

***Report on the proceedings of the
Workshop on the African Peer
Review Mechanism and Civil Society***

17-18 January 2006

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

PAC

CRDA

ACRONYMS

Put them in alphabetical order

ADB	African Development Bank
APRM	African Peer Review Mechanism
AU	African Union
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
CRDA	Christian Relief and Development Association
PAC	Partnership Africa Canada
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
CSO	Civil Society Organization
NPA	National Plan of Action
ABR	African Business Roundtable
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
PEF	Private Enterprise Foundation
DIFID	Department for International Development

Introduction

NEPAD, as designed by Africa's Heads of State, is a framework for development that requires the participation of all stakeholders to put an end to the continent's chronic underdevelopment and ensure its full integration into the global arena.

The Christian relief and Development Association (CRDA) and Partnership Africa Canada (PAC), have been working towards this end by conducting research and by providing space for dialogue among Africa's various stakeholders and advocacy groups in order to influence African policymakers and partners on key issues of development.

CRDA and PAC have been actively involved in the NEPAD initiative since its inception in October 2001. Two consecutive workshops on NEPAD were held with support from the NEPAD Outreach Fund, managed by CIDA. The ECA participated in the workshops organized jointly by CRDA and PAC for representatives of CSOs and NGOs, which were held in Addis Ababa in 2002.

Similarly, CRDA and PAC have since then published several documents aiming to popularize NEPAD and raise awareness of the APRM pertaining to such issues as greater democracy, good political and economic governance and socio-economic development in Africa.

The participation and representation of African civil societies as legitimate partners in addressing the development challenges of the continent has been seen as crucial to meet the goals and objectives because CSOs are effective in engaging local communities and bringing forth the concerns from the grassroots.

Therefore, CRDA and PAC have taken on the role to provide access to information and raise awareness, with the goal of enabling civil society to grasp the essentials of NEPAD, and assume the responsibilities for the success of the goals. The publications have been widely distributed to African NGOs, the AU, ECA, the NEPAD Secretariat and the various African Civil Society fora.

A key component of NEPAD is the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), whose primary purpose is to foster the adoption of policies, standards and practices that lead to political stability, high economic growth, sustainable development and accelerated sub-regional and continental economic integration. This is to be done through the sharing of experiences and reinforcement of successful best practice methods, which includes the identifying of deficiencies and assessing the needs for capacity building.

Public participation in the APRM process is key to enhancing democratic governance and socio-economic development in participating member governments of the AU, which currently number 23 countries. The involvement of civil society is therefore essential to the successful implementation of the APRM process.

In the communiqué issued at its fifth meeting held in Johannesburg, South Africa, from April 29-30, 2004, the APRM Panel of Eminent Persons decided that strong emphasis should be put on finding ways to involve civil society and the private sector in the APRM process at the country level.

The APRM Panel also noted the importance of information dissemination to both sectors, at national and continental levels. In response to this opportunity and challenge, CRDA and PAC in collaboration with the ECA conducted a workshop in Addis Ababa on January 17th and 18th, 2006, with the following objectives:

- Increase understanding of the APRM process among a wide spectrum of African civil society organizations and institutions;
- Develop clear procedures and mechanisms for greater participation of African civil society organizations and communities in the APRM process to influence policy making;
- Encourage and support the creation of a pan-African network of CSOs collaborating on the APRM and governance issues;

Report of the proceedings

1. Opening presentation by Mr. Ousmane Déme, Research Associate with PAC and author of “Between Hope and Scepticism”.

Africa is entering an important stage in its political history, and attempts are being made at all levels to lay the foundations for a new political and economic framework capable of putting an end to the persistent underdevelopment plaguing the continent.

It is in this context that, on the initiative of African heads of state, the African and global community learned of the establishment of an ambitious but realistic program known as NEPAD.

Since its creation, NEPAD has sparked a great deal of interest marked by major debates both within Africa and throughout the Western world. For some, it is a new and highly promising initiative. For others, NEPAD contributes nothing new to the development efforts already being undertaken in Africa, and in fact reinforces aid dependence.

The question is being asked - what are the accomplishments of NEPAD nearly four years after its launch? It increasingly appears that out-and-out criticism is replacing the strong enthusiasm that prevailed at its launch. In fact, the hopes originally raised by this ambitious program are now beginning to dissolve.

The APRM is a NEPAD governance evaluation initiative. Admittedly, it is not the only concrete action taken by NEPAD, given that the NEPAD Secretariat is prominently active in the various areas covered by its mandate.

However, it has been difficult to quantify the achievements made so far because of the Secretariat's lack of a clear and coherent communication policy. The purpose of NEPAD and the APRM is to put Africa on the road to good governance. The APRM proposes a comprehensive approach to the concept of governance, which includes political, democratic, economic and corporate governance.

So far, Ghana and Rwanda have completed their reviews, and their reports and action plans are expected to be issued shortly. Kenya and Mauritius will soon be finishing their

reviews. Although these reports have not yet been published, it can already be confirmed that NEPAD, through the APRM, is seeing one of its most important programs come to fruition.

Many obstacles of a political and economic nature have been overcome to get this key initiative off the ground. However, despite the problems, by implementing APRM, Africa is demonstrating that it is able to design the methods by which it will achieve its goals.

In order for the APRM to be a success at the national level, all stakeholders, namely government, the private sector and civil society, must cooperate to create a framework for dialogue and action to ensure that all national players are fully involved.

This is a mandatory requirement set out in the memorandum of understanding that must be followed to the letter by all APRM member states. The APRM founding document provides all stakeholders with irrefutable mandates that will enable them to fully play their part in assessing the level of governance and development in their respective countries.

Certainly, in the African context, often governments tend to monopolize the political arena, so room must be made for the private sector and civil society. With the exception of a few countries, the African private sector, generally speaking, is very marginal or marginalized in the debates on governance and socio-economic development.

The APRM's role would be to gradually correct this situation in order to foster wider participation. It is important to emphasize that the African private sector is now, and must be even more so in the future, an essential lever in the development of the continent.

With respect to civil society, and given the current trend toward bilateral and multilateral co-operation, governments must involve civil society in all their major initiatives. However, research shows that certain countries have tried to co-opt, corrupt or divide civil society, with the ultimate goal of pre-empting any possibility of sharing the policy and development arena. Because of these dangers, civil society must constantly be ready to take on immense challenges in order to assume a legitimate role.

Clearly, there are significant differences between the participating states of the APRM. In countries with relatively stable political traditions, such as Senegal, Ghana, Mali and Mauritius, to name but a few, civil society has won many battles and taken its rightful place on the national scene. Elsewhere, such as in post-genocide Rwanda, Burundi and Sudan, it has made significant contributions in the effort to resolve major national and regional problems, despite continuously facing huge challenges when dealing with the state authorities.

The APRM represents a major challenge for African civil society. It needs to seize this opportunity to parlay its extensive expertise to promote good governance in Africa.

In light of recent experience, the following are some of my recommendations:

- Civil society participation must be strengthened in the APRM process;
- The APRM process must improve its visibility by working out a coherent communication strategy and increasing the involvement of the press;
- There is a need to properly tackle the persistent question of adequate finances;
- Parliaments/national assemblies must be involved because so far only heads of state are involved from the state sector;
- Political dialogue must be strengthened;
- Civil society must be present in the policy designing process;
- The relevance of the APRM must be widely disseminated;

2. *Presentation by Mr. Kojo Busia of the Economic Commission for Africa*

I wish to commend the CRDA and PAC for putting together such an impressive workshop on not only raising awareness and outreach about the APRM process, but also debating some of the most critical issues facing the APRM.

Indeed workshops such as this are much needed to make the APRM a credible and legitimate framework for dialogue and action among all stakeholders.

A consensus now exists among African policymakers, the private sector and civil society, on the critical issues confronting the continent in the 21st century, along with the necessary strategies for success. Among the principles shaping these strategic issues includes:

- The importance of the African ownership of the feasible, relevant and affordable policy options;
- Long-term commitment in the implementation of policies;
- The need for frank discussions among Africans about each others internal problems before they spill-over borders;
- Popular participation, democratization, good governance and the need to forge partnerships with countries outside Africa in order to achieve objectives;

One of Mr. Deme's main assumptions in his presentation is that since the APRM is government led, the involvement of the private sector and civil society might be constrained.

This is a valid hypothesis, given the monopoly of politics and power by African governments since independence. However, the APRM, as the most innovative program of NEPAD, promises a rebirth of African politics that should be seen as an opportunity for partnership and participation in the promotion of good governance.

Mr. Deme advances a few reasons why the private sector and civil society might be excluded from the APRM process, and I would like to respond to those concerns respectively:

The Private Sector: The private sector is marginal or marginalized in most debates on governance and socio-economic development. This is essentially the case in most of Africa. However, the "effectiveness" of the private sector in participating in the APRM should not be limited to considerations of size alone.

While the emergence of a dynamic capitalist class in Africa may be at a nascent stage, there is in Africa a viable cooperative sector, organized along producers associations of agricultural commodities like cocoa, coffee, cotton and livestock. This constitutes a viable a private sector.

These associations can have a decisive influence when they lobby the government for favorable policies. A good example of such lobbying are the recent successes of the cotton growers associations of Burkina Faso, Mali, Benin, Chad and Senegal, when they were able to have their opinions felt at the World Trade Organization negotiations. We do not have to wait for “big companies” to emerge to make a difference.

In fact, one would argue that producer and micro-business associations, along with informal trade organizations, may be better at playing the role of honest brokers than formal business associations, who may be well connected and as a result dependent on political favoritism, and therefore be less inclined to challenge the state. The politics of patron-client relations in Africa have always been a hindrance to good governance.

Civil Society Participation: Mr. Deme’s presentation advances the argument that civil society’s involvement may be purely instrumental, and that governments co-opt civil society to dilute any effectives in challenging governmental policies, and essentially just use them to please external partners. Both of these assertions may be true and, in fact, there are several examples, especially in PRSP and other initiatives.

However, the APRM process presents a different kind of “opportunity” for partnership and participation with governments. Contrary to popular opinion, African civil society – academic leaders, think tanks and NGOs, individual technical experts and consultants – were intimately involved in the designing of the objectives and indicators of the APRM questionnaires. In fact, a series of workshops were held in Cape Town, Midrand and Dakar to design the APRM questionnaires.

But the paper is right to assert that the APRM presents a major challenge for African civil society in its efforts to seize the opportunity to make a positive contribution. The experiences of Ghana, Kenya, Mauritius and more recently South Africa, gives hope

that one can successfully go through the process. The key is for civil society to be proactive and not wait for the government to hand it the opportunity.

Specific challenges faced by the APRM:

Resource Availability:

Obviously, there are resource constraints for countries that are undergoing the APRM, and the question remains whether or not the review can be funded by internal resources.

Initially, it was anticipated that the cost of a review for each country was US \$100,000, and therefore it was arranged that each country should pay that amount to the APRM Secretariat. The costs were to cover actual review visits, verifying results, outreach, public meetings, action plan formulations, etc.

According to the APRM Secretariat, countries have been spending between US \$1-\$2 million, and the Secretariat itself was spending more than the US \$100,000 budget allocated per country.

Obviously, external resources were needed, and essentially the UNDP Trust fund, administered jointly by the APRM and the UNDP country offices, was able to fill the financial gap.

This raises the very crucial question of dependency, and the possibility of the donors influencing the process or converting APRM reports into aid conditionality score cards.

But a more serious question is; are the APRM participating countries willing to use a positive APRM evaluation as evidence of their adoption of good governance policies, and therefore deserving of more aid?

Risk of Interference from Heads of States: This is a major concern and one that should be watched closely. However, the APRM provides enough safeguards against this kind of undue interference. One way of checking is by examining the representations on the Governing Councils of National Commissions.

The APRM Secretariats and its partners should continue to make sure that governing structures are equitably representative of broad sections of society. According to the procedures now in place, if a problem has been identified, corrections are requested before an actual review visit. If a problem has not been effectively dealt with, the secretariat then has the right to refuse a review visit.

Even at the Heads of States and Peer Review levels, it would be very difficult to suppress a final report submitted by the Panel of Eminent Persons.

In Abuja, for example, the reports on Ghana and Rwanda were submitted to the Forum for the first time and everyone had to read the reports at the same time.

Although it was a closed-door meeting, there was no way a report finding could be changed or repressed. The Panel of Eminent Persons is made up of men and women of the highest integrity.

The Absence of Sanctions as a Shortcoming of the APRM: The APRM is not a scorecard and should remain so. It is a learning tool, an instrument for peer learning and not a policing instrument. Countries should enter into the system willingly and because of the benefits.

The Risk of Conditionality: I think this issue has been answered in my earlier comment. I believe the APRM is a self-imposed conditionality in a way – setting very high standards and codes of good governance in Africa.

However, it should not be used unfairly by external partners – for example countries that are emerging from conflicts need development assistance and should not be expected to perform at the same level as stable countries that have been practicing good governance for some time.

Since the APRM is to help correct good governance deficiencies in Africa, all participating countries must be able to access assistance first from amongst African states, and if not from external partners. That is the ultimate goal of the mechanism.

Monitoring Action Plans: The National Plan of Action (NPA) is a product of a wide-ranging stakeholder consultation process, with inputs from different sectors of society.

The implementation, monitoring and evaluation of its recommendations should therefore be the business of all stakeholders. There are various methods of monitoring including formal evaluation and using the media. The NPA is a social contract between governments and the public, involving accountability.

The NPA is not the traditional five-year development plan designed, developed and implemented solely by the government. The NPA is a comprehensive national program of voluntary actions and commitments, in which all stakeholders contribute to its formulation and are likewise expected to participate in its implementation and monitoring.

3. *Summary of discussion points raised on the presentations of Mr. Busia and Mr. Deme*

- Mr. Deme conducted his research on the APRM to provide much needed information on the APRM, it was an effort to promote further dialogue.
- For the success of the APRM, it is necessary to create institutions and mechanisms for consultations between Civil Society and governments. Such institutions could issue periodic reports and become forums where problems are raised and discussed. The reports could then become available internationally.
- In the APRM process, first a country issues a self-assessment report which is then evaluated by leading experts from the strategic partners which includes: the African Development Bank, UNDP, ECA and the AU. It is only after a successful evaluation by the leading experts that country visits are conducted.
- A self-assessment report is analyzed in terms of what it says and the process of its compilation.
- Experience shows that the preparation and evaluation of reports is a cumbersome process. For example, a self-assessment report may take six to nine months assemble.

- Final reports are submitted to a Heads of State forum, and the results are usually the subject of debate in the press.
- The political will of African governments must be strengthened if more countries are to take part and the APRM more successful
- The issues dealt with the APRM are interlinked. For example economic development is connected to human rights and we cannot isolate the problems.
- The APRM is not an effort designed to please the West, but a realization that Africans have a responsibility to their citizens. Donors must share in the responsibility through their aid commitments.
- Building a social compact through the APRM pre-supposes strong partners. The action of civil society may make governments unhappy, and this may make civil society groups reluctant to challenge governments. In South Africa, trade unions are strong and are aggressively involved in all the major issues.
- Mr. Deme's presentation does not discuss the role of trade unions because they are weak in most of Africa. South Africa is one of the few exceptions, because its private sector is more developed and the trade unions have millions of members.
- The role of tribal and class affiliations of civil society groups must be closely examined, to ensure cross-sectoral participation.
- A structured process is necessary if the private sector is to be involved successfully.
- As the example of post-genocide Rwanda shows, history influences politics, economics, etc. Therefore new spaces must be created for dialogue. There are different levels of development both between countries and within countries.
- Access to the information resources of such institutions as NEPAD, APRM and the ECA must be increased, if countries are to learn from each other. Especially with regards to economic data.
- NEPAD and the APRM are still new initiatives and must be given time to develop.
- The manner of informing the public about the issues raised by the APRM must be closely analyzed, because in some countries it may be difficult to talk about such things.

- The private sector must be divided up into different groups such as: local private sector, indigenous sector, diaspora private sector, foreign private sector, etc.
- After independence, most African countries have not been able to greatly develop their private sectors, and so the private sectors have not been partners in the broad issues that confront society.
- The APRM is an innovative initiative because Africans own it.
- The NEPAD secretariat has worked to improve private sectoral involvement, but it needs more funds to widen its efforts.

4. *Summary of discussion points raised on the participation of South Africa, Rwanda and Kenya in the APRM process.*

In Rwanda;

- The genocide had wiped out the social fabric, so everything, including civil society, had to be rebuilt, and the first priority in rebuilding was establishing security.
- In the process of reconstruction, Rwanda had to learn from the experiences of other African countries such as Ghana. From its inception, Rwanda took on the initiatives of NEPAD and the APRM as one of its major goals.
- The establishment of civil society was important because someone had to speak for the voiceless. To rebuild, the Rwandese government brought together different organizations, and through a memorandum of understanding examined what went wrong and planned out a vision for the future.
- As a basis for civil society, currently such civil society institutions as churches and the media are trying to rehabilitate themselves and work towards reconciliation.
- There are currently nine private radio stations and several newspapers in Rwanda, and the basis for a vibrant civil society is being laid.
- The government of Rwanda was one of the first African countries to agree to an APRM evaluation. For the self-assessment exercise, sensitization on the APRM process in Kigali was found to be adequate. However, it was found that the residents outside of Kigali had little knowledge of NEPAD and the APRM.

In Kenya;

- The NEPAD secretariat operates under the auspices of the Kenyan government, and co-ordinates all APRM activities.
- The National Governing Council comprises 33 members, 20 of which come from civil society and the private sector.
- At the local level, thematic groups were mobilized for the sensitization process among the public.
- Kenya has been able to obtain funding from the UNDP, CIDA and DIFID. Even so, the APRMs budget was reviewed because of underestimation of costs.
- The self-assessment process had to be especially adopted to the Kenyan socio-economic and cultural situation.
- Sensitization efforts involved open discussions, and various levels of society participated. At the discussions, new points came to the fore, such as the marginalization of men and youth. Rural communities were targeted at district levels, and discussions were conducted using such research methodologies as focus group discussions. The approach was deliberately bottom-up. The vibrant nature of the local media was used effectively to sensitize the public about the APRM.
- The self-assessment report was then submitted to the NEPAD secretariat in South Africa, following which an Expert Panel Survey was conducted.
- The Kenyans believed that it was important to engage all stakeholders, especially such groups as the disabled, women, traders and opposition parties. All participants had to be assured that their contributions would not be ignored.
- In the development of Plan of Actions, it was believed that all sectors must cooperate and build on past recommendations, especially PRSP recommendations.
- Among the constraints of the process was that it was very time consuming. It was also found that the 33 member Governing Council was too large. In the process, three Governing Council members, including the chairman had to be removed.

The monitoring and evaluation of the APRM process was also found to be a challenge.

- In general, those taking part found the process transparent, and also discovered that the APRM involved the interrogation of the governors by the governed.

In South Africa;

- Civil society had very strong roots. The country's major trade union was 2 million strong. There were thousands of NGOs, and numerous faith-based organizations.
- The APRM process was seen as an opportunity to revitalize the fight to end poverty and inequality in South Africa.
- In September, 2005, the first consultative meeting was convened to start the APRM process.
- The APRM Governing Council was constituted involving civil society and the South African government, giving civil society a simple majority.
- It was observed that the APRM process in South Africa was destined to be unique because of the relatively strong position of the private sector.
- The entire APRM process in South Africa is expected to take around ten months.
- Some of the constraints cited were; the importance of utilizing strong civil society actors along with the importance of resource mobilization and targeting.

5. Summary of discussions on private sector involvement in the APRM

The private sector, which has been acknowledged worldwide as the engine of growth in emerging economies, is yet to be fully accepted, empowered and able to perform its role effectively and efficiently in Africa.

An the National levels, a number of countries including Ghana, Nigeria, Senegal and South Africa, have made considerable progress in the organization of their private sectors for involvement in the APRM.

Ghana in particular, has a separate Ministry for Private Sector Development, in addition to a ministry for NEPAD and another for Trade and Industries. The reason to do this can be found in the fact that most African countries, after independence from colonial rule, adopted a public-sector-led development strategy which operated on the basic assumption that the government was capable of providing development single handedly for its people. The private sector's immense potential as a partner for development was largely ignored, being often looked at with suspicion as a parasite.

Many years down the road, it is now an accepted fact that the private sector must be nurtured as credible partner by government if development is to be rapid and sustainable.

At the continental level, recognizing this fact, the ADB has established the ABR, which to date remains the only credible continent-wide private sector organization which helps African business.

The ABR also chairs the NEPAD Business Group (NBG), which is a new vehicle created to bring together private sector businesses interested in the implementation of NEPAD projects.

Even though initial concerns were raised that the private sector had not been properly involved in the design and evolution of NEPAD, subsequent events have brought the private sector into partnerships of varying sorts with governments, and it has also helped in the fine tuning of the NEPAD program.

The private sector was involved at the steering committee level in Cairo, in 2001, when the OMEGA and the MBEKI Millennium Action Plans (MAP) were merged into what became NEPAD.

Since the signing into force of the NEPAD initiative by the African Union Heads of State in July 2001, the private sector, through the ABR and a few other organizations like the chambers of commerce and industry associations, has been striving for full involvement in the NEPAD program.

However, the constraints the private sector has encountered revolve around; lack of an understanding of the partnerships required, lack of access to information and leadership of the NEPAD secretariat, and inadequate resources.

Initially, most people, including those in the NEPAD secretariat thought that NEPAD meant partnership between African governments and the G8 or the so-called development partners.

After much dialogue under various auspices (other than that of the NEPAD secretariat), it has now been recognized that partnership means more than just partnerships between African governments and the donors. It means partnership between governments and the private sector, between private sector and civil society, between local private sectors and foreign private sectors, in the implementation of the APRM initiatives. These partners must operate within an environment of mutual trust and respect.

Partnership is also about ACCESS to the NEPAD secretariat and also to reliable information. The attitude of the secretariat has been seen as not welcoming enough. Most stakeholders have had difficult encounters when trying to meet with officials in the secretariat or obtain information.

It is hoped that the new leadership under Dr. Firmicio Mucavele will bring much needed change in the provision of services by the secretariat, and the mobilization of the necessary resources to involve the private sector in the proper manner.

The APRM, as a unique and innovative tool of the NEPAD program, has involved the private sector by way of membership of the APRM Eminent Persons Group, the National Review Committee, and the actual work involved in the writing of the reports.

In Ghana, for example, the Private Enterprise Foundation (PEF), which was contracted as the consultant for the preparation of the report on the creation of an enabling environment, has been the umbrella body for all the Ghanaian private sector organizations.

It remains, however, for the private sector to be given enough information and encouragement to be involved on a larger scale. Moreover, synergies must also be created between civil society and the private sector for the enhancement of partnerships.

6. Summary of discussion points at the group sessions

6.1 Group one discussion theme: Governance in Africa and the relevance of the APRM.

In addressing the theme, the discussants focused on the following areas:

- Re-examining the APRM's strengths and weaknesses
- Key lessons emerging from the experiences of countries going through the APRM process
- Existing governance mechanisms in Africa
- How CSO's can become effective partners in the APRM
- Concrete recommendations for the working group

6.1.1 Examples of existing mechanisms for development in Africa that have had mixed successes

- The PRSPs across the continent.
- The Rwanda vision 2020.
- The Kenya World Bank Structural Adjustment Program.

6.1.2 Opportunity for dialogue

The APRM involved the participation of CSOs, private sector and governments, therefore the process can be said to be owned at a deeper level than other initiatives like PRSPs and MDGs. It is also believed that the APRM can assist in the effectiveness of PRSPs and MDGs.

6.1.3 The relevance of the APRM

- The question of governance in Africa is important and the APRM is a key tool for its evaluation.
- The APRM is an African owned method of peer review where commitments and deficiencies are identified for the formulation of development of strategies.
- The APRM can also be used as a tool to complement existing development programs and organizations.
- The APRM can be used to open up political space in countries where it is necessary to do so.

6.1.4 Integration

More African countries have not been involved in the APRM process because they are preoccupied with other initiatives. In fact, there is an overload of initiatives and existing development strategies need to be integrated.

6.1.5 Reinforcement

The NEPAD/APRM secretariat needs to be strengthened so as to effectively deal with the increasing number of countries joining the APRM initiative. Information flow, currently a key problem, must be improved between the various stakeholders.

6.1.6 Political commitment

In Rwanda, the President is leading the APRM process. In Kenya, the Ministry of Planning and Development in conjunction with the National Governing Council (which includes the government, CSOs and private sector), are leading the process. This indicates the importance of political commitment.

6.1.7 The need for a framework

While there is a broad template for the APRM, each country needs to have its own template relative to its political, historical and cultural environments.

6.1.8 Leadership

In some countries, leadership is vested in just one person, therefore there is need to broaden the leadership structure of the APRM with the creation of such an organ as a National Steering Committee.

6.1.9 Learning from each other

It was noted that countries had varying knowledge of the APRM process, therefore it was seen as important that those with more experience shared their views with others.

6.1.10 Independence

CSOs should be independent, and through their organizations must nominate themselves for participation in the APRM process in such organs as National Governing Councils.

6.1.11 Resources

Donor funding is essential and must be flexible and structured. The Kenya Basket Fund, managed by the UNDP, was seen as a model. It also helped to fight corruption.

6.1.12 Tolerance

Governments should not fear CSOs, and there should be a tolerance for differing views between all stakeholders.

6.1.13 Speed

Delays in issuing reports can harm confidentiality. The responses to needs by the NEPAD/APRM secretariat must be made quicker and stronger.

6.2 Group two discussion theme: Networking and CSO action in the APRM

6.2.1 Objective

The objective of a network is to firmly entrench African Civil society in the NEPAD/APRM process. To do that civil society must work proactively and own the process.

6.2.2 Methodology

It is necessary to work out a methodological approach for the establishment a network. This type of an approach will enable the formulation of practical ideas for working across borders.

6.2.3 Questions

In the establishment of a network the following questions need to be asked: what are the limitations of existing relationships; what kind of help is available from outside sources; what kind of leadership is necessary for a network; and is information accessible?

6.2.4 Effectiveness

The setting up of effective civil society networks pre-supposes honest and democratic institutions that are not corrupt.

6.2.5 Kenyan experience

In Kenya civil society worked for democracy, but in the last few years its image has been tarnished because accusations of corruption, and work is in progress to restore the image of civil society.

6.2.6 Structure

Any network should be structured, beginning with the NEPAD/APRM secretariat, and any structuring should start with the training of all those involved.

6.2.7 Networks

The networks of CSOs could be at different levels; national, sub-regional and continental.

6.2.8 Participant's work

The participants of the workshop could act as the focal-points and agents of dialogue for the establishment of networks.

6.2.9 Learning

Efforts must be made to learn about the networks utilized from the few countries that are going through the APRM process.

6.2.10 Approaches

Different approaches must be tailor made for the particular circumstances of each country, especially with regards to capacity building.

6.2.11 Priorities

Often existing networks tend to be loosely associated, and priorities and resources are not well defined.

6.2.12 Information

Currently, information dissemination is a problem. In the continent, individuals and groups tend to be very economical with information or keep data secret. This must be tackled promptly.

6.2.13 Establishment

Networks should be established step by step, starting from the national level.

6.2.14 Partnerships

Networks should build effective partnerships with the private sector and governments.

6.2.15 Coordination

Coordination is critical for successful networks. Can existing sub-regional organizations serve as networks or do we need to create new regional focal points? Continental networks are important for lobbying and other activities. What role can global organizations like PAC play in networks?

Final recommendations of group two:

- The participants of the workshop to return home to work as focal points with the task of sensitizing the private sector and government about the network and information requirements of the APRM.
- PAC to establish a newsletter service to disseminate critical information about the NEPAD/APRM process.
- A pilot project for networking and information dissemination to be set up involving the following organizations; South African Institute for International Affairs, AFRIMAP, the Comite' de liaison des ONG du Congo and the Kenya NEPAD Secretariat.
- Participants of the workshop to work on an agenda for a larger meeting in six months. The agenda to include: possibilities for training more CSO stakeholders, evaluation of the support necessary for wider CSO participation, and to take stock of progress so far made.

7. Final declaration of the participants of the workshop:

**Addis Ababa Declaration
on the role of African Civil Society with regard
to the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM)**

We, representatives of African civil society organizations, meeting in Addis Ababa on January 17 and 18, 2006 in a workshop organized by the Christian Relief and Development Association (CRDA) and Partnership Africa Canada (PAC), in collaboration with the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), on the theme of “The African Peer Review Mechanism and Civil Society”;

- Having examined the challenges that the APRM addresses and its contribution to the strengthening of good governance, and having reviewed the APRM experiences of Ghana, Rwanda, Kenya and South Africa;

- Recognizing the political will of African heads of state and government to promote good governance in Africa by fully involving civil society and the private sector in the implementation of the APRM objectives;

- Recognizing that the APRM offers a real opportunity to promote policy dialogue between all national actors and to strengthen good governance;

- Reaffirming that the APRM's success depends on the wide and effective participation of African civil society in the whole evaluation process and in the implementation of national action plans;

Recommend:

TO AFRICAN GOVERNMENTS

1. That they promote ownership of the APRM by the people and allocate sufficient financial resources for it to remain an African instrument serving African interests;
2. That they involve all state institutions, and especially parliaments, in all the phases of the APRM process;
3. That they fully involve civil society and the private sector in the national structures supervising the APRM evaluations, and in the implementation of action plans;
4. That they develop, through the APRM Secretariat, a dynamic communications strategy to encourage a good understanding of the APRM by all development actors, particularly by ensuring the regular updating of the APRM website and by creating other communications tools for disseminating information on the mechanism;

TO THE AFRICAN PRIVATE SECTOR

5. That it support existing mechanisms for dialogue and become more involved in the APRM national evaluations, as well as in the implementation of action plans;

TO AFRICAN CIVIL SOCIETY

6. That it create its own opportunities for dialogue and discussion in order to identify common objectives and plan strategies to strengthen its participation in the APRM;
7. That it strengthen cooperation with governments and the private sector in order to identify problems as well as solutions respecting national, regional and pan-African interests;
8. That it strengthen technical and institutional capacities in the area of democratic, political, economic and corporate governance;
9. That it develop networks within African civil society to work on NEPAD and the APRM;
10. That it bring to the APRM evaluations the experience gained through advocacy and the implementation of national development policies;

TO THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

11. That it acknowledge and support the efforts of African governments with regard to the APRM;
12. That it support the wide and effective participation by African peoples in the APRM process.

Addis Ababa

18 January, 2006

Annex 1

Profiles of the strategic partners in the organization of the workshop

1. Partnership Africa Canada (PAC) was created in 1986 with the support of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and Canadian and African non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Since its inception PAC has funded hundreds of innovative projects that have supported sustainable development in sub-Saharan Africa. In 1996, PAC changed its mandate to focus on policy development.

Mandate

Partnership Africa Canada works with organizations in Africa, Canada and internationally to build sustainable human development in Africa. PAC seeks to:

- Strengthen African and Canadian efforts in research and policy dialogue relation to sustainable human development in Africa.
- Facilitate, among Africa, Canada and international decision-makers, the adoption and implementation of policies that foster sustainable human development in Africa.
- Promote greater understanding of and commitment to sustainable human development in Africa.

Programme

PAC undertakes a number of inter-related activities with the broad aim of promoting sustainable human development in Africa. It focuses on several interconnected themes, each of which has an impact on human security and development in Africa:

- peace and human security
- natural resources and development
- governance
- capacity building for African civil society.

The initiatives undertaken in these areas are varied, but each serves to develop the central goals of deepening our understanding of issues critical to the development of Africa, particularly in regions that have experienced conflict. In carrying out this programme, PAC sees its role as a forum for dialogue, research and action on African development.

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2. The Christian Relief and Development Association (CRDA) is an indigenous secular umbrella organization of over 250 secular and faith-based NGOs operating in Ethiopia and spread out all over the country.

It was in 1973 that CRDA was born as a relief coordinating agency by 13 church – based and secular humanitarian organizations. Earlier, it coordinated relief activities before it shifted its focal areas to development, capacity building and advocacy, with the aim of now nurturing a vibrant civil society in the country.

CRDA is currently working with the mission of creating an open, vibrant, questioning, self-reflective and critical Ethiopian civil society. It envisions seeing an Ethiopia civil society. It envisions seeing an Ethiopian society, which is poverty free and empowered in handling its own affairs.

Strategic directions

- Transforming the broader NGO sector towards brining overall societal transformation.
- Enabling CRDA members to become leading exponents of civil society.

- Facilitating the creation of a more enabling environment for the emergence and development of civil society.
- Cultivating civil society organizational culture and practice.

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3. Established in 1958, ECA is one of five regional commissions under the administrative direction of United Nations (UN) headquarters. As the regional arm of the UN in Africa, it is mandated to support the economic and social development of its 53 member States, foster regional integration, and promote international cooperation for Africa's development. It reports to the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

The Commission is organized around the following substantive program divisions:

- Development and Policy Management
- Economic and Social Policy
- Gender and Development
- Information for Development
- Sustainable Development
- Trade and Regional Integration

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4. The NEPAD strategic framework document arises from a mandate given to the five initiating Heads of State (Algeria, Egypt, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa) by the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) to develop an integrated socio-economic development framework for Africa. The 37th Summit of the OAU in July 2001 formally adopted the strategic framework document.

NEPAD is designed to address the current challenges facing the African continent. Issues such as the escalating poverty levels, underdevelopment and the continued marginalisation of Africa needed a new radical intervention, spearheaded by African leaders, to develop a new Vision that would guarantee Africa's Renewal.

a) To eradicate poverty;

b) To place African countries, both individually and collectively, on a path of sustainable growth and development;

c) To halt the marginalisation of Africa in the globalisation process and enhance its full and beneficial integration into the global economy;

d) To accelerate the empowerment of women

- Good governance as a basic requirement for peace, security and sustainable political and socio-economic development
- African ownership and leadership, as well as broad and deep participation by all sectors of society;
- Anchoring the development of Africa on its resources and resourcefulness of its people;
- Partnership between and amongst African peoples;
- Acceleration of regional and continental integration;

- Building the competitiveness of African countries and the continent;
- Forging a new international partnership that changes the unequal relationship between Africa and the developed world; and
- Ensuring that all Partnerships with NEPAD are linked to the Millenium Development Goals and other agreed development goals and targets.

The NEPAD Programme of Action is a holistic, comprehensive and integrated sustainable development initiative for the revival of Africa, guided by the aforementioned objectives, principles and strategic focus.

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Annex 2

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