

REPORT ON ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

December 16, 2006, Accra – Ghana

Introduction

The Annual General Meeting successfully took place as planned on the 16th December 2006 and attracted Parliamentarians from APRN network countries – Benin, Malawi, Niger, Tanzania, Uganda and Zimbabwe. In all nineteen MPs attended. The Director of APRO, Dr. Rasheed Draman and Hon. A. Makinda, Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly of Tanzania and a member of the Steering Committee made opening remarks. The agenda for the meeting included:

- Review of past APRN activities
- Elaboration and ratification of an action plan for 2007
- Elections

Review of past APRN activities

A review of past APRN activities over the years and particularly over the last year, were given by Dr. Rasheed Draman. This covered the work of the Centre in some network countries in the areas of the community monitoring training; the pilot projects; the Africa – Asia Dialogues and the Newsletter.

Highlights of the *community monitoring training* program which took place in Tamale, Ghana was reviewed with special emphasis on the usefulness of the community scorecards as well as the citizens report cards.

Status of the *pilot projects* embarked on by MPs from network countries was also discussed. It was noted that while certain countries had completed the pilot projects others were yet to do so.

A summary of the objectives and number of *Africa – Asia dialogues* held were discussed. A recap of the recent dialogue held in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania in late September 2006 was emphasized. The financial and human resources support provided by the Parliament of Tanzania was highly commended.

On the *Newsletter*, it was emphasized that, hence forth, the Center will endeavor to stick to its quarterly time table for publication. The latest copies of the newsletter were distributed to MPs.

Elaboration and ratification of an action plan for 2007

As per the agreement between the Centre and the Austrian Development Agency, an action plan for the year 2007 was discussed taking cognizance of the terms outlined in the PC/ADA proposal. The action plan included: regional conferences; budget training;

publications; community monitoring projects; Newsletters; Website; Virtual Parliament and Executive Committee Meetings. The issues of community monitoring and newsletters for 2007 have been captured in the review of APRN activities' review in the previous section.

On *regional conferences* the MPs were briefed on plans being made by the Centre to ensure that members of the network attended a conference that would offer them the opportunity to engage in the poverty/development discourse and to network with researchers, academics, practitioners, the media as well as their counterparts from the region. To this end the Centre is making arrangements for network members to participate in one of two conferences to be held by Wilton Park, United Kingdom. The themes of these two conferences are "*Africa: Business Growth and Poverty Reduction*" (April 2007) and "*Government Accountability and Parliamentary Oversight in Developing Countries*" (October 2007). Final decision will be communicated to network members in due course. Additionally, issues relating to the on-going activities with IDRC's MIMAP are being worked out.

The first in the series of the twice yearly *budget training* program has just (11-15 Dec. 2006) been completed for MPs from three countries – Malawi, Uganda and Tanzania. The five-day training workshop was on the theme "***Financial Oversight Functions of Parliamentarians: Tools and Mechanisms for Optimum Government Budget Analysis***". In keeping with the terms of the PC/ADA agreement the next budget training will be held by May 2007 on the same theme but for selected francophone network countries.

The Centre, in keeping with its objective of serving as a knowledge organization will continue to undertake research on development issues, singularly or in collaboration with other institutions, and disseminate its finding in *publications*. The Centre plans to come up with research issues it can undertake in 2007.

One of the activities to be undertaken in 2007, which has already began, is the development of an *APRN website as well as a virtual parliament*. This will provide greater opportunities to MPs to exchange, share best practices and lessons learned. In 2007, the work on the website and the virtual parliament will be continued and be completed depending on the availability of time.

In 2007, the Executive committee will undertake the *annual meeting* at a date yet to be determined to review activities, discuss poverty/development issues and to advice on program development and activities as well as to set priorities. At a post-election discussion by elected members it was the view of the members that consideration should be given to more than just an annual meeting so that more issues could be covered and addressed.

Elections

Elections were held to elect officers to take charge of the network's activities. This was based on the election structure developed by the steering committee in the early part of 2006. The elections satisfied these conditions namely that there should be:

- Regional balance in representation;
- Gender balance; and
- Members should have demonstrated commitment to the work of APRN as well as to possess institutional memory and experiences in the Centre's activities.

Based on the agreed structure six members were elected as the executive committee to be in charge of the activities of the network for a two year period. Two members each were elected from Eastern, Southern and Western Africa to compose the six member committee.

Two members of the six were further elected by their colleagues to be the Chair and Vice Chair respectively. The regional and gender balance once again governed the election of the two leaders of the executive committee.

The elected officers were as follows:

REGION	ELECTED MEMBERS
Eastern Africa	Hon. A. Makinda (Tanzania) Hon. W. Okecho (Uganda)
Southern Africa	Hon. P. Mushenga (Zimbabwe) Hon. Dr. K. Thindwa (Malawi)
Western Africa	Hon. S. Adam (Benin) Hon. I. Adamou (Niger)

Hon. A. Makinda (Tanzania) and Hon. S. Adam (Benin) were elected as the Chair and Vice Chair respectively.

Participants' list

Below is the participants list for the program

	Name	Contact Information	Designation
1	S. Rwamafa Byanagwa	sbyanagwa@parliament.go.ug	MP – Uganda
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7	E. Kabadi Nyawazwa		MP – Tanzania
8	G. Cassian Kayombo	gaudencek@hotmail.com	MP – Tanzania
9	Felix Bello	fegbello@yahoo.co.uk	Committee Clerk – Budget and Finance, Malawi
10	Nelson Chuthi		MP – Malawi
11	Anderson Steppe		MP – Malawi
12	Roy Choma		MP – Malawi
13	Dr. K. M. Thindwa		MP – Malawi
14	Hon. A. Makinda	mlukolo@hotmail.com	MP – Tanzania
15	Hon. P. Mushenga	pathi99@yahoo.co.uk	MP – Zimbabwe
16	Hon. S. Adam	souleabou@yahoo.fr	MP – Benin
17	Hon. I. Adamou	Adamou99@yahoo.fr	MP – Niger
18	Hon. Abdou Saliou Youssao		MP – Benin
19	Hon. Hamidil Alio		MP – Niger