

WHAT IS THE AFRICAN PEER REVIEW MECHANISM, AND WHY DOES IT MATTER?

An introduction to the SA APRM Popular Sensitisation (SAPS) Project

VIA ZOOM

STEVEN GRUZD
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OUTLINE

- SAIIA and the APRM
- APRM in a nutshell
- Why does it matter
- SAPS: APRM in South Africa – an opportunity to influence



SAIIA AND THE APRM

- Since 1934, independent, non-governmental think tank on international affairs. Turned 86 in 2020
- 3 major programmes: AGDP, EDIP and GARP + Youth
- Worked on APRM since 2002, new work on other MSIs
- Research, analysis, training, consulting to the Secretariat
- Sensitised CSOs in early countries, worked on questionnaire revision, bottlenecks to development, expanded mandate
- Developed a CSO submission in 2018 in Namibia, and 2020 in Botswana



WHAT IS THE APRM?

- Africa's voluntary governance monitoring and promotion tool established on 9 March 2003
- Grew out of African Renaissance and NEPAD, now an AU Specialised Agency
- Measures adherence to African & global standards in 4 thematic areas, comprehensive, based on questionnaire
 - Democracy and Political Governance
 - Economic Governance and Management
 - Corporate Governance
 - Socio-Economic Development
- Based on the belief that dialogue, peer pressure, diplomacy & civil society involvement can catalyse and support reform



WHAT IS THE APRM?

- Reviews must be “Technically competent, credible, and free of political manipulation”
- Set up institutions at national and continental level
- Self-assessment, country review mission, peer review. Final Country Review Report is made public
- Develop, fund, implement and report on NPoA
- 40/55 African states are members now, 22+3 reviewed, 3 Targeted Reviews



APRM: THE BASICS

- Based on 105 page Questionnaire (Revised in 2012), self-assessment needs varied research & consultation methods, civil society participation
- Both internal and external review, reports made public, NPoA to address shortcomings
- Envisaged as a continuous process, not a one-off
- Supposed to be a country-wide process, not just a government one. Thus, participation of civil society, academia, business, parliament is very important

Mandate of the APRM

The mandate of the African Peer Review Mechanism is to ensure that the policies and practices of participating states conform to the agreed political, economic and corporate governance values, codes and standards contained in the Declaration on Democracy, Political, Economic and Corporate Governance. The APRM is the mutually agreed instrument for self-monitoring by the participating member governments.





Purpose of the APRM

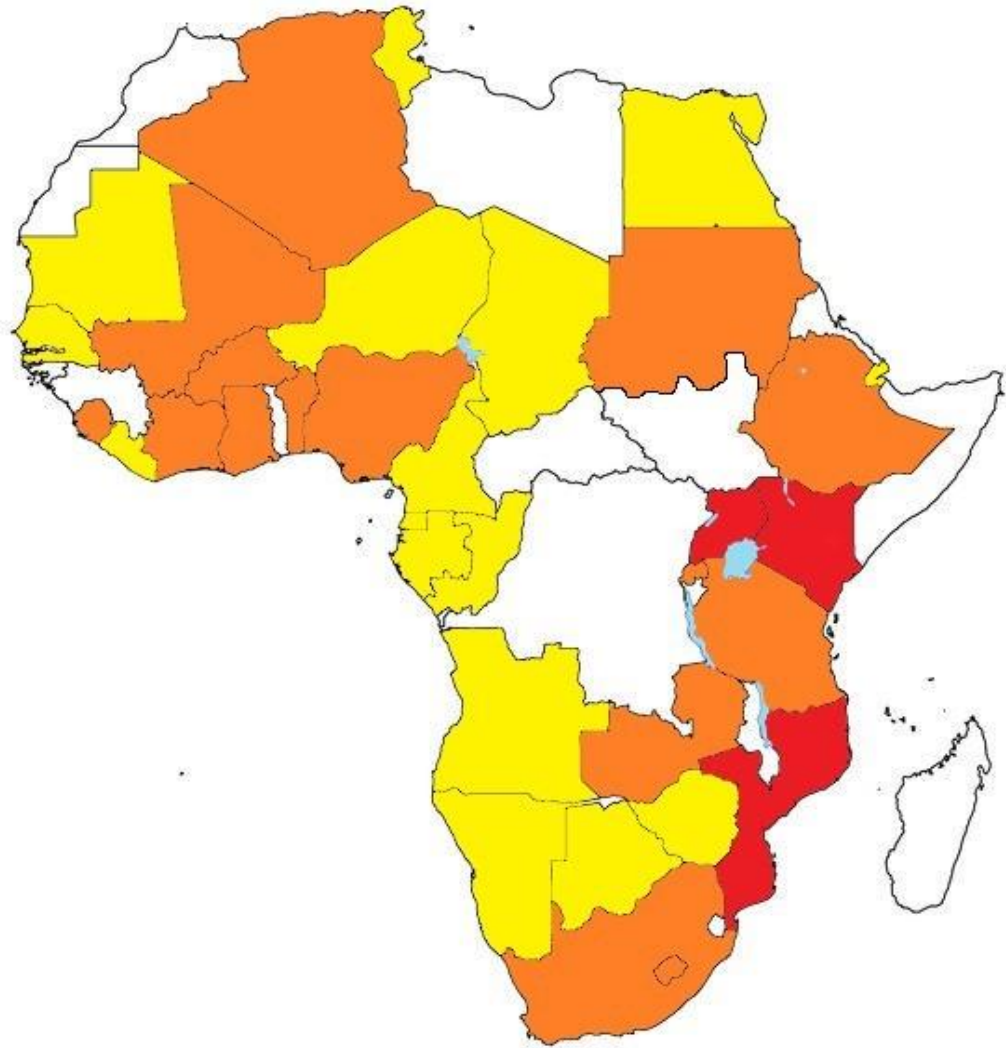
2. The primary purpose of the APRM is to foster the adoption of policies, standards and practices that lead to political stability, high economic growth, sustainable development and accelerated sub-regional and continental economic integration through sharing of experiences and reinforcement of successful and best practice, including identifying deficiencies and assessing the needs for capacity building.

Principles of the APRM

3. Every review exercise carried out under the authority of the Mechanism must be technically competent, credible and free of political manipulation. These stipulations together constitute the core guiding principles of the Mechanism.

40 APRM STATES

-  2ND review completed
-  1st review completed
-  New or slow
-  Not in APRM





FIRST 23+3+3 REVIEWS

2006: Ghana, Rwanda, Kenya

2007: South Africa, Algeria

2008: Benin, Uganda, Nigeria, Burkina Faso

2009: Mali, Mozambique, Lesotho

2010: Mauritius

2011: Ethiopia

2012: Sierra Leone

2013: Zambia, Tanzania

2017: Chad, Djibouti, Senegal, Kenya II

2018: Sudan, Uganda II

2019: Côte d'Ivoire, Mozambique II

2020: Egypt, TRs of Djibouti, Namibia, Zambia





WHY DOES THE APRM MATTER?

- Setting new norms of openness, frankness, transparency
- Unparalleled in breadth, sensitive subjects covered
- Honest reports assess governance in the country
- Identifies salient issues and common problems
- Opens political space, public involvement in policy, can normalise debate, criticism
- CSO involvement can catalyse reform
- Between non-interference & non-indifference
- Early warning system, supports policy reform



CHALLENGES

- “Peers”? Countries with different political outlooks/ levels of development
- Logistics, support, financing, stamina, implementation, M&E
- CSOs: interested but difficulty making input
- Media: shown modest interest – process is highly technical
- Time: multi-year process for most countries
- Implementation of NPoAs
- Has it worked? Ibrahim Index - governance has flatlined
Leadership, political commitment and funding

APRM IN SADC: A REGION DIVIDED

6 reviewed: South Africa (2007), Lesotho (2009), Mozambique (2009, 2019), Mauritius (2010), Zambia (2013) & Tanzania (2013)

2 very slow: Malawi & Angola (joined 2004)

4 newly joined: Namibia (2017), Botswana (2019), Zimbabwe (2020), Seychelles (2020)

3 out: DRC, Madagascar, eSwatini

KEY ISSUES IN SADC CRRS

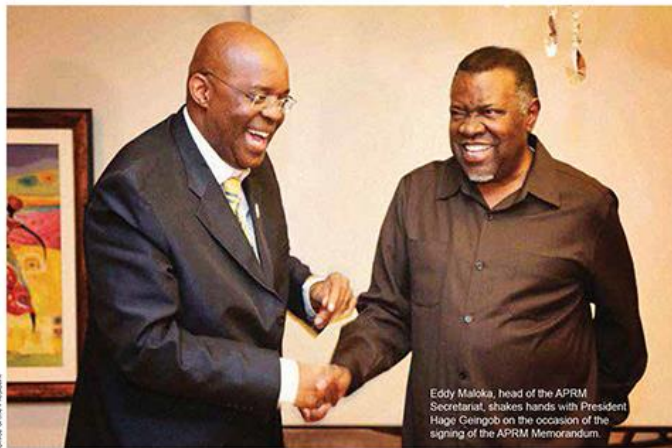
- Reports predicted xenophobia in SA, party tensions in Mozambique, constitutional crisis in Zambia
- Managing diversity, electoral systems, separation of powers, corruption, public finance management
- Land, poverty, unemployment, education, health
- Inclusion of civil society crucial but contested
- Good diagnosis, locally rooted, but NPoAs poor
- Little evidence of peer pressure



APRM IN SA – AN OPPORTUNITY TO INFLUENCE

- **Acceded in 2003, second review much delayed**
- **Institutions, personnel and plans starting**
- **Ostensibly well governed, but key challenges include poverty, inequality, unemployment, environment, corruption, state capture, SOE management**
- **Build on SAIIA experience to train & empower civil society and parliamentarians – model used in Namibia, SA, Zambia, Tanzania, Lesotho, Uganda and Botswana**
- **Develop a written submission by APRM CSO Working Group**

NAMIBIA AND THE AFRICAN PEER REVIEW MECHANISM: COMMITTING TO IMPROVED GOVERNANCE



Eddy Maloka, head of the APRM Secretariat, shakes hands with President Hage Geingob on the occasion of the signing of the APRM Memorandum.

Introduction: Namibia becomes number 36

On Saturday 28 January 2017 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, President Hage Geingob signed his name on a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), committing the Republic of Namibia to Africa's premier governance assessment and promotion process.

In his speech to the APRM Forum of Participating Heads of State and Government, the President said "Namibia is honoured to have acceded to the African Peer Review Mechanism," remarking that the APRM would "play a pivotal role in enabling Africa to achieve the noble aspirations and developmental goals of Agenda 2063 and its First-Ten Year Implementation Plan."¹

¹ Statement by HE Dr Hage Geingob, President of the Republic of Namibia at the African Peer Review Mechanism Forum of Heads of State and Government, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 28 January 2017. https://au.int/web/sites/default/files/speeches/31976-sp-aprm_acceptance_speech_by_h_e.pdf, accessed 14 February 2017.

He continued: "Mechanisms such as the APRM provide us with an opportunity to introspectively interrogate our processes, systems and institutions in order to identify shortcomings, while at the same time identifying our strengths. With many of our Governments having adopted a number of policies and ratified countless instruments, it is only through the implementation of the APRM that we will achieve tangible far-reaching results. The voluntary nature of the APRM allows Member States to openly and realistically evaluate and monitor developmental progress in a friendly Peer-Peer atmosphere."²

He claimed that although Namibia had long supported the APRM, it had declined to join until now, along with Botswana, "because the two countries were considered worldwide as good examples of democracy in Africa and did not want to be used as points of reference against other African countries."³

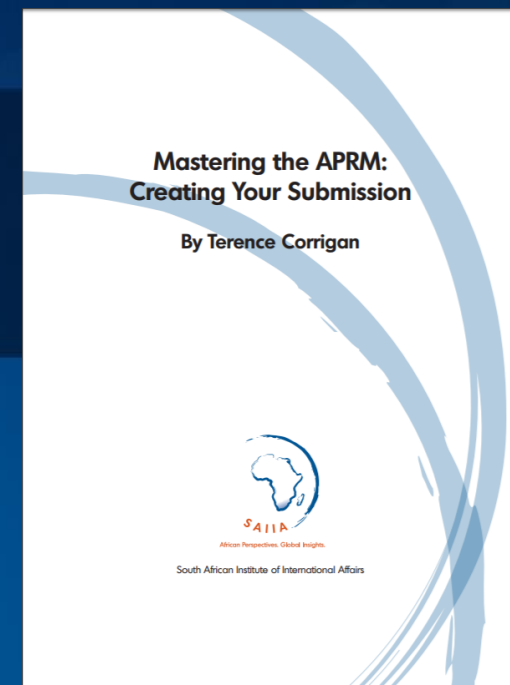
² Ibid.
³ Ibid.

SOUTH AFRICAN APRM POPULAR SENSITISATION (SAPS) PROJECT

- Support for civil society and official process
- Work with APRM Secretariat, DPSA, JASORO Consulting
- Sensitisation workshop with experience setting
- Form a APRM CSO Working Group (youth)
- Select & write up 12 key issues
- Help with submission
- Dissemination strategy
- Funder is SIDA

CREATING A SUBMISSION

- Make yourself heard, raise issues
 - Know the rules, don't wait for govt
1. Identify the issues – don't do all, but link to SAQ
 2. Gather & analyse evidence – yours & govt's words – facts and figures are important
 3. Develop convincing written arguments, solutions
 4. Circulate draft for consensus and allies
 5. Submit to the right place at the right time



BENEFITS FOR SA AND THE REGION

- Comprehensive governance assessment, by Africa
- Identify strengths, weaknesses, remedies
- Catalyse genuine reform
- Burnish the national brand, share best practices
- Opens civil space, platform to raise pertinent issues
- Attract investment?
- Encourage others to accede
- Strengthen SADC as more countries deal with cross-boundary issues – climate, health, migration

Thank you!

Steven.Gruzd@wits.ac.za

@rhymeswbruised

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