs monitor the performance of the Executive and Government.

***Step 6: Organize and/or take part in sensitization (information) events on APRM***

Advocacy and disseminating activities are critical for the success of APRM. Advocacy and disseminating activities can take various forms. Information and sensitization campaigns with development partners can help create support and funding for APRM. Also, Parliamentarians can organize mass sensitization in rural communities. For example, individual MPs can engage in APRM advocacy and dissemination activities in their constituencies, and package popularized information in simplified language. By so doing, Parliamentarians can sensitize and mobilize their constituents to secure their input into and buy-in of APRM country process. A strategic collaboration with civil society organizations can assist with mobilizing community involvement in the processes at the constituency level. Additionally, stimulating media coverage and encouraging responsible journalism will help increase the dissemination of information on APRM at the grass-roots level.

Moreover, Parliamentarians can initiate sustained advocacy and support for APRM country processes by having debates on APRM. These Parliamentary sessions could be made general for the public and media so as to accelerate the dissemination of information on APRM to the wider public.

***Step 7: Establish a Parliamentary committee which is responsible for defining, overseeing and organizing engagement in APRM***

As the work of national Parliaments is comprehensive most of the detailed work of the legislature is often carried out by specialized committees. In this regard, Parliamentarians should try to create special or standing committees (not ad hoc) to oversee their engagement in APRM. A great institutional arrangement would be to create specific committees for each

of the four main topics covered in APRM respectively: Democracy and Good Political Governance; Economic Governance and Management; Corporate Governance; and Socio-Economic Development. Another arrangement could be to create a specific standing committee focusing on all the four thematic issues, or to host APRM within an already existing committee. The Parliamentary committee would specifically review the country report and the NPoA and report to back to Parliament in plenary for debate and adoption.

In the case of South Africa, Joint Ad Hoc Committees were set up for all the four APRM thematic areas, each of which not only called for public views on APRM-related issues through public hearings and written submissions but also conducted independent research and received briefings from identified stakeholders and held community consultations in municipalities across the country. Where committee systems have limited staff or technical skills to support the work of the Parliament, the support from civil society organizations can be useful.

*Step 8: Create formal contact with the APRM continental secretariat and request to be notified of review missions etc.*

Contacting the APRM Secretariat and the APRM support unit hosted by UNECA is an easy way to ensure that the national Parliament is kept updated on the dates of the country review missions and other relevant information. The contact information can be found in chapter eight.

## 5. Parliamentary Involvement in Self-Assessment (Stage One)

*Step 1: Play an active role in self-assessment and if possible, conduct parallel self-assessment*

Self-assessment is one of the most comprehensive aspects of APRM. Self-assessment involves a study of the political; economic and corporate governance; and development environment of the country. The Parliament is able to contribute actively in self-assessment. It is important to study the self-assessment questionnaire and to develop a strategy for the Parliament to contribute to this. Parliament is able to contribute to the self-assessment by collecting data during the survey stage of self-assessment. This input should be focused on the four thematic areas and specifically aimed at generating input for the self-assessment with regard to the topic of “Democracy and Good Political Governance”. In the specific case of a federal system of government, it is important to “federalize” APRM country processes and secure the participation of state or regional governments in the country processes.

Furthermore, Parliament can participate in the self-assessment by having debates within and outside Parliament on APRM. The Nigerian experience with APRM illustrated the importance of distinguishing between the APR process and a country’s general debate on local, state, national, African and global governance issues, and to incorporate APRM as an integral part of focus on the debate.

The conduct of the South African Parliament is a great example of how Parliamentarians can engage in the self-assessment. The Parliament’s engagement with the APRM country process was in the form of its own parallel country self-assessment, independent of that carried out by the APRM National Governing Council. This included the setting up of a joint Coordinating Committee, co-chaired by the Presiding Officers; and Joint *Ad Hoc* Committees for all the four APRM thematic areas. Furthermore, the Joint Coordinating Committee assigned to an independent panel the task of analyzing and assessing Parliament’s performance in respect of the sections of the Master Questionnaire

pertaining to the role of Parliament. This is an exemplary practice for newly acceded APRM countries.

*Step 2: Study the self-assessment report and prepare comments based on country experiences that can improve and enhance it*

After self-assessment report has been prepared there is an opportunity to enhance the report by incorporating country experiences. Parliamentarians should synthesize various country experiences to guide their choice of best practices that need to be emulated. The case used to illustrate this suggestion is the Kenyan initiative of going back to the communities to obtain supplementary information for updating the country's APRM report. When Parliamentarians link and relate their activities in their communities/constituencies to APRM thematic issues, they are able to generate feedback that can enhance the self-assessment report. It is important for Parliament to be encouraged to propagate the best practices indicated in the self assessment reports.

From other country experiences it has also proved significant to ensure gender mainstreaming in the four aspects of the evaluation. Included in annex II are specific APRM cross-cutting issues that have come up from country review missions to various countries. The APRM Panel recommends that participating stakeholders pay attention to these issues. National Parliaments are urged to address these issues and provide for appropriate policies, strategies and systems within the context of self-assessment and NPoA.

Furthermore, it is critical for Parliament to take stock of the codes and standards which are yet to be ratified and/or domesticated and initiate legislation in that regard. Parliament should make sure that all ratified conventions and standards are reflected in the self-assessment report. Moreover, all ratified standards and codes should be submitted to the NGC.

*Step 3: Request the Focal Point/National Governing Council to defend NPoA in Parliament and review the draft NPoA*

The country formulates a (draft) programme of action which is submitted to the APR secretariat. Parliament can then request the President or APRM supervising Minister to make a formal presentation of the draft NPoA before Parliament. Likewise, the APRM National Governing Council can be requested to defend the draft NPoA before Parliament. This can take the form of a validation exercise of the self-assessment report and the draft NPoA.

*Step 4: Analyse NPoA budget before appropriating monies for it; and ask for a monitoring mechanism to ensure its implementation follow-up*

The NPoA is one of the most important and innovative features of the APRM; however, it also one that is riddled with the most difficulties - both in its place next to other development plans and its implementation. In the example of Benin, the prerequisite of adopting a national plan of action was not sufficient condition for the success of APRM. It became necessary to clarify the institutional framework and the resources for its implementation and emergent challenges hindering the implementation of NPoA.

Parliamentarians should ensure that APRM is integrated into the governance programme as a specific chapter for approval by Parliament. Furthermore, Parliaments, through their APRM committee, should check whether the appropriation bill includes budget for NPoA and other APRM-related matters during presentation of budgets by ministries, departments and agencies. The development of short, medium and long-term strategies in the four strategic areas can enhance the appropriation of budgets.

It is critical to adopt NPoA as law and where possible ensure its implementation so that it is integrated into national development plans.



*Step 5: Adopt a consensual rather than a partisan attitude to the process*

From previous country experiences, it has become evident that Parliament should adopt a consensual rather than a partisan attitude to the APRM process. Parliament is the actor and the forum where citizens' perspectives and views are presented and advocated; and it is the role of individual Parliamentarians to adopt a consensual attitude so that perspectives can translate into actual policy.

## 6. Parliamentary Involvement in Stages Two-Five

### *Stage two: External Country Review*

The Peer Review Team will visit the country and assess the integrity of the country self-assessment and hold in-depth consultations on the major governance issues with the various stakeholders. This is an opportunity for Parliamentarians to meet with the Peer Review Team and to discuss the outcomes of the self-assessment report and the draft NPoA. Parliamentarians at all levels of state should be involved in the peer review exercise. In this respect, National Parliaments should facilitate and support the liaison between the Peer Review Team and locally elected officials. Furthermore, Parliament should monitor the country review mission and analyze the transparency of the process.

### *Stage three: Preparation of Country Review Report*

National Parliaments should review the country review report and prepare a feedback. It is suggested that a Parliamentary debate be organized for the validation of the country review report.

Experiences from Uganda: The Ugandan Parliament played an intersecting role in the APRM process which involved keeping APRM on the Parliamentary agenda, as well as monitoring the APRM process as a constitutive aspect of the general Parliamentary oversight role of the governance of the country. This included the general policy process, and input to the draft country self-assessment report and to the preliminary of the NPoA as well as their validation.

To involve the Ugandan Parliament in the APRM process Parliamentarians were encouraged to participate in APRM activities including the launch of the process, research, regional workshops and validation of the CSAR. The CSAR was also distributed to all members of the Ugandan Parliament.

They took legislative action to facilitate and thereafter, monitor the implementation of the NPoA and the national budget, to ensure that good practices were enhanced and recommendations implemented; Parliamentarians also worked to disseminate information about the APRM to their respective constituencies.

*Stage four: Submission of Country Review Report to the African Peer Review Forum*

National Parliaments should follow the peer review process that takes place at the African Peer Review Forum.

*Stage five: Presentation and Official Publication of the Report*

National Parliaments should follow the presentation and official publication of the report.

## 7. Parliamentary Involvement in Monitoring and Evaluation of NPOA

### *Step 1: Design monitoring and evaluation mechanisms*

Parliamentarians should insist on their constitutional powers and functions, especially budgetary, investigation and oversight. In this regard, it is the duty of the Parliament to monitor and evaluate the implementation of NPoA. A suggestion would be to legislate, and establish a permanent statutory independent body or agency to monitor the APRM country process, which shall be required to submit regular/annual reports to Parliament on the state and status of the process. Furthermore, Parliamentarians should strengthen their oversight and investigatory role through capacity-building and enhancement. ICT master plans can enhance the capacity of Parliamentarians to engage in APRM and monitor and evaluate NPoA. In particular, ICTs can be utilized to monitor the implementation of plans and to create a database. Moreover, it can facilitate and support exchange programmes between Parliamentarians on the monitoring, evaluation and implementation of NPoA. In addition, it is important to act on the Auditor Generals' Annual reports to Parliament as part of investigatory powers to ensure accountability.

In the case of South-Africa, the APRM process had been anchored on a combination of capacity-building and institutional reforms within Parliament and “community consultations” with private sector, civil society and vulnerable groups in the society. The idea was to enable Parliament to exercise more effectively its general oversight and legislative functions and powers, in addition to empowering and capacitating institutions like the Offices of Auditor Generals and Human Rights Commissions, “established to strengthen democracy”.

*Step 2: Establish a partnership with civil society organizations to monitor and evaluate the implementation of NPoA*

Establishing institutional linkages and structures to enhance the integration and participation of civil society in Parliament's oversight work, can be of tremendous support to the work of Parliament. Civil society is able to provide research-generated data on public issues to Parliament to assist it in its legislative and oversight functions. Furthermore, civil society can work with Parliament to ensure legislative action and focus on the pressing governance issues identified in the country review reports and NPoA. Examples of these are to support initiatives aimed at taking "Parliament to the people," including ratifying and implementing the resolution taken at the 113th General Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union on the importance of civil society in a democracy. In a similar fashion, to enact legislation that enables civil society to oversee the country processes.

Experiences from Nigeria: The APRM cycle in Nigeria commenced with a pre-test, including the domestication of the APRM master questionnaire in July 2004 and the first visit of the country support mission from the APRM continental Secretariat in March 2005, up to the country's peer review in November 2008. The cycle was marked by advocacy, sensitization and dissemination activities which climaxed in extensive nation-wide consultations and validation of the draft country self-assessment report and draft NPoA by stakeholders at State and society levels and in the private sector, conducted by the APRM-NWG between 18 November and 7 December 2007; and by the APRM Country Review Mission from 3 February to 2 March 2008.

## 8. Contact and Further Information

Please visit the following websites for further information:

- <http://www.uneca.org/aprm>
- <http://www.nepad.org>
- <http://www.aprm-international.org/index.htm>

Or contact us at:

Governance and Public Administration Division  
African Peer Review Mechanism Support Unit  
United Nations Economic Commission for Africa  
P. O. Box 3001  
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia  
Tel: +251 (0) 11-544 5439  
Fax: +251 (0) 11 551 1953/5541

African Peer Review Mechanism Secretariat  
P.O. Box 1234  
Midrand, South Africa  
Tel: +27 (0) 11 313 3401  
Fax: +27 (0) 11 313 3086

## **Annex I: APRM Participating Countries**

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

### **Countries that have completed the process**

Algeria, Benin, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Mali, Mauritius, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa and Uganda.

### **Countries at different stages**

Djibouti - Stage II

Sierra Leone - Stage III

Zambia - Stage III

### **Country undergoing second review**

Kenya

## Annex II: APRM Cross-Cutting Issues

Following country review missions to various countries, several key cross-cutting issues have come up. The APRM Panel recommends that stakeholders pay attention to these issues. National Parliamentarians are urged to address these issues and provide for appropriate policies, strategies and systems within the context of NPoA. The major cross-cutting challenges facing democratic governance in Africa are<sup>2</sup>:

- Managing diversity
- Unemployment
- Poor service delivery
- Poverty and inequality
- Land distribution
- Violence against women and gender inequality
- Corruption
- External dependency
- Elections
- Crime, xenophobia and racism.

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2 Matlosa, K., 2010. APRM and the promotion of socio-economic development in Africa: Wither popular participation? In Masterson, G., ed., Busia, K., ed., Jinadu, A., ed. *Peer-ing the peers; Civil society and the African Peer Review Mechanism*. Johannesburg: EISA. Ch. 6.





