South African APRM Popular Sensitisation (SAPS) Project Civil Society Youth Working Meeting

Via Zoom, 08 October 2020, 10h00-12h30

Report by Nhlakanipho Macmillan Zikalala

Welcome

Mr Steven Gruzd, Head of SAIIA's African Governance and Diplomacy Programme, opened the meeting by welcoming all participants and stating that the purpose of the meeting is to identify the most important issues affecting youth in South Africa. He went on to state that the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) is designed to improve governance in Africa by identifying key challenges and championing transformative leadership through the sharing of experiences among member countries. It is a very wide-ranging process that focuses on four thematic areas i.e. Democracy and Political Governance, Economic Governance and Management, Corporate Governance and Socio-economic Development. He encouraged all participants to select the most important governance issues in South Africa that affect the youth. He stated that in a similar programme in Namibia, participants selected thirteen, with each issue having sub-issues. In South Africa, he mentioned that the available budget can only cover twelve issues. He went on to stress that participants may want to look at the progress and shortcomings that have been made since the last review in South Africa and offer nuanced solutions. He showed copies of the Namibian civil society submission (2018) and South Africa's first APRM Country Review Report (2007)

Ms Luanda Mpungose, Programme Officer in the African Governance and Diplomacy Programme at SAIIA

The meeting was co-facilitated by Ms Mpungose who expressed her excitement to be working at something that is being led by youth in South Africa. She encouraged all participants to feel free in voicing their opinions throughout the meeting.

Ms Tessa Dooms, Jasoro Consulting

Ms Dooms began by stressing that the aim is to make this process as inclusive as possible irrespective of it being virtual. On this point she reiterated that all those responsible for drafting a written submission should, where possible, make an attempt to consult with young people on the ground as a basis for articulating the interests of the youth in South Africa. She noted that the WhatsApp group that has been set up will be very useful in gathering information and sharing ideas. Ms Dooms proceeded to say that the rest of this meeting will be focused on

developing a picture of success. Participants should ask themselves; what are the most important issues and what recommendations can be made to resolve them? All this requires an understanding of a picture of success. This means that participants must imagine the kind of South Africa they would like to have and answer the question of what will the lives of South African youth look like?

The following points were articulated by participants as South Africa's picture of success:

- South African Government has leaders who actually care and are committed to deliver quality services versus filling their pockets.
- South African youth would be adequately represented in parliament/ decision making bodies.
- The SA government would be able to inspire patriotism.
- South African Youth would have at least 40% representation in key strategic positions.
- South Africans would be able to have fair opportunities to use their skills in the economy.
- South Africans would be able to live decently regardless of whether they have a job. They should not go without food or shelter, healthcare, etc.
- South Africa would have access to high quality education.
- South African youth would be able to experiment, innovate and start social ventures with the appropriate resources and confidence.
- The South African government would be able to demonstrate feminist leadership, transparency and educated decisions, inspiring governments across the region.
- South Africans will be safe from gender- based violence, crime & corruption.
- South African government would be able to bridge the gap of inequality, creating opportunities for all and harnessing a society that is free from the scourge of violence, crime, and gender-based violence. Governed by the strong rule of law and fair justice for all.
- South Africa must be able to support circular economy from local levels.
- The South African government has leaders who truly understand and at least try to understand and be involved in pressing youth issues. Not just for the image or status that comes with this.

This was then followed by the examining of the issues of concern, a discussion regarding the writing process and development of a submission and logistics thereof.

Moreover, participants must think about the kinds of people that are affected by the identified issues. This does not only mean identifying a problem then jumping to a solution. "To get to the picture of success we need to show evidence in support of the issues and use this evidence

to come up with practically achievable goals." She said that there will be a commissioned background paper that will assist participants in gathering evidence.

Ms Dooms encouraged all participants to present their views in terms of which governance issues can be identified as being important on the youth in South Africa. Participants made suggestions on key issues that this submission should zero in on, these include: unemployment, gender-based violence, violent crimes, xenophobia, quality education, land, climate change, human trafficking and child abductions, Innovation, technology, irregular migration, digital divide, access to information, mental health, sexual health and reproductive rights, health, peace and security. Participants also made suggestions on how these proposed issues should be clustered.

Responses from participants resulted into the identification of the following draft issues:

Jasoro CONSULTING

SAIIA APRM SOUTH AFRICA YOUTH SUBMISSION

SAIIA SOUTH AFRICAN INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

PROPOSED WRITING GROUPS

Education – GROUP 1
- Access to quality basic and higher education
- Education infrastructure
- Skills development
- Digital futures

Peace and security –GROUP 2
- Crime and violence
- GBV and Human trafficking
- Migration and xenophobia
- Constitutionalism and human rights

Corruption – GROUP 3
- State capacity
- Nepotism
- Political party funding
- Accountability

Economic empowerment GROUP 4
- Employment
- Entrepreneurship
- Income inequality and consumer patterns

Basic services and economic infrastructure –GROUP 5
- Water and sanitation
- Roads and built environment
- Transportation
- Telecoms infrastructure and data costs

Health – GROUP 6
- Substance abuse
- Sexual and reproductive health
- NHI
- Mental health

Political Participation – GROUP 7
- Electoral system and political party participation
- Youth representation in parliament and in public service
- Tokenism

Social services – GROUP 8
- Social welfare system
- Access to food and nutrition
- Basic income grant
- Public employment guarantees

Discrimination and social cohesion – GROUP 9
- Gender and sexual orientation
- Race and Ethnicity
- Nationality
- Religion

Land and housing – GROUP 10
- Access to land tenure
- Agriculture
- Urban housing and homelessness
- Rural development

Institutional planning – GROUP 11
- National Development Plan
- National youth governance structures (NYDA, Youth Desks, Ministry etc)
- SGDs and Agenda 2063

These issue clusters will be sent to the WhatsApp group for further discussion and validation by the Working Group.

Discussion
Have you found success in the first APRM process in South Africa?
Mr Gruzd stated that one of the most important factors is that identifying a problem is by no means solving it, but is the first step towards that. In South Africa in 2006, APRM civil society submissions were tabled in parliament before special ad-hoc APRM committees. This was a strength of the process. The first review picked up that xenophobia was a latent problem and a potential threat to peace. In Namibia, the CSO submission resulted in the fielding of a Targeted

Review on youth unemployment by the APRM Secretariat. Another notable success in the South African context is abolishment of floor crossing in parliament., although this reform was not linked to the APRM report, despite this recommendation having been made there. In Kenya, the APRM report warned about ethnicity and contested elections. Nevertheless, it must be noted that a written submission is not always enough, in that it has to followed by lobbying and continued participation.

How will the working group be constituted?
Ms Dooms responded by saying the aim is to constitute 12 groups working on separate issues. Each group can be made up of about ten people. Furthermore, all issues and sub-issues have to be classified in a manner that makes sense. Inasmuch as everyone is encouraged to make a contribution, we must balance democracy with efficiency, in such way that the written submission need not be too long. Moreover, each group will have a budget of R7000 and someone from the group will have to be in charge of that budget. This person will be determined by the group itself upon formation. She went on to stress that one of the most important things to do is to form a writing group which will have time frames in terms of meetings.

Closing
Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it was decided that groups will work online unless it is practically possible for members to meet. There is going to be a writing workshop on 20 October 2020 where participants can choose a group lead. The first drafts are due on 18 November 2020. In January 2021, the working group should have submitted the final draft for people to make inputs. The launch workshop will be in March 2021. It was mentioned that there will be a link sent to all participants where they can sign up to be part of any working group.