

Lesotho APRM: NGOs'/CSOs' Lessons, Challenges, Opportunities & Prospects

*(Perspectives for an
Experienced APRM
Player)*

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Maseru, July 2021

Outline

- Purpose
- Introduction (personal history with APRM)
- Lesotho experience with APRM: NGOs, Governance and Government (CSAR-CRR1)
- Lessons for NGO/CSOs
- Windows for NGOs per APRM stage
- Larger Picture: Selected Peer Lessons since CRR1
- Possibilities and Prospects: Strategy, Templates, Tactics

Purpose

- Identify (what I consider) key elements of APRM directly relevant to/for NGOs/CSOs
- Highlight benefits for CSOs and national actors in APRM
- Identify Opportunities for NGO engagement, influence with/on APRM
- Share experience with above from and for Lesotho
- Identify current and future prospects for LAPS & Lesotho NGOs in APRM

Introduction

*(personal
history with
APRM)*

- 30 years Governance NGO, thinktank, academia (1992)
 - Elections, Research (meth), APRM, African IR
- Circa 10 APR countries
- 15 years as APRM actor/player/"expert" (2006)
- 2 APRM TRIs (ISAS-LIPAM, SAILA) (2006-11/13)
- Roles
 - Governance research/academic teaching)
 - TRI research leader/coordinator (CRR #12)
 - Researcher (Best Practices I (12 CRRs))
 - Governance NGO leadership (Dem, HR, SJ/SED)
 - Reforms ES (NDPC)
 - CRM thematic expert (Uganda 2017 –EGM, DPG)
 - Governance Expert consultant (AMP, elections)
 - EMB Board (IEC-Lesotho)

Lesotho APRM experience: NGOs, Governance & Government

- **History we know**
 - Signed 2004, process started 2005, CSA started 2007, CSAR 2008-9, CRR 2010 (#21)
 - NGC, NGO-led (and dominated??)
- **Who they are**
 - **NGOs** (LCN, TRC etc), **FBOs** (CCL, etc), **EBOs** (LCCI, trade unions, etc), **Media**, **AROs and TRIs** (NUL, LIPAM)
- **The Environment/Context**
 - considered partners in development
 - participation/partnership is ad hoc, (limited) to consultation
 - weak monitoring and evaluation capacity
 - weak culture of debate, dialogue, information and knowledge sharing (intra-sector, with govt, externally)
 - weak/non-existent ownership-creation mechanisms (for nat. programmes)
 - internal AND cross-national networks not strong
- **NOW, meaning (for NGO/CSO community)?**

Context:

*(Challenges
,opportunities?)*

■ Challenges

- *Lesotho is well behind on these updates (for AU/NEPAD and ourselves)*
- *Implementation of NPoA (whole CRR?) needs review and integration: (now a decade old)*
- *National structures at 'skeletal' level OR outdated (NGC, FP, APRM Office?)*
- *APRM National profile weak (Continental presence same)*
- *Direct benefits (especially changed lives of citizens AND direct economic benefits to country) doubtful/not visible*

■ Has African future for Lesotho:

- Centre of excellence (WACAA for SADC?) LAPS regional?
- Learning from other Africans –successes, reform, best practices

■ Regional lesson and experience sharing and synergies

■ Strict adherence to APRM guidelines:

- Presentation to RECs
- Presentation to PAM
- CSOs could
- Regular assessments (AMP?)

■ Strategies:

- Push independent momentum “shadow/parallel” processes
- Also seek and formalise “APRM partnerships”

■ Branding, resources, vision, ownership continue to be problematic – but CHAMPIONS are needed

Challenges

: Hurdles to overcome?

- Sector participation ends at consultation: role in implementation and reporting?
- Lack of monitoring progress of NPoAs
- No clear reporting mechanism to NSA constituencies
- No “sectoral” opinion/input into self-assessment
- Integration, Coordination, Synergies limited INTERNALLY, EXTERNALLY and STRATEGICALLY
- Personality/interest dependence of momentum in Civil Society
- Resource constraints
- Weak thematic/work coordination to carry/internalise APRM within CSOs
- “Branding” weakness
- Low national profile –amnesia?
 - Non-prioritised in policy planning, coordination, resources, ‘future’
 - Not referred to in visualising “Lesotho we want”
 - Failure/neglect to mobilise support from Midrand

Lessons:

Big Picture since CRR 12

- Deliberate effort to capacitate NSAs on M&E (APRM and more) is necessary
- Internal GG?
 - CSOs cannot only hold govt to the standards of GG without practicing it themselves
- National political context matters:
 - politics/changes in government, stability and security of government, popular direct relevance etc
- Capacity & resources
 - lack the “luxury” of APRM programmes –little donor support, little local ownership (knowledge??)
- Involvement must go beyond consultation
 - assertiveness, branding, programming – innovation
- National ownership-creation-programmes
 - across the NSA movement and across the country –APRM still seen as government process

So?

*(Possibilities
& Prospects: Strategy, Templates, Tactics)*

- To what extent do/can CSOs in Lesotho collaborate on APRM,
 - and how can linkages be strengthened?
 - By being innovative and taking advantage of some of the windows and opportunities I have intimated
- For this, they also need to recognise that APRM is a NATIONAL, not government programme
 - Therefore they need to OWN and internalise it, brand it properly and link it to other elements of their core work

Pointers:

Strategic Windows

- ✓ Accession – post-accession
- ✓ **Sensitization**
- ✓ NGC membership
- ✓ Assessment research (inputs)
 - ✓ Report writing
 - ✓ POA formulation
- ✓ POA Implementation
 - ✓ POA M&E and reporting
- ✓ **Capacity-building & peer learning**

Way forward

➤ Possible Projects?

- Review of CRR 12
- APRM in Reforms (NRA)
- CSO-Parliament partnerships?
- Future reviews
- CSAQ and process reforms (nat/cont)
- Peer learning studies (not just tours) & regional projects (LAPS, AMAT? Etc)
- Performance benchmarking for APRM in Lesotho

What is needed

- vision/agenda at national level, to
 - integrate “lentsoe la Basotho” into what the state does (**reform?**)
 - pick and act on “low-hanging fruit” recommendations (**NRA, Plen II, CRR 12?**)
 - To act on long-standing recommendations for reform:
 - (IEC/electoral, parliamentary, peace-building, dual citizenship, diaspora, CSR, etc)
- Needs resources and ‘national’ capacity (even NGO-level)
 - Research, networking, critiques, policy advice, (**next reviews?**), updates/progress reporting
- Needs to demonstrate relevance and impact to Basotho
- Needs national-level active and visionary leadership (FP/Secretariat)
- **SO, what role here for CSOs? For LAPS?**

ie, LAPS up to it?

***THE
END!!!***