

African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) Sensitisation Project in Namibia (ASPIN)

Civil Society Working Group Meeting

06 September 2018

House of Democracy, Windhoek, Namibia

On 06 September 2018, a Civil Society Working Group Meeting was convened to discuss the progress on the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) Civil Society submission. The intention was to update the group on the submission progress and discuss the issues identified and the contributions received thus far.

The workshop was organised and presented by the South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA) and the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) as part of the APRM Sensitisation Project in Namibia (ASPIN). Over 20 civil society members attended. For more on ASPIN, see

<http://www.saiia.org.za/news/the-aprm-sensitisation-project-in-namibia-aspin/>

Steven Gruzd, Programme Head of the African Governance and Diplomacy Programme at SAIIA, opened the meeting with a brief introduction to the APRM and Namibia's accession to the mechanism in January 2017. The APRM is a voluntary process centered around four broad ranging thematic areas: Democracy and Political Governance, Economic Governance and Management, Corporate Governance and Socio-Economic Development. For more on the APRM in Namibia, see

<http://ippr.org.na/publication/namibia-african-peer-review-mechanism/>

Steven then presented on the ASPIN process so far, comprising of an inception meeting in February 2018, a civil society training workshop in April, and a working group meeting in July, wherein civil society identified 12 governance issues for inclusion into its APRM submission. Following July's meeting, various organisations and individuals from Namibian civil society committed to contributing several pages

on their respective areas of expertise. Much has been achieved in the last six months, in relation to the draft submission, the working group and meetings held with various stakeholders. These include meaningful discussions with Namibia's National Planning Committee, both houses of parliament, the Ministry of International Relations and Cooperation and President Geingob's advisors.

Further recent developments were discussed, including a stakeholders meeting, which will be held by the APRM Secretariat advanced mission in Namibia on 11 September 2018 at 14:20. Possible dates for a validation workshop were also discussed. It was decided that the final draft submission would be circulated to Namibian civil society before the workshop, which will be held on 23 or 24 October 2018 in Windhoek. It is important to get as many senior delegates as possible to this meeting. This will be followed by a process of endorsement by the various CSOs.

Members of the working group then presented on the individual draft submissions received so far:

- Youth Unemployment – Kudzai Chireka, Labour Resource and Research Institute
- Inequality and Poverty – Terence Corrigan, SAIIA
- Education – Cayley Clifford, SAIIA
- Health – Dietrich Remmert, IPPR
- Gender Based Violence – Cayley Clifford, SAIIA
- Land Reform – Steven Gruzd, SAIIA
- Corruption – Graham Hopwood, IPPR
- Environmental Sustainability – Terence Corrigan, SAIIA
- Access to Information – Emilia Paulus, ACTION Namibia
- Separation of Powers – Andre Du Pisani, Academic
- Lack of Policy Coherence – Graham Hopwood, IPPR

All presentations were followed by rich discussions around the issues raised, further possible evidence and recommendations on how to solve or ameliorate the identified problems. Further submissions are expected on natural resource governance and corporate citizenship.

In closing, ways to carry the programme forward in 2019 were discussed, including the possibility of publishing the civil society submission in a shorter comic form and utilising the media to increase the submission's reach.