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**The Democratic Governance  
Fellowship Programme**

**Effective Stakeholder Participation  
in the APRM Process for the Promotion  
of Democratic Governance:  
A Case Study of Ghana**

Eric Albert Opoku, December 2006



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**The OGC Fellowship Programme**

The UNDP Oslo Governance Centre (OGC) was established in 2002 as a centre of excellence designed to provide support to the work of UNDP in democratic governance. The OGC is a unit of the Democratic Governance Group [DGG] in the Bureau for Development Policy [BDP]. The major purpose of the work of the OGC is to help position UNDP as a champion of democratic governance.

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**LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

AGF	-	African Governance Forum
APPER	-	Africa Priority Programme for Economic Recovery (1986-1990)
APRM	-	African Peer Review Mechanism
AU	-	African Union
CHRAJ	-	Commission of Human Rights and Administrative Justice
CBOs	-	Community-based organisations
CSO	-	Civil Society Organisation
DA	-	District Assembly
DCE	-	District Chief Executive
FBOs	-	Faith-based organisations
GC	-	Governing Council
GJA	-	Ghana Journalist Association
GNAT	-	Ghana National Association of Teachers
GOG	-	Government of Ghana
GPRS	-	Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy
NARPM-GC	-	National African Peer Review Mechanism Governing Council
NCCE	-	National Commission for Civic Education
NDPC	-	National Development Planning Commission
NEPAD	-	New Partnership for African Development
NFED	-	Non Formal Education Division
ISD	-	Information Service Department
PEF	-	Private Enterprise Foundation
PM	-	Presiding Member
POA	-	Programme of Action
RBA	-	Rights-Based Approach
TRT	-	Technical Review Team
UNPAAERD	-	UN Programme of Action for Africa's Economic Recovery and Development (1986-1990)

**DISCLAIMER**

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## Executive Summary



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1 APRM Base Document, (AHG/235[XXXVIII] Annex II) NEPAD Website: <http://www.nepad.org/2005/files/documents/49.pdf>

The African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) is 'an instrument voluntarily acceded to by Member States of the African Union as an African self-monitoring mechanism'.<sup>1</sup> Its primary purpose is to foster the adoption of policies, standards and practices that lead to the attainment of the objectives of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). APRM promotes stakeholder participation in the assessment and improvement of governance in participating countries, and thus promotes the practice of democratic governance. This paper holds that democratic governance is critical for the attainment of sustainable human development as it promotes participation of all stakeholders in taking decisions that affect them, e.g. decisions on allocation of available resources.

Ghana pioneered the implementation of the APRM process. This paper assesses the strengths and weaknesses of stakeholder participation in the Ghana process and makes recommendations for improvement and to deepen democratic governance practice. Thus this paper is intended to be a tool for facilitating effective stakeholder participation in the APRM processes, and indeed to improve stakeholder participation in other decision-making processes.

The paper first gives a background of the APRM, which is an integral aspect of NEPAD, and the factors that necessitated NEPAD. It then defines the key concepts of the paper, and explains the context within which stakeholder participation is discussed, i.e. the APRM structure and process at both the continental level and the national level in Ghana. Chapter three analyses the nature of stakeholder involvement in the APRM process in Ghana. Stakeholder participation is discussed with reference to the key stages of the APRM implementation process, and the challenge of successful capacity building for stakeholder participation is addressed. Based on these findings, broad recommendations are offered in chapter four, with a focus on strengthening participatory planning processes, ensuring effective stakeholder involvement at all stages of the APRM process, deepening national and continental ownership of the APRM, and developing strategies for strengthening public education and awareness.

The paper advocates that values, principles, and ethics such as courage, honesty, transparency, accountability and altruism are critical in ensuring effective implementation of the various stages of the APRM process for the attainment of its noble objectives. These factors or principles shape our perceptions and attitudes, which in turn guide our choices and actions. As to whether difficult but effective measures will be chosen over easy but ineffective ones that can be 'polished' through publicity and propaganda, is influenced by these factors.

The author therefore appeals to fellow stakeholders to be guided by superior principles as we make choices and decide whether to participate and pursue development or remain apathetic and maintain the status quo. In any case, it is worth noting that we will bear the consequences of our choices and also remember that posterity will be our judge. The poor majority of the populace look up to leadership and those of us who have the chance to participate directly in the process, to make APRM work for the promotion of democratic governance and attainment of sustainable human development in Ghana and the entire continent. It is my hope that we will not fail the country and continent.

# Chapter 1: General Introduction

## 1.1 Background and Justification of the Study

The various development agendas drawn over the years for Africa seem to have focused on economic growth, with little attention on governance. Despite these efforts the continent has seen little success, but rather many intra-country and in some cases inter-country conflicts which often relate to power and control of resources. These occurrences, along with others factors, have highlighted the importance of governance at all levels. However, there is a growing perception across the globe, particularly in Africa, that governance is becoming the domain of a small elite of society who manipulate it to their sectarian advantage, to the detriment of society in general. There is growing citizens' 'disaffection in both new and old democracies about the way their governments operate and their own capacity to influence them'.<sup>2</sup> In Africa, as in other places, the resultant conflicts from such dissatisfaction, if they are resolved at all, are often addressed through dialogue involving all the relevant stakeholders involved. This is a testimony to stakeholders' desire to be involved in making decisions that affect all aspects of their lives, especially those relating to livelihood, allocation of resources, and survival.

2 David Beetham, (2005) 'Democracy: A Beginner's Guide', (Oneworld Publication., Thomson Press Ltd., India).

Efforts to put Africa back on the path of development culminated in the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), which was formally adopted as a strategic framework for integrated socio-economic development for Africa at the 37th Summit of the OAU in July 2001. The primary objectives of NEPAD are to eradicate poverty; place African countries, both individually and collectively, on a path of sustainable growth and development; halt the marginalisation of Africa in the globalisation process and enhance its full and beneficial integration into the global economy; and to accelerate the empowerment of women. Guided by principles of good governance, through participation of all sectors of society and partnership between and amongst African peoples<sup>3</sup>, the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) was designed as one of NEPAD's key priority areas to facilitate the attainment of its objectives.

3 NEPAD Website, NEPAD in Brief: <http://www.nepad.org/2005/files/inbrief.php>

APRM is 'an instrument voluntarily acceded to by Member States of the African Union as an African self-monitoring mechanism'.<sup>4</sup> Its primary purpose 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 practices, including identifying deficiencies and assessing the needs for capacity building'.<sup>5</sup> Under the memorandum of understanding that countries sign to accede to the mechanism, they are required to ensure the participation of all stakeholders, including trade unions, women, youth, civil society, private sector, rural communities and professional associations, in the development of a national Programme of Action (PoA)<sup>6</sup>. APRM has distinct structures and processes through which the intended objectives are to be achieved. These have been elaborated upon in Appendix 1. NEPAD therefore seeks to promote democratic governance in the African Union (AU) member states, through the participation of all stakeholders in decision-making processes of the APRM. 'Stakeholder participation' in all stages of the APRM processes is therefore the fundamental link between the APRM and democratic governance.

4 APRM Base Document, (AHG/235[XXXVIII] Annex II) NEPAD Website: <http://www.nepad.org/2005/files/documents/49.pdf>

5 Ibid.

6 Memorandum of Understanding of the African Peer Review Mechanism ('THE MOU'): <http://www.nepad.org/2005/files/documents/111.pdf>



Stakeholder participation, which APRM promotes, is also very important if viewed within the context of the rights-based approach (RBA), an approach that:

7 4th Report of the UN Independent Expert on Rights to Development, quoted from African Human Rights Law Journal, Vol 4, No. 1, 2004.

*‘...embraces the inter-dependence of rights – civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights and which follows procedure and norms of human rights laws, and is transparent, accountable, participatory and non-discriminatory, with equity in decision-making and sharing of fruits of the process’<sup>7</sup>.*

8 UN General Assembly Resolution 55/96 on Promoting and Consolidating Democracy, 28 February, 2001.

Thus APRM, through its participatory processes, incorporates the rights-based approach (RBA) as it advocates the need for respecting citizens’ right to be part of decision making processes. Also, it has the potential to translate into reality Section 1(e) of UN resolution 55/96 on ‘Promoting and consolidating democracy’, as it seeks to ensure ‘wide participation of all members of civil society in the promotion and consolidation of democracy’<sup>8</sup>.

#### **Benefits of Effective Stakeholder Participation**

In the light of the above, the importance of APRM lies in the involvement of stakeholders in decision-making processes which yields many benefits for individuals and society. Among others, it creates a sense of self-dignity and belonging for the individual members of society and encourages them to develop their intrinsic potential capabilities for their own benefit and that of society at large. Participation in decision-making also creates legitimacy and ownership of the results among all stakeholders involved and wins their commitment to the outcomes. Subsequently, stakeholders demonstrate their commitment through participation in and the provision of technical, financial and material support for the implementation of decisions made. Its ultimate outcome is collective responsibility and sustainability of both the agreements reached and the democratic processes which resulted in them.

9 APRM Base Document:  
<http://www.nepad.org/2005/files/documents/49.pdf>

These issues clearly underscore the relevance of the APRM as an instrument for promoting good democratic governance through its emphasis on stakeholder participation, both in the country assessment and the implementation of the resultant PoA. Consequently, the need to examine stakeholder participation in the APRM and ensure its effectiveness cannot be over-emphasised. Another reason to research this issue are the several different forms of participation in the APRM. Some of these may be shallow, in spite of the fact that the core guiding principles of the APRM require that: ‘every review exercise carried out under the authority of the Mechanism must be technically competent, credible and free of political manipulation’<sup>9</sup>.

#### **Why Ghana as Case Study?**

Ghana has been ground breaking in pioneering the implementation of APRM among the 25 countries that have acceded to the APRM mechanism. Naturally, the implementation of APRM in Ghana has its associated successes and challenges. The study of Ghana’s experience is therefore crucial in helping to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the APRM process in the face of practical challenges and opportunities of implementation. The lessons learnt and recommendations made will hopefully inform adjustments that need to be made to improve and make the process more effective for the attainment of its mandate.



## 1.2 Study Purpose, Scope and Methodology

### **Purpose:**

The primary purpose of this paper is to help deepen stakeholder participation in APRM processes and thus promote the practice of good democratic governance.

The specific objectives of this paper are to:

1. Highlight the merits and demerits of stakeholder involvement in the APRM process in Ghana
2. Discuss the opportunities and challenges of ensuring effective stakeholder participation in the APRM processes and
3. Offer recommendations for the improvement of stakeholder participation in the APRM processes for the promotion of good democratic governance.

A transparent and generally accepted participatory process, it is believed, will ensure popular ownership of the results and commitment to the implementation of the resultant National Programme of Action (PoA) for the country's sustainable development.

### **Scope:**

This paper explores the relationship between the practice of democratic governance, effective stakeholder participation and sustainable human development, with reference to Ghana's self-assessment period in the APRM process. It focuses on APRM's approach to promoting stakeholder participation for the promotion and practice of democratic governance. It begins by looking briefly at concepts and then turns to practice by examining the level and extent of stakeholder participation in the APRM process in Ghana, in respect of the relevant APRM provisions. Here the strengths and weaknesses of the Ghana process are examined. Recommendations are subsequently made for deepening stakeholder participation for the realization of its benefits. Although the paper focuses on Ghana's experience, it will also draw on experiences from other countries for some comparative analysis of aspects of best practices with respect to stakeholder participation.

Though there is no shortage of literature on governance, a discussion on the debates about the definition and semantics of good or democratic governance falls beyond the scope of this paper. It will also not debate whether democratic governance should be perceived as an 'end' and/or 'means'.

### **Methodology:**

The study makes use of a combination of primary and secondary data, as well as the author's personal experience of the APRM process in Ghana. Review of literature, interviews and questionnaires have been employed for data collection and analysis, with a focus on the level and extent of stakeholders' involvement at various stages of Ghana's self-assessment process.

In the next chapter, we will look at key concepts and definitions to place the discussions of the paper in context.

## Chapter 2: Definition of Key Concepts

### 2.1 Introduction

As indicated in chapter one, one objective of the APRM is to promote democracy and good political governance. This chapter seeks to define and draw the conceptual links between *democratic governance*, *effective stakeholder participation* and *human development*. The assumption is that when stakeholder participation is effective, for example, in the APRM processes, governance would be democratic and beneficial to the achievement of human development. In effect, this chapter sets the context within which the importance of stakeholder participation in the APRM and other governance processes is discussed in this paper.

### 2.2 What is Democratic Governance?

This paper uses the term *democratic governance*. This is defined as a system of structures and processes and their relationships which are employed by a group of people to guide, stimulate and regulate individual and collective activities, behaviours and interactions in a participatory manner, in order to attain growth and development to the benefit of all stakeholders. Guiding principles for the practice of democratic governance include the equality of all people (stakeholders), equitable representation, the rule of law, transparency, accountability and respect for human rights, including the right of people to participate in making decisions that affect them.<sup>10</sup>

All the principles of democratic governance clearly reinforce each other. For instance, employing transparent and accountable processes make imperative the issues of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms of stakeholders such as the right to information, participation and freedom of association, which helps in defining representation. While the principle of equality emphasizes the need to treat all people with dignity irrespective of their racial, ethnic, religious, social and economic background; equitable representation seeks to ensure that different groups in society (including disadvantaged groups such as women, the youth and the disabled, as well as the rural and the urban poor) are adequately and fairly represented in decision-making processes. Rule of law will thus be respected and upheld since the guidelines and provisions that make up the law would have been agreed upon collectively. The assumption here is that when all relevant stakeholders are allowed to participate in decision-making processes through appropriate structures, resources will be fairly allocated to the benefit of all citizens.

Against this context, this paper attempts to draw the link between the effectiveness of stakeholder participation at all levels in the APRM process and the quality of democratic governance, which in turn is very important in the pursuit of human development. The questions that need to be addressed in this regard include:

- How does the APRM promote stakeholder participation and, by extension, democratic governance?
- Are stakeholders involved adequately in the APRM processes?
- Are citizens playing their role effectively? and
- Are the needs and views of stakeholders (critical for their development) considered?

10

1. <http://www.undp.org/governance>:2. George Nzongola-Ntalaja, *Democratic Governance and Human Rights in the International Framework*, 15<sup>th</sup> June 2004;3. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Governance>

### 2.3 What is Human Development?

The ultimate aim of NEPAD/APRM is to achieve sustainable human development through democratic governance. The link between democratic governance and human development is evident from the above discussion. As indicated by UNDP, human development is basically a condition of satisfaction among people about their lives. This is achieved through the creation of 'an environment in which people can develop their full potential and lead productive, creative lives in accord with their needs and interests'. Its scope therefore goes beyond the 'rise or fall of national incomes' or economic growth, which may be a very important means of helping people to expand their choices.<sup>11</sup>

11 United Nations Development Programme, 2006: <http://hdr.undp.org/hd/>

Human development is thus defined in this paper as both a process and a condition of creating a stable, peaceful and secure environment that allows people to satisfactorily expand their choices and participate in decision-making to facilitate the development of their intrinsic potentials and to pursue their businesses successfully, create wealth and meet their needs.

In effect, participatory decision-making as promoted by APRM is imperative for the attainment of both democratic governance and human development. The challenge is translating these good concepts into practice, and the relevant question here is; who are the people (stakeholders)? This is one of the questions that this paper attempts to address, both in the context of stakeholder participation in the APRM process in particular, and democratic governance in general.

### 2.4 What is 'Effective Stakeholder Participation'?

**Participation** can take various forms. It may be through consultation, which is essentially getting people's views on an issue without any obligation to take on the views expressed beyond just listening to them. It may also be the provision of material or financial resources without much control over their usage. As best practices suggest, participation is also the involvement of all stakeholders in all stages of a programme/project, including conceptualization, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. This may also include managing the intervention. Stakeholder participation is qualified in this paper with 'effective' to draw attention to the desired end result – actual participation and collective responsibility and ownership; not just the situation of bringing people together or consulting them.

Thus **Effective Stakeholder Participation** is defined here as a transparent, fair and generally accepted **process** of determining the relevant stakeholders of a process or an issue, analyzing their needs, capacitating them with relevant information and tools and creating a congenial atmosphere that allows them to provide informed input into decisions on issues that do or may affect them. Thus an effective stakeholder process is guided by the democratic principles of equitable representation, inclusion of the vulnerable/marginalized groups and respect for human rights, including the right to relevant information and participation.

The inter-connected stages which are key to the process of making stakeholder participation effective, as perceived in this paper, are:

1. Determining stakeholders
2. Capacitating stakeholders to participate fully
3. Creating avenues to inform and engage stakeholders
4. Managing the entire process with stakeholders
5. Validating and reaching consensus with stakeholders

### Determination of Stakeholders

The APRM process, like most national programmes, requires popular participation through the use of good multi-stakeholder processes (MSP). Since a stakeholder is a person or group(s) of persons who have an interest or 'stake' in, or may be affected (positively or negatively), by an issue or a decision to be taken, the process of deciding who participates in the programme or not, is therefore very crucial. This stage determines whether the entire process will be truly participatory or not and can be facilitated by a comprehensive situational and stakeholder analyses to ensure that no relevant stakeholder is excluded by design or omission. In order to prevent such occurrence, the APRM Guidelines Document advises for the involvement of key stakeholders in defining the 'roadmap on participation in the APRM' process, which should be 'widely publicized'.<sup>12</sup> Thus individuals or group who are interested in the process will be made aware and have the choice to participate or not.

12 Guidelines for Countries to Prepare for and Participate in the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), NEPAD/APRM/Panel3/guidelines/11-2003/Doc8

The stakeholder analysis will subsequently inform the planning of the entire exercise in terms of stakeholders to be involved at each stage of the process, appropriate methods to be employed for different stakeholders, as well as sequencing and timing of activities to achieve the desired impact.

13 Ibid.

Broadly, the stakeholders of the APRM process include **government, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), private sector and international development partners**<sup>13</sup>. NGOs refer to the broader civil society and its various organisations including the media, trade associations, professional bodies, academia, Faith-Based Organisations (FBOs) and Community-Based Organisations (CBOs). The questions that this paper will attempt to address are 'who determines the stakeholders, and how are they determined'?

### Building the Capacity of Stakeholders

Ability to participate effectively in any process is dependent, among other factors, on one's capacity regarding knowledge of the subject-matter and its social, economic or political ramifications. It is in this regard that the National APRM Focal Points are required to provide information to the public about the 'national coordinating structures, the stages of the APRM and the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders from government, nongovernmental organizations, private sector and international development partners'.<sup>14</sup> Adequate time to process this information is an important factor determining how well stakeholders can use the information for its intended purpose. This makes timing very crucial when planning the process of building the capacity of stakeholders. The vital issue here is how the stakeholders' capacity is built to ensure effective participation in the process.

14 Ibid.

15 Ibid.

### **Creating Avenues to Inform and Engage Stakeholders**

Closely linked to enhancing the capacity of stakeholders is the need for appropriate channels of communication. This is adequately recognised in the APRM Guidelines requesting National Focal Points to 'establish and publicize feedback mechanism between different levels of government and with non-governmental stakeholders'<sup>15</sup>. Through such avenues, clarifications are sought for better understanding of the process and informed inputs are also made. They serve the dual purpose of providing means of communication and engagement. Thus the feedback mechanism also allows stakeholders to ensure and validate the final output as a true reflection of their inputs and opinions. This results in popular ownership and commitment to the implementation of the resultant PoA, as well as the sustainability of the process. The paper will therefore attempt to examine avenues that were created to inform and engage stakeholders, and how effective they were.

### **Managing the Entire Process with Stakeholders**

Best practice, as indicated earlier, suggests that stakeholders should be involved in all stages of a programme to make their participation meaningful. This is made possible where stakeholders are involved in the design and management of the entire process. This is very crucial considering that the whole issue of participation is about respecting the rights of people and making them feel respected in order to win their commitment for the successful implementation of the outcome, e.g. the PoA. Sustainable development is only possible with the indispensable participation and commitment of all stakeholders. If so, are stakeholders adequately involved in the design and management of the process, and in what ways can stakeholder participation be improved?

In the light of the above, meaningful stakeholder participation is an end which is only attainable through comprehensive planning of the entire process in collaboration with stakeholders. This results in the development of mutually acceptable multi-stakeholder processes, improves participation, wins the commitment and support of stakeholders for the implementation and supports the sustainability of collectively made decisions. In effect, the critical issue is the attention paid to the details of the various stages of the process of ensuring stakeholder participation. This is what actually determines the success or failure of achieving the desired goal and associated benefits.

This paper therefore assesses stakeholder participation in Ghana's APRM process in the above context. The concept of APRM is explained below to clarify the framework within which participating countries such as Ghana implemented the process, particularly for readers who are not familiar with the APRM. It also helps to situate the context of this paper within APRM framework.

## **2.5 The Concept of the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM)**

### **What is APRM?**

APRM is an 'instrument voluntarily acceded to by Member States of the African Union as an African self-monitoring mechanism',<sup>16</sup> to facilitate the attainment of the NEPAD objectives. Along the line of a peer review, which is usually a process of performance assessment among people of similar standing (peers) and sharing of experiences for development, APRM is assessment of governance performances among the member Heads of States or Governments (HSGs) (peers).

16 APRM Base Document:  
<http://www.nepad.org/2005/files/documents/49.pdf>

Through the mechanism, participating African HSGs (peers) ‘peer review’ the situation pertaining in members countries regarding the four focal areas of the APRM, which are *Democracy and Good Political Governance, Economic Governance and Management, Corporate Governance, and Socio-economic Development*.

Member countries subsequently assist the country under review to implement a programme of action (PoA) the reviewed country has developed in order to address identified shortcomings, improve its governance and enhance the living standard of its people. The APRM is innovative in respect of its voluntary nature. Countries accede to the mechanism on their own volition, without any compulsion from the AU. This is intended to ensure that countries that accede are fully committed to the APRM and its goals.

A critical requirement of the APRM is stakeholder participation through fora for dialogue, experience-sharing, and mutual support within and among the participating countries towards the attainment of the set objectives. Thus the mechanism inculcates in stakeholders and participating countries the idea of being their ‘brother’s keeper’. Currently 25 out of the 53 African countries have acceded to the mechanism. The APRM is implemented via its designed structures and five-stage process described below (see an elaborate description and a table of participating countries in Appendix 1).

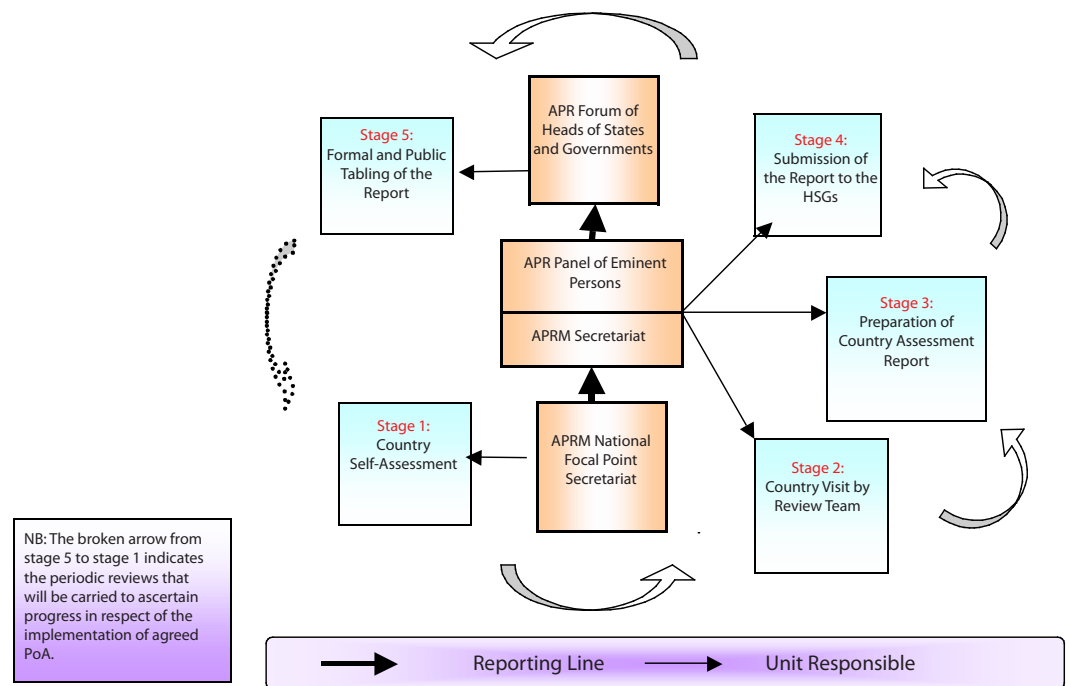
### 2.5.1 The APRM Structure and Processes

The APRM process is managed through a well-designed and simple structure that clearly defines the roles of the various components. The **APR Forum** (of participating HSGs) is the highest decision-making authority of the structure. It oversees the entire APRM process and is responsible for the establishment of the other components of the structure such as the APR Panel and the APR Secretariat. It also considers and adopts the final country review reports submitted by the APR Panel, discusses it with the peer Head of State and assists the government to implement her PoA to improve governance and socio-economic conditions in the country. Below the APR Forum is the seven-member **APR Panel** of eminent persons<sup>17</sup> appointed by the Forum to direct and manage the Continental APRM process. The Panel oversees the selection and appointment of the APR Review Teams, considers review reports and makes recommendations to the APR Forum. The APR Panel and Forum is supported by the **APR Secretariat** in South Africa that provides secretarial, technical, coordinating and administrative support services for the APRM. A Country Review Team (**APR Team**) is periodically constituted only for the country review visit. It is appointed to visit countries that have completed the country self-assessment to review progress with the country’s programme of action. The team produces the APRM report on each country after its review.<sup>18</sup> At country level, the APRM is overseen by the **National Focal Point**, which may be a Council, Commission, Ministry, Department or be organised under the Office of the President, according to the country’s preference.

17 The members of the Panel are Dr. Dorothy Njuma of Cameroun (Chairperson), Ms. Marie-Angelique Savane of Senegal, Ambassador Bethuel Kiplagat of Kenya, Dr. Chris Stals of South Africa, Prof. Adebayo Adedeji of Nigeria, Dr. Graca Machel of Mozambique, and Mr. Mahammed Babes of Algeria (who replaced Mr. Mourad Midelci who has appointed a Minister of State of Algeria).

18 African Peer Review Mechanism Organisation and Processes: NEPAD/HGSIC-3-2003/APRM/Guideline/O&P 9 March 2003

FIGURE1: THE APRM STRUCTURE AND PROCESSES



The APRM Process involves periodic reviews of the policies and practices of participating states to ascertain progress being made toward the attainment of mutually agreed goals. It has five main stages. Much as the APRM process is broadly clear, it only provides the framework and each country determines its national processes for conducting the country self-assessment (Stage 1). This design may be a strength as it allows adoption of conducive situation-specific approaches. At the same time, it may be a weakness if countries employ very varied approaches that tend to be less participatory, transparent and are dominated by one group or another. What is evident from the different approaches employed by countries that have implemented the first stage, is that the intended six-month duration for the submission of the country report to the APR Forum i.e. the entire 5-stage process, is inadequate for even stage 1 alone. This is due to the participatory nature of the process and the time it takes for consensus to be reached by the different stakeholders. The key units or components of the structure responsible for the different stages of the APRM process are as depicted in Figure 1 and explained below:

The APRM process is made up of five key stages. Stage 1 is the **Country Self-Assessment** whereby a participating country conducts a self-assessment in the four focal areas and develops a Programme of Action (PoA) to address identified short comings. A final report on these is sent to the APR Secretariat. Stage 2 - **Country Review Visit** - then commences when an APR 'Review' Team is put together and visits the country to consult with a wide range of stakeholders and to ascertain if the final report submitted by the country reflects the situation on the ground. In Stage 3 - **Preparation of Country Assessment Report** - the Review Team prepares its report on the country and submits it with the concerned government's responses,



to the APR Panel. **Submission of the Report to the HSGs** marks the fourth Stage. Here, the APR Panel studies the reports and adds its comments before it is submitted to the HSGs for discussion, comments and adoption. In the final Stage 5 - **Formal and Public Tabling of the Report**, the report is made public and formally tabled in key regional and sub-regional structures such as the Pan African Parliament, etc, before it is released to the general public. Although the report was supposed to be made available to the public six months after it had been considered by the HSGs, the APRM Forum released Ghana's report early. This was mainly due to two factors: Because Ghana pioneered the APRM, the implementation period took longer than envisaged. There was also a concern that the public would suspect censorship on the part of the HSGs if the report would be kept away from the public for a period of six months.

The implementation of the PoA that follows the fifth stage is the most important aspect of the process, which leads to the attainment of the desired transformation. At this point, the country modifies its PoA and continues to implement it to improve governance, while monitoring progress. The APR Secretariat also monitors the country's progress and interacts with the implementers of the Programme to assist where necessary, especially with capacity building and resource mobilisation (See Appendix 1 for elaboration on the stages of the process).

### 2.5.2 Stakeholder Participation in the APRM Processes and the Practice of Democratic Governance

As indicated in chapter one, stakeholder participation as a way of promoting democratic governance is at the root of the APRM process, and there is strong emphasis on this at both the national and continental level in order to facilitate experience-sharing and collective growth and development. The APRM Basic Guidelines Document states:

The APRM process is designed to be open and participatory. Through a participatory process, the APRM will engage **key stakeholders** to facilitate exchange of information and national dialogue on good governance and socio-economic development programmes, thereby increase the transparency of the decision-making processes, and build trust in the pursuit of national development goals.<sup>19</sup>

Participating countries are therefore enjoined 'to organise a participatory and transparent national process'<sup>20</sup>. They are also required to:

- a. Define, **in collaboration with key stakeholders, a roadmap on participation in the APRM**, which should be widely publicized and provide information about the national coordinating structures, the stages of the APRM and the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders from government, nongovernmental organizations, private sector and international development partners in the APRM Guidelines Document.
- b. Establish and publicize feedback mechanism between different levels of government and with non-governmental stakeholders.
- c. **Ensure participation by relevant stakeholders** in the implementation of the Programme of Action.
- d. Make annual progress reports to the APR Secretariat on the implementation of the Programme of Action.

19 Guidelines for Countries to Prepare for and Participate in the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), NEPAD/ APRM/Panel3/guidelines/11-2003/ Doc8, Paragraph 13

20 Ibid

As a way of assessing the participation of stakeholders, participating countries are required to clearly indicate in the country's Programme of Action:

- 'Description of the national consultations that have taken place during the self-assessment and development of the National Programme of Action', and
- 'Outline of feedback mechanism established to keep local stakeholders involved in the process, including effort to disseminate information in an easily accessible and understandable manner'.<sup>21</sup>

21 Ibid

Above all, the review exercise is required to be 'technically competent, credible and free of political manipulation'.<sup>22</sup>

22 Ibid

It is the above clear provisions on stakeholder participation in the APRM process that manifest its link to the promotion of democratic governance practices. This linkage is also evident in the UNDP definition of governance, as a:

.....system of values, policies and institutions by which a society manages its economic, political and social affairs through interactions within and among the state, civil society and private sector. It is the way a society organizes itself to make and implement decisions— achieving mutual understanding, agreement and action... It operates at every level of human enterprise, be it the household, village, municipality, nation, region or globe.<sup>23</sup>

23 UNDP Strategy Note on Governance for Human Development, 2004

Thus it is '...a collective or social practice involving discussions, arguments and debates in the course of reaching an agreed decision and engaging in action with others'<sup>24</sup>. The involvement of stakeholders therefore help in the fulfilment of the requirements and principles of democratic governance. This includes respect for the right of people to participate in taking decision that affect them, which is also advocated by the African Charter on Popular Participation in Development and Transformation, especially under People's Role.<sup>25</sup> APRM, like democratic governance, acknowledges the interdependence of and promotes respect for the social, cultural, economic and political rights of the citizenry, through their participation in decision-making at all levels. This is more so considering that the ultimate goal of democratic governance - development of the people - is strongly linked to their involvement in charting the course of progress. This is corroborated by the experience that '*the ability of the people to organize themselves to participate in political process and influence national and local policies and programs is the single most important factor in improving human conditions*'<sup>26</sup>. Again, as the definition of UNDP above indicates, governance (decision-making) affects all aspects of life and operates 'at all levels of human enterprise'<sup>27</sup>, hence the aptness of involving those who will be affected. When practiced as it should be, democratic governance will lead to transparency and build trust among all stakeholders. It will also bring out the best potential of all stakeholders for the entire system of society to function effectively for the creation of wealth.

24 David Beetham, (2005) 'Democracy: A Beginner's Guide', (Oneworld Publication, Thomson Press Ltd., India).

25 African Charter on Popular Participation in Development and Transformation: <http://www.africaaction.org/african-initiative/chartall.htm>

26 G. Shabbir Cheema, (2005) 'Building Democratic Institutions: Governance Reform in Developing Countries', Kumarian Press Inc., USA

27 UNDP Strategy Note on Governance for Human Development, 2004

In chapter three, we will look at the APRM process in Ghana and examine the level and extent of stakeholder participation in the context of the discussions above.

## Chapter 3: Stakeholder Participation in Ghana's APRM Process

### 3.1 Introduction

Ghana was among the first countries to accede to the APRM and the first country to undergo the APRM. The key issue to be examined in this chapter is to what extent stakeholders were effectively involved and participating in the process. Consequently, attempts will be made at examining the following questions: who were the key stakeholders and how were they determined; what avenues were created for their involvement; how well were they informed and capacitated to participate; how were their ideas integrated into the process; and what consensus was reached for the way forward? In order to contextualize the discussion, let us first take a look at the organizational structure and the key stages of the implementation process in Ghana within which stakeholder participation took place. They are as explained and illustrated in Figures 2 and 3 respectively.

### 3.2 Organizational Structure and Implementation Framework

#### 3.2.1 Organizational Structure

28 The NAPRM GC is made up seven eminent members comprising: Rev. Prof. S.K. Adjepong (Chairman), Ambassador Alex N. Abankwa, Prof. S.K.B. Asante, Most Rev. Dr. Bishop Paul Bemile, Prof. Miranda Greenstreet, Ms. Gloria Ofori-Boadu and Mr. Nutifafa Kuenyehia.

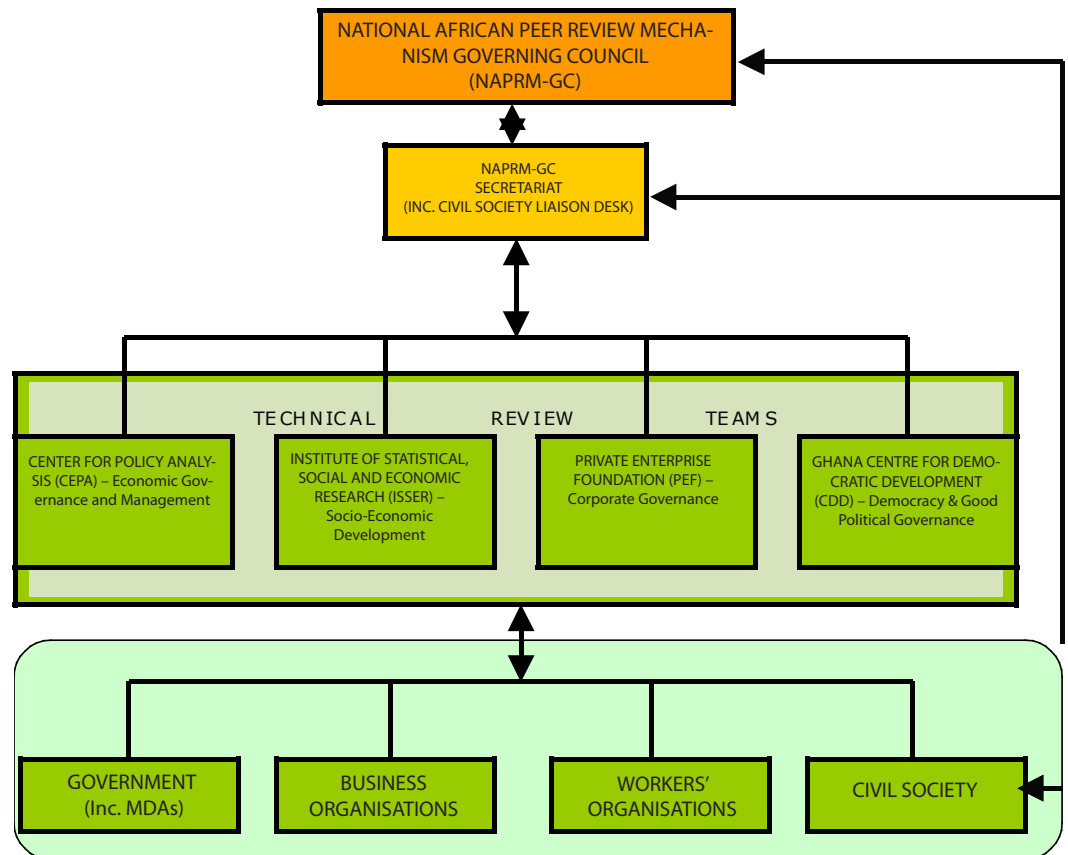
The NAPRM GC<sup>28</sup> is at the apex of the structure with a mandate to oversee the successful implementation of the APRM process in Ghana. It is supported by a Secretariat. Below the Secretariat are the four non-governmental thinks-tanks that carried out the country self-assessment exercise in the form of surveys focused on the four focal areas. They are referred to as the Technical Review Teams (TRTs) and are:

- Center for Democratic Development (CDD) – Democracy and Good Political Governance
- Center for Policy Analysis (CEPA) – Economic Governance and Management
- Private Enterprise Foundation (PEF) – Corporate Governance
- Institute of Statistical Social and Economic Research (ISSER) – Socio-Economic Development

At the base of the structure are the stakeholders, comprising the governments, private sector (business associations) and civil society who provide input to the country survey.

#### 3.2.2 Country Self-Assessment Implementation Framework

The government of Ghana, following accession to the APRM, and on the principle of ensuring a credible and professional process devoid of political manipulation, established a 7-member National African Peer Review Mechanism Governing Council (NAPRM-GC) as an independent body to oversee the implementation of APRM in the country.

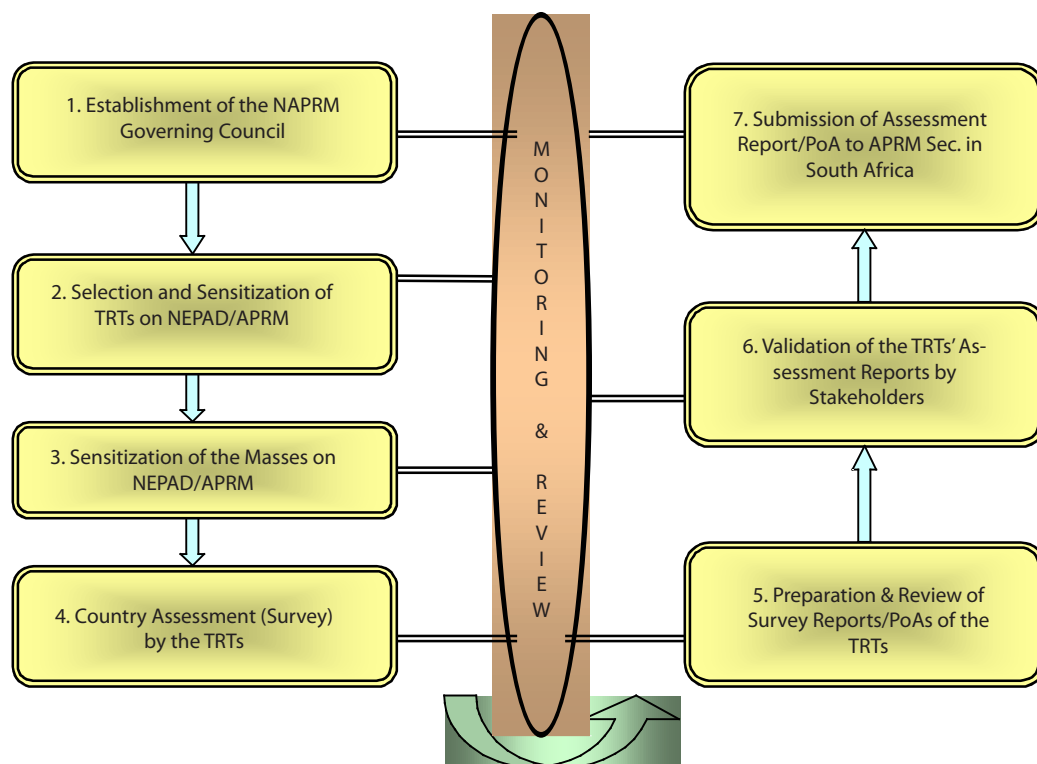
**FIGURE 2: ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE APRM PROCESS IN GHANA**

Source: NAPRM GC Secretariat, Ghana.

The Council subsequently determined the organizational structure above and country assessment processes within which the participation of stakeholders in Ghana's APRM took place, and are discussed in this chapter. The Ghana process may be classified under the following broad headings:

- Selection and Engagement of Technical Teams to assess the prevailing situation in the country under the four focal areas of the APRM
- Awareness Creation and Sensitization of Stakeholders
- Country Assessment Exercise
- Preparation of the Assessment Reports
- Validation of the Assessment Reports and
- Preparation and Submission of the Final Country Assessment Report and Programme of Action (PoA) to the Continental APR Secretariat in South Africa.

FIGURE 3: GHANA'S APRM IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS



### 3.3 Assessment of Stakeholder Participation in Ghana's Process

The assessment of this process will be done in the context of the concept of meaningful stakeholder participation as discussed in chapter two and by addressing the questions raised in the introduction of this chapter. The discussion will draw on the experiences of South Africa and Kenya.

#### 3.3.1 Determination and Preparation of Stakeholders (Analysis of Stakeholders)

The process of determining the relevant stakeholders in Ghana was done at three levels, by the government, the Governing Council and the Technical Review Teams (TRTs).

##### Appointment of National Focal Point (NAPRM GC) members by Government:

The government, through the Ministry of Regional Cooperation and NEPAD (MRCN) initiated the process by selecting the members of and setting up the National APRM Governing Council (NAPRM GC) and its Secretariat. Ross Herbert has indicated that the government appointed the Council's civil society members without public consultation and 'despite an outcry from civil society organizations'<sup>29</sup>. However, according to the Executive Secretary of the NAPRM GC Secretariat, the outcry led to the development of criteria that guided the selection of the seven eminent persons.<sup>30</sup> This is quite similar to the case of South Africa, where government unilaterally

29 Ross Herbert, 'The survival of NEPAD and the African Peer Review Mechanism', South African Journal of International Affairs (Volume 11, Issue 1, Summer/Autumn 2004)

30 Interview with Dr, Francis Appiah, Executive Secretary of the NAPRM GC, Monday, 8<sup>th</sup> January, 2007.

31 Criteria for appointment of GC members: Appointees are not state officials, have professional competence, integrity, objectivity, impartiality and independence, command of public rectitude, capacity to stand up for public scrutiny in respect of the APRM findings. Other considerations were ethnic and regional balance, religious representation, academic representation, civil society advocacy, gender balance, legal representation and international review experience (Source: Presentation by Dr. Francis Appiah, Executive Secretary of the NAPRM GC).

32 Ross Herbert, 'The survival of NEPAD and the African Peer Review Mechanism', *South African Journal of International Affairs* (Volume 11, Issue 1, Summer/Autumn 2004)

33 Steven Gruz, 'South Africa and the APRM', draft chapter for forthcoming book on 'APRM Lessons Learned' by Ross Herbert and Steven Gruz, to be published by the South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA), Johannesburg, 2007.

34 During the inauguration of the GC, the President did not make the members swear oath of allegiance to him; and the NAPRM GC office is located outside the premises of any government ministry, to stress their independence.

35 Steven Gruz, 'Kenya and the APRM', draft chapter for forthcoming book on 'APRM Lessons Learned' by Ross Herbert and Steven Gruz, to be published by the South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA), Johannesburg, 2007.

36 Guidelines for Countries to Prepare for and Participate in the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), NEPAD/APRM/Panel3/guidelines/11-2003/Doc8

37 Interview with Mr. Isaac Owusu Mensah, former Principal Programme Officer, NAPRM GC Secretariat.

38 Steven Gruz, 'Ghana and the APRM', draft chapter for forthcoming book on 'APRM Lessons Learned' by Ross Herbert and Steven Gruz, to be published by the South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA), Johannesburg, 2007.

appointed the Minister of Public Service and Administration as head of the APRM Focal Point without consulting civil society and subsequently attracted their outcry. The acceptance of Ghana's GC was initially threatened and could have weakened national ownership of the process, as in South Africa. In Ghana, the threat was somehow averted through regional sensitization workshops of the GC, where the criteria for the selection of the members were explained to participants.<sup>31</sup> Kenya, on the other hand, employed a more open approach whereby civil society elected its representatives who constituted the majority of its National Governing Council. Though this of approach has its problems as well, it helps in ensuring legitimacy and national ownership of the national focal point, if it is managed properly.

The civil society outcry in Ghana and South Africa clearly manifested the importance of involving stakeholders at all stages of the process, especially the conceptual stage where 'stakeholders' and 'participation' are determined. Attesting to this point is the argument by 'participants in a SAIIA civil society conference on peer review in Ghana...that it was far more important **who** the APR Panel talked to than **what** was contained in the formal questionnaire'; more so when 'there is nothing to prevent government from naming only friendly voices to the civil society panel' at the national level.<sup>32</sup> In South Africa, the government seemed to have maintained strong influence on the process despite its broad bottom-up participatory approach. Without the involvement of other stakeholders, it determined and announced a fifteen-member national governing council, comprising five government ministers and ten representatives from civil society. Indeed 'the names of the representatives were decided behind closed doors' and concerns about government's desire to dominate the process and muffle civil society were voiced.<sup>33</sup> On the contrary, the governments of Ghana<sup>34</sup> and Kenya<sup>35</sup> made the focal points independent to avoid any criticism or suspicion of political manipulation of the process. In Ghana, this worked very well and depoliticized the APRM process in the country.

### Determination of Stakeholders by the GC

A Stakeholder Liaison Officer was made an integral part of the Secretariat of the GC and engaged to facilitate the identification and participation of stakeholders in the process. This illustrates the seriousness that was attached to the involvement of stakeholders. The GC in collaboration with the Stakeholder Liaison Officer determined stakeholders to the regional sensitization workshops and other programmes of the GC. This, however, did not follow strictly the directive of the APRM Guidelines that participating countries should 'define, in collaboration with stakeholders, a roadmap on participation in the APRM, which should be widely publicized....'<sup>36</sup> According to the then Principal Programme Officer<sup>37</sup> of the NAPRM GC, there were no publications, rather Invitation letters were sent to selected stakeholders, including representative organizations key stakeholders such as private sector and civil society. The selection was not subjected to a sequential process of situational and stakeholder analyses, which involves setting clear criteria that guide and ensure that no key stakeholders is excluded, as discussed in chapter two. It is therefore not surprising that some popular civil society organizations such as 'Abantu for Development' complained of little involvement in the process.<sup>38</sup> Kenya prevented this by holding two widely publicized national stakeholders' forums that threw invitation to all interested stakeholders, despite the difficulty of managing the open invitation approach and the repercussions on the level of deliberations with such a large number. The Kenyan fora were used 'to inform the public



39 Steven Gruz, 'Kenya and the APRM', draft chapter for forthcoming book on 'APRM Lessons Learned' by Ross Herbert and Steven Gruz, to be published by the South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA), Johannesburg, 2007.

40 Dr. Kwesi Aning, formerly of African Security and Dialogue and Research (ASDR), quoted from Steven Gruz, 'Ghana and the APRM', draft chapter for forthcoming book on 'APRM Lessons Learned' by Ross Herbert and Steven Gruz, to be published by the South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA), Johannesburg, 2007.

41 Ibid (South Africa and the APRM (forthcoming))

about APRM and to allow nomination of the civil society governing council members'.<sup>39</sup> Again, the GC selected the Technical Review Teams (TRTs) without the involvement of stakeholders and attracted complaints that 'there were other equally competent and critical institutions' and that 'the organizations chosen share common political thinking and background with the incumbent government'.<sup>40</sup> Although there is no doubt about the technical competence of the TRTs, the selection process was not transparent and competitive. In order to avoid such legitimate complains, selection of experts for such national assignments should follow national procurement procedures as was done in South Africa, where institutions were invited to tender to become Technical Support Agencies (TSA).<sup>41</sup> Besides the credibility that such a transparent and competitive process provides, it also tends to be cost-effective.

Apart from inadequate comprehensive planning of the entire process, other factors partially contributed to low involvement of stakeholders in the selection process in Ghana. They included bureaucratic delays and irregular flow of funds to the GC, which adversely affected the timing and sequencing of the Council's activities. The pressure from the Continental APR Secretariat for the submission of the country reports, combined with the limited time within which the GC had to complete the country assessment, also influenced the methodologies adopted, how processes were managed and the scope of the public education, engagement and survey.

Despite the weakness in the selection process as per the APRM directives, the Council did involve a wide spectrum of stakeholders, which is commendable. They included representatives from government institutions such as Local Authorities, Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) and security services. The private sector comprised a large part of the representatives of the formal sector, although they constitute a small proportion of total employment (20%), compared to 80% in the informal sector.<sup>42</sup> Civil society representatives included Traditional Authorities, Trade Union Congress, Professional Associations, the media and academia. Indeed the academia was dealt with more on a selected individual basis than at institutional level. It would have been good if the views of academia from the various universities were elicited through requests for submissions. This would have provided a more objective analysis of the APRM both in content and process and provided inputs for both the country process and report.

42 Presentation by PEF at the APRM Country Assessment Report Validation Workshop, GIMPA, Accra

### **Determination of Stakeholders by the TRTs**

The Technical Review Team that did the country self-assessment also determined the stakeholders via respondents consulted in their surveys. The respondents were classified and covered broadly under 'elite' and 'mass' surveys. While the elite survey targeted experts in the government, academia, the private sector and civil society considered to have considerable knowledge about the issues raised in the questionnaire, the mass survey targeted the general public across the country for representative views on the four focal areas.

### **3.3.2 Capacitating Stakeholders for Effective Participation**

#### **Public Education and Awareness Raising**

In order to create awareness among the populace about the APRM to facilitate participation of all key stakeholders in the country's self-assessment exercise, the GC embarked on Regional Sensitization Fora in all the regional capitals of the country, and for specialized groups such as the Security Services, Parliament, NGOs/CSOs, the Youth, the Disabled, the Trade Union Congress



43 Presentation by Dr. Francis Appiah  
(Executive Secretary, NAPRM GC)

(TUC) and Trade Associations and for the Media/the National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE). Newspaper articles, pamphlets, newsletters and brochures were also produced and circulated. In collaboration with the NCCE, an 'APRM WEEK' was organized after the field survey. Activities in the 'Week' included Radio/TV educational programmes such as public symposia and adult education in the main local languages. The public education was targeted at creating national ownership among the populace and to depoliticize APRM and eliminate opposition to the process.<sup>43</sup>

At all the sensitization fora, participants were given copies of the APRM base document and presentations on NEPAD/APRM and the four focal areas were made by the Executive Secretary and members of the GC. A 'questions and answers' session followed which allowed participants to seek further clarifications.

44 Team Consultancy, AGF National  
Stakeholder Consultation Report:  
Implementing the APRM in Ghana;  
Challenges and Prospects, September  
2005.

In the light of the above, it is evident that the GC made conscious efforts to educate as many stakeholders as possible. However, APRM is still not widely known in the country, because the coverage of public education was not wide and intense enough to make the desired impact on the public. This perception is shared by most people interviewed, including some officials of the NCCE, as well as participants of the African Governance Forum National Consultation workshop. The workshop advocated that an awareness creation campaign on the APRM should be sustained and intensified 'to ensure informed participation by the population'.<sup>44</sup> The on-going public education especially at the district level is therefore a step in the right direction.



Section of Participants listening attentively and taking notes at a Regional Sensitisation Forum in Northern Ghana

Among the factors that might have accounted for the low public awareness include the fact that, despite the existence of the NCCE, there was no national strategic civic education framework within which the awareness raising about the APRM was situated. The GC therefore commenced the public education by themselves through the regional sensitization workshops. The GC did

not engage the NCCE initially, probably to avoid criticism of 'flirting' with government (if national institutions are used). The NCCE and the media were brought on board later and have since been working with the Council on its public educational programme. The GC also worked with some journalists to publish articles on the process, as was done in Kenya. Although APRM activities did receive good press coverage, circulation of newspaper articles, pamphlets, newsletters and brochures were limited to the urban/peri-urban centres and to participants at APRM programmes.

45 The budgetary constraints on the Council would have been compounded, most likely, by the almost institutionalized practice of having to pay allowances to participants who attend programmes, and the possible inflation of budgets based on the number of participants.

Besides, most of the activities were centred at the regional capitals and did not reach out to the districts prior to the commencement of the country assessment survey. Also, the regional programmes were not opened to the general public, but more or less restricted to invited participants, most probably for budgetary reasons.<sup>45</sup> Furthermore, the 'APRM week' which was intended to deepen public awareness, also took place at the regional capitals when some of the TRTs were almost through with the country assessment survey. In addition, irregular flow of funds affected planned public education adversely and resulted in concurrently running sequential activities such as public sensitization and surveys. This yielded less positive cumulative effects. The communication strategy employed was therefore not very comprehensively planned, taking into account the characteristics of the various categories of stakeholders and the most appropriate medium of communicating with each of them. The intensity of the education programme and the timing between the education and actual survey was also quite inadequate. This made assimilation of information on APRM difficult, contributed to the low public awareness and to a greater extent, minimized effective participation.

46 Presentation by Dr. Francis Appiah (Executive Secretary, NAPRM GC)

As it should be, the sensitization exercise was a continuous process and spread between May and September, 2005. Indeed it still continues on the district level, even as Ghana is implementing her PoA. The Council's acknowledgement as a lesson that, '[e]arly engagement of the populace through education and sensitization is a critical first step in the implementation of the APRM',<sup>46</sup> expresses its appreciation of the situation and explains its close working collaboration with the National Commission on Civic Education (NCCE) on public education at the district level. The need for a strategy for increased public awareness to deepen ownership, commitment and participation in ensuring the implementation of the PoA is not an overstatement. This is more so as the APRM, like any planning process, is continuous and the involvement of stakeholders is still required at every stage.

### 3.3.3 Participation of Stakeholders in the Assessment Processes

The participation of stakeholders in Ghana will be assessed by looking at their level of sensitization, access to information on the process, available time for assimilating the information received, required role, knowledge of the national context of each focal area, and avenues created for them to make input into the process. Actual participation via inputs provided and consensus reached and integrated into the APRM process will also be discussed. The focus here is not to question the authenticity of the report, but to discuss the issue of involvement, ownership and commitment of stakeholders (Ghanaians) to the APRM, and the associated benefits for deepening good democratic governance in the country.

47 NAPRM GC Secretariat, Accra, Ghana.

48 Ross Herbert, 'The survival of NEPAD and the African Peer Review Mechanism', *South African Journal of International Affairs* (Volume 11, Issue 1, p. 36, Summer/Autumn 2004).

### 3.3.3.1 Stakeholder Participation in the GC Sensitization Activities

Beside a national stakeholders' conference at Akosombo for selected participants held during the initial stages of the process, the regional sensitization workshops of the GC were also used to engage selected stakeholders and elicit their inputs. Following presentations and 'questions and answers' session as indicated above, participants went into syndicate groups to discuss broadly issues such as the prevailing state of affairs as regards the four APRM focal areas; the likely causes; level of stakeholder participation; issues that should be included in the country assessment; and measures that can be taken to improve the process (see Appendix 2)<sup>47</sup>. Indeed, participants had limited time to assimilate the content of APRM documents and presentations given, to make informed input into the process; discussions therefore tend to be more of seeking clarification than making input into the entire process. Nonetheless, at the end of each sensitization workshop, at least participants leave with a better appreciation of the APRM. This cannot be deemed adequate, though, considering the somewhat technical nature of APRM and the amount of information therein. To buttress this point, Ross Herbert's asserts that 'many participants in the Ghana seminar and another in Kenya argued that civil society organizations would have difficulty preparing thoughtful analyses of governance without resources.'<sup>48</sup> Thus, as indicated earlier, initial inadequate information dissemination on the APRM as a subject, explaining its origin, objectives, structures and processes and the roles of stakeholders – contributed to the low public awareness and minimized the level of participation in the process.



Participants in a syndicate group discussion at an APRM sensitization work

The above notwithstanding, some inputs were made and some of the concerns expressed helped in streamlining the process, including suggestions for extension of the sensitization on APRM to the district level. In addition, stakeholders' inputs such as inclusion of issues on gender and science and technology, which were not part of the APR Questionnaire, were integrated into the

country assessment. To this effect, participation of stakeholders and integration of their input into the national process can be said to be adequate. In all, about 1,300 participants attended the sensitization fora (see Table 1 below).

### 3.3.3.2 Stakeholder Participation in the TRTs' Country Self-Assessment

In the actual country assessment, which was done through 'elite' and 'mass' surveys by the TRTs, the participation of stakeholders was naturally limited to respondents. The key issues to look at here are the sample size and the methodologies employed. How representative was the sample size, and how were the surveys structured to get the best quality information from participants?

**TABLE 1: PARTICIPANTS AT THE APRM SENSITIZATION FORA**

	SENSITIZATION FORUM	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS		
		MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
1.	National Sensitization Forum			
2.	Upper West Region	54	8	62
3.	Upper East Region	72	16	88
4.	Northern Region	89	16	105
5.	Brong Ahafo Region	84	14	98
6.	Ashanti Region	94	33	127
7.	Eastern Region	104	25	129
8.	Western Region	55	5	60
9.	Volta Region	117	30	147
10.	Security Services	59	20	79
11.	TUC and Trade Associations	33	9	42
12.	Physically Challenged (Disabled)	57	24	81
13.	Youth Groups	113	67	180
14.	NCCE and the Media	23	4	27
	TOTAL	954	271	<u>1,225</u>

Source: Progress Report under UNDP Dissemination Project.

### Participation in Actual Survey (Approaches and Implications)

Regarding the actual survey, the TRTs cast the APR questionnaire into survey instruments for respondents under two main categories of 'elite' and 'mass' surveys, based on the subject matter and the capacity and characteristics of respondents. This was highly appropriate and ensured effectiveness and efficiency in the data collection.

There were, however, slight differences in the approaches of the TRTs, which had participation and documentation implications. For instance, while ISSER instructed its field officers (research assistants) to paraphrase research questions to mass survey respondents in order to create an informal environment, relax the respondents and get the most of them, CDD charged its field officers to present questions exactly as they are framed in order to avoid alteration of the intended meaning and purpose. Similarly they were expected to document the responses exactly as they were given. PEF, on the other hand, invited its respondents to workshops, briefed them on the APR process and presented them with the relevant components of the questionnaire to be completed and submitted at the workshops. Space was subsequently created for participants to express their sentiments and also seek clarification on the APRM. CEPA administered an elite



49 Observation of the processes and presentations of TRTs at the APRM Country Report Validation Workshop, GIMPA, Accra

survey on the Economic Governance and Management section to the relevant professionals, on the assumption that this category of issues would best be addressed by such professionals<sup>49</sup>.

A combination of questionnaires, individual interviews and focused group discussions were employed to solicit the views of respondents. These are appropriate standard research methods, and stakeholders who participated in the survey had the chance to provide input to the country self assessment. Needless to say, the foundation for effective participation, which is a good appreciation of the subject (APRM) through education and/or access to information, was generally weak and did limit the level of stakeholder participation that could have been achieved. Institutions surveyed included Ministry of Regional Cooperation and NEPAD, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, UNDP, Net Right, UNFPA, Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative, South Africa High Commission, Child Right Commission Ghana, Ministry of Manpower Development, Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, Parliament, Attorney-General's Department, Office of the President, National Commission on Women and Development, and NGOs and Civil Society Organizations (ISSER Validation Pres.)

50 The experts and the focal areas they considered were: Mr. Kwesi Jonah of Institute of Economic Affairs – Democracy and Good Political Governance; Prof. Cletus Dordornu of ClayDord Consult - Economic Governance and Management, Dr. Samuel Aikins of the University of Cape Coast - Socio-Economic Development, and Dr. Richard Adjaye of Ernst and Young - Corporate Governance.

#### **Review and Validation of the TRTs' Assessment Reports by Stakeholders:**

Following the submission of the TRTs' reports, the GC engaged four non-governmental experts in their private capacities as consultants<sup>50</sup> to review each of the focal areas. Again, although this demonstrates the involvement of civil society, the selection of the reviewers was not opened to competition.

51 Steven Gruz, 'South Africa and the APRM', draft chapter for forthcoming book on 'APRM Lessons Learned' by Ross Herbert and Steven Gruz, to be published by the South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA), Johannesburg, 2007.

A validation workshop was held on 10 -13<sup>th</sup> February 2005 at GIMPA, Accra. The purpose of the workshop was to ascertain the authenticity of the country assessment reports submitted by the TRTs and whether the reports adequately reflect the expressed perception of stakeholders about the prevailing situation in the country in respect of the APRM focal areas. Although the validation in Ghana was originally planned to be done by zoning the country into three, time constraint and pressure from the APR Secretariat for the submission of the Country report, compelled the GC to do only one National Validation Workshop. Attendance was quite low in Ghana (about 50 participants, out of about 200 people invited), compared to South Africa's 1700 people who attended the 2<sup>nd</sup> National Consultative Conference held with the partial purpose of validating the country report and PoA<sup>51</sup>. The participants of Ghana's validation workshop included representatives of some governmental and non-governmental organizations, members of the Governing Council, staff of the NAPRM GC Secretariat and the TRTs. The non-governmental organizations represented included Institute of Democratic Governance (IDEG), African Security Dialogue and Research (who were quite critical of the process in Ghana) Children's Rights International, Association of Ghana Industries, Ghana Employers' Association, Ghana National Chamber of Commerce & Industry and Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative. The Office of the President, Ministries of Regional Cooperation and NEPAD, Foreign Affairs, Environment & Science, Food and Agriculture, as well as the National Commission for Civic Education, Ghana Armed Forces, Ghana Statistical Service, Ghana Investment Promotion Centre and CHRAJ were the governmental bodies that were represented.

52 Steven Gruz, 'South Africa and the APRM', draft chapter for forthcoming book on 'APRM Lessons Learned' by Ross Herbert and Steven Gruz, to be published by the South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA), Johannesburg, 2007.

Similar to South Africa, participants were given the reports they were supposed to validate at the conference, without the chance to pre-study them to facilitate meaningful participation. But while in South Africa participants complained of being given copies of the text<sup>52</sup> (which I suppose was voluminous) to digest and comment on in a limited timeframe; in Ghana participants complained about the difficulty of validating reports of more than 150 pages, when only about

10-page summaries had been made available to them. Nevertheless, they agreed that the issues raised in the summaries and presentations of the TRTs reflect the situation in the country. They also commented and provided additional inputs for the TRTs to improve and enrich the Final Ghana Country Reports. The inability of the GC to make the entire report available to the public is attributed to the APRM provisions that *'[s]ix months after the report has been considered by the Heads of State and Government of the participating member countries, it should be formally and publicly tabled in key regional and sub-regional structures such as the Pan-African Parliament, the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, the envisaged Peace and Security Council and the Economic, Social and Cultural Council (ECOSOCC) of the African Union'*.<sup>53</sup> In effect the public (including civil society, private sector and international development partners) only see the final country report, after it has been accepted as authentic by only one of the stakeholders – the government.

53 APRM Base Document, paragraph 25.

*'The Team's draft report is first discussed with the Government concerned. Those discussions will be designed to ensure the accuracy of the information and to provide the government with an opportunity both to react to the Team's findings and to put forward its own views on how the identified shortcomings may be addressed. These responses of the Government will be appended to the Team's report.'*<sup>54</sup>

54 APRM Base Document

55 Ravi Kanbur, The African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM): An Assessment of Concept and Design, January, 2004: [www.people.cornell.edu/pages/sk145](http://www.people.cornell.edu/pages/sk145). (The emphasis in bold is mine).

56 Pagani (2002), quoted from Ravi Kanbur (2004)

Thus the government changes from a 'stakeholder' to 'representative of all stakeholders'. Describing the APRM process, Ravi Kanbur expresses similar concern by saying that, '[t]here are site visits, discussion with government and broad civil society, and a **draft report which is usually discussed with government**'<sup>55</sup>. He goes on to advocate for the involvement of all stakeholders by quoting Pagani, who attributes the success of the OECD peer review to the fact that 'the whole body is encouraged to participate extensively'.<sup>56</sup> Indeed, the provision above seems contradictory for the APRM process to promote human rights including the right to information and participation in decision-making, and at the same time restricts public access to a report they have contributed to, until after it is 'publicly tabled'. However, it is noteworthy that 'public tabling' is qualified as 'formally'. This therefore does not necessarily restrict informal release of reports to the public. The involvement of civil society should not be made to look as 'window dress ...to meet procedural requirement of the APRM'.<sup>57</sup> An objective interpretation of this provision by the National Focal Point is therefore necessary to prevent possibility or suspicion of censorship which can minimize public ownership. This is particularly so as most of the National Focal Points originate from government, even if they are independent.

57 Len Verwey, 'NEPAD and Civil Society Participation in the APRM', IDASA Occasional Papers, p. 28: <http://www.idasa.org.za>

### 3.3.3.3 Ownership, Commitment and Implications for Implementation of the PoA

The people of Africa, and indeed Ghana, do not seem to own the NEPAD/APRM initiative as expected. This is because of the way NEPAD/APRM evolved, without the involvement of the key stakeholders – the people of the continent. As Len Verwey indicates 'the NEPAD vision is not the product of broad consultation and regional deliberations, but was conceived and articulated by a few African leaders, unveiled initially in the West, and subsequently brought back and 'marketed' to the African People'<sup>58</sup>. On the contrary, '[n]ational ownership implies a fully participatory process of engagement with citizens, civil society, academia, trade unions, the private sector, etc., in addition to different government agencies'.<sup>59</sup>

58 Ibid

59 Accra Outcomes Statement in Developing Capacity through Technical Co-operation: Country Experiences, edited by: Stephen Browne, Earthscan Publications Ltd, London and Sterling, Virginia.

60 Team Consultancy, AGF National Stakeholder Consultation Report: Implementing the APRM in Ghana; Challenges and Prospects, September 2005.

The whole agenda to promote good governance seem to have started wrongly, against the very principle it was suppose to hinge on – participation of stakeholders. The people's knowledge of NEPAD and APRM is weak due to inadequate publicity and public engagement on the issue. APRM seems to have circulated among few groups of people (elite), which is the case in Ghana as well<sup>60</sup>. It was mostly the same people who were invited to join National APRM workshops, probably for the reasonable fear that new people who are ignorant about it may set discussions back as the process progresses. Notwithstanding, those who had the chance to participate in the sensitization and others activities of the process have positive impressions of the process and participated by learning about it and providing input.

The good thing however is that there is some level of interest of stakeholders in the process, which was particularly evident in the political debate that ensued after the release of the report. Again it is worth noting that this debate was among the middle and high class intellectual and politicians, and not the ordinary people who constitute the majority of the public. All the same the interest shown by both sides of the political divide should be exploited to bring more stakeholders, especially the ordinary people, on board and allow them to take ownership of the process. The recommendations below address this.

There are varied implications of the above for the implementation of the PoA – the most important aspect of the process. In the first place, stakeholders may not even know enough about the content of the PoA, let alone be able to monitor and ensure that the government - the major implementer - meets its obligation. Secondly, there may be little support offered by stakeholders to government to facilitate implementation by way of resources or co-operation, as they may not know the issues that relate to them and play their roles ineffectively. Stakeholders not owning the outcome also create a favourable opportunity for a new government to have little or no regards for the outcome and thereby discontinue the process. This is more so, considering that APRM is a voluntary process and governments that have acceded or future ones (when change of government occurs) are not permanently bonded. Resources committed thus far may all come to waste.

### 3.3.4 The Role of Key Stakeholders

61 Guidelines for Countries to Prepare for and Participate in the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), NEPAD/ APRM/Panel3/guidelines/11-2003/ Doc8

The APRM guidelines broadly indicate the key stakeholders at the country level as the government, NGOs (i.e. civil society), private sector, and international development partners<sup>61</sup>, including UNDP. The roles of both national and international development partners are critical and are discussed below.

#### 3.3.4.1 The Role of National Stakeholders

The role of national stakeholders is premised on the fact that they are in the country and feel both the positive and negative impacts of policies and programmes. They are therefore required, in collaboration with the focal points, to design the participation framework that will guide the involvement of all key stakeholders. Within the agreed framework, the stakeholders are expected to discuss and determine the prevailing situation in the country in respect of the four focal areas, as well as programmes of actions to improve undesirable situations.





Participants at the National Stakeholders Forum at Akosombo, Ghana (May 29th 2004).

The national stakeholders, as individuals or groups, are thus expected to provide information on governance in the country through participation in national surveys or through submission of views. Stakeholders are therefore expected to be proactive and ensure they participate fully in the process and influence the direction of governance and development to their benefit.

It is noteworthy that besides efforts of the focal points (GC) to get stakeholders on board, relevant stakeholders, especially civil society, should also be proactive and express their interest to be involved. For instance in South Africa, when civil society organizations felt they were being left out of a conference on APRM, they 'vowed to attend the conference, even if uninvited, and many came without government funding and assistance'<sup>62</sup> This is critical for ensuring total coverage of all relevant stakeholders, and more so when it is possible for focal points to overlook potential stakeholders. The occasionally apathetic behaviour of some stakeholders, especially among civil society, also affected participation adversely.

#### 3.3.4.2 The Role of International Partners (IPs) and UNDP

Despite the African origin and ownership of the NEPAD and APRM process, international development partners are considered as key stakeholders, providing technical and financial assistance, especially for the implementation of National PoAs.<sup>63</sup>

The involvement of international partners is appropriate in several respects. They are already engaged in development programmes of the participating countries, including the promotion of democratic governance, and can share their experiences, insights and know how. Above all, if IPs are required to provide resources and technical support to the process, this gives them a stake in the process. In such circumstances, it is also noteworthy that external actors such as IPs might 'bring to the table certain concepts and conditionalities that are influenced by how they view governance and human development.'<sup>64</sup> The governance concepts and reporting systems of IPs

62 Steven Gruz, 'South Africa and the APRM', draft chapter for forthcoming book on 'APRM Lessons Learned' by Ross Herbert and Steven Gruz, to be published by the South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA), Johannesburg, 2007.

63 Guidelines for Countries to Prepare for and Participate in the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), NEPAD/APRM/Panel3/guidelines/11-2003/Doc8, paragraph 46

64 G. Shabbir Cheema, (2005) 'Building Democratic Institutions: Governance Reform in Developing Countries', Kumarian Press Inc., USA.

regarding utilization of their funds, sometimes take little notice of implementation challenges and can influence the pace of participatory processes such as the APRM adversely. The need for transparent, objective and flexible negotiations between IPs and other stakeholders is critical in reaching a consensus that is beneficial to all parties.

In Ghana, for instance, the government has been and is the main source of funding for the APRM process in the country. However, in spite of her effort, the financial implications of the required participatory approach made the mobilization of additional funds from IPs necessary, and accentuated the important role of the international development partners. Besides the key role UNDP played in supporting the GC and the APRM process, other IPs such as the French government, the British Government's Department for International Development (DFID), Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAF) and the Italian Government, provided financial and material support to complement government funds. Each IP negotiated the use of the funds with the GC.

65 Interview with some International Partners including officials of the EU, USAID and DFID

Apart from UNDP, which had quite a close relationship with the GC (as indicated below), most of the other IPs observed the process from a distance to avoid getting too involved or being accused of influencing the African-initiated process. Indeed IPs interviewed preferred this distant role.<sup>65</sup> There seem to be a feeling also among IPs that information on the process was not easily accessible to facilitate their active participation. This sentiment was expressed during a meeting between the IPs and the Country Review Mission Team, who came to consult with stakeholders in the country upon submission of Ghana's Self-Assessment Report. Among the issues raised were:

- When the report will be made publicly available
- The unavailability of the report on Ghana makes it difficult for them to discuss and pledge support to the process.
- Whether a report on Ghana that has been published by an institution in South Africa was done by the APR Secretariat.
- It is necessary that reliable data is made easily available and accessible to facilitate the work of the Development Partner, and
- How the PoA is different from the GPRS<sup>66</sup>.

66 Progress Report on APRM in Ghana

Although it was explained that by the provisions of the process, the report will be made public only after it has been reviewed by the APR Forum, the above sentiments clearly indicate that the IPs were somehow alienated from the process, apart from the funds some of them provided. They also felt incapacitated to participate effectively due to inadequate access to information.

#### **The Role of UNDP**

UNDP Ghana has been a major contributor to the establishment and implementation of NEPAD and APRM in Ghana. It assisted the Government of Ghana to set up a NEPAD Secretariat in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in March 2002. The Secretariat was later transferred to the newly created Ministry of Regional Cooperation and NEPAD (MRCN), as a key component of the Ministry. In collaboration with the newly created Ministry, UNDP further provided support for the educational programmes of the MRCN workshops, including the Consultative Forum on the APRM organized on the 21<sup>st</sup> November 2002.

A unique support from UNDP-Ghana to the APRM process was the '*Support to the APRM Dissemination Project*'. The project was aimed at documenting and disseminating information

on Ghana's APRM process experience within the country to promote national as well as regional awareness and ownership. Among other media, the publication of the "APRM IN GHANA" Newsletter was one of the major means of information dissemination under the project.

In effect, while the role of UNDP at the country level was two-fold: provision of technical advice and financial support, her role and that of other IPs is dependent on the level of involvement by the National Focal Points. They can, however, observe the process, provide their insights and share their experiences and resources, through objective, transparent and flexible negotiations. Such negotiations should result in clear clarification of roles, the extent of reliance on external funding and conditions pertaining to support that are provided under such circumstances, ensuring that national ownership of the process remains intact. The issue of values such as honesty, transparency, courage and prudence are therefore critical at each stage of the process, including delineating the role of various stakeholders.

### **3.3.5 Stakeholder Participation in the APRM Process in Ghana: A SWOT Analysis**

In the light of discussions above the 'Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats' (SWOT) matrix (see Table 2) presents a summary of key findings of stakeholder participation in the APRM process in Ghana. The findings are conclusions drawn from literature reviews, interviews, responses to questionnaires and the author's personal experience. While the strengths refer to favourable factors in the country, e.g. appropriate structures and processes put in place that influenced stakeholder participation favourably, the weaknesses refer to factors that had negative influence on stakeholder participation. The strengths and weaknesses are the internal positive and negative factors respectively; while the external positive and negative factors are termed opportunities and threats. The definition of internal and external can be varied. In this case internal refers to factors within the control of the Focal Point – NAPRM GC, while external refers to factors beyond the Council's control, but within and beyond the country.

**Table 2: SWOT Analysis of Stakeholder Participation in Ghana**

INTERNAL FACTORS	
STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involvement of national eminent persons</li> <li>• Covered a wide spectrum of stakeholders</li> <li>• Good research methods employed by the TRTs</li> <li>• Educational materials were made available to participants of workshops</li> <li>• Adequate sensitization of participants of NAPRM GC workshops</li> <li>• Integration of input from participants into the survey, e.g. on gender and Science and Technology</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inadequate detailed planning of the entire process resulting in illogical sequencing of some of the activities</li> <li>• Inadequate education of the public</li> <li>• Low coverage of public education programme</li> <li>• Inadequate involvement of stakeholders in the planning process, including determination of participation in the entire process as required</li> <li>• Method employed in determining stakeholders unclear</li> <li>• Participation in the process seems to have centred around few people or groups, hence there was inadequate public awareness about APRM</li> <li>• Inadequate time for and lack of proper timing between distinct aspects of the process, e.g. public education and surveys</li> <li>• Uncompetitive selection of TRTs and reviewers of the TRTs' reports</li> <li>• Irregular flow of funds from government which affected the timing and logical sequencing of some activities of the process.</li> </ul>

EXTERNAL FACTORS	
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong political commitment towards a transparent process (absence of political manipulation)</li> <li>• UNDP CO support</li> <li>• Support from other development partners e.g. DFID, French and Italian Governments, KAF, etc.</li> <li>• Availability of competent research institutions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pressure from the APR Secretariat for timely implementation and conformity to agreed schedule (taking little cognizance of implementation difficulties)</li> <li>• Bureaucratic delays and irregular flow of funds for the work of the focal point</li> <li>• High cost of services of the TRTs</li> <li>• Provision in the APRM process that restrain the release of the draft and final report to the public apart from government</li> <li>• Inadequate technical support or direction from the APR Secretariat</li> </ul>

## Chapter 4: Recommendations and Conclusion

### 4.1 Introduction

The recommendations of this paper as indicated earlier, are to help deepen stakeholder participation in the APRM processes and thus promote the practice of democratic governance, which provides the most conducive environment for attaining sustainable development. It outlines some programming and planning issues and concludes that whether the respective countries and African as a whole will develop or not is a matter of choice. The choice has to be made and borne with its associated actions and consequences. Good programmes in themselves will not result in development. It is the moral courage to pursue the right course through comprehensive planning and ethical, professional and transparent practices, guided by good values and principles. Above all, conscious effort should be made to ensure the participation of all stakeholders. This is the only way to attain the desired results. In order to improve the existing effort of ensuring effective stakeholder participation in the APRM process, the following are proposed.

### 4.2 Comprehensive Planning of the Process

The discussions in the earlier chapters points to the fact that detailed planning is crucial to the success of any programme, including the implementation of the APRM. The various stages of the process should be painstakingly analyzed and planned to determine how the key stakeholders will be identified and involved in the entire process. Going through the rudiments of planning will facilitate the actual implementation and minimize oversights. As the APRM guidelines suggest, invitation should be widely publicized to invite and inform the public about the process, and in collaboration with key stakeholders determine the roadmap on participation. The outcome of such fora or meetings will inform the planning, which should deal in detail with issues such as; what is at stake at each stage, which objectives are to be achieved, who will and should be involved and what are their roles. The outcome of the meeting should also inform methods and approaches to be employed, when activities should be executed and the logistics needed as well as the cost implications. The detailed plan and the monitoring and periodic evaluation framework should be completed before the process is commenced. The adage is true that if we fail to plan (before we start implementing), we are invariably planning to fail. Although, we may be able to achieve something, we may still fail in getting people involved to take ownership, win their commitment and ensure sustainability of the APRM process and its objective of promoting democratic governance.

### 4.3 Deepening National/Continental Ownership of the NEPAD/APRM

The current situation of inadequate awareness among the people of the continent, including Ghanaians, on NEPAD/APRM is the major threat to the success and sustainability of the initiative. This situation should be corrected to build the needed foundation – common ownership and commitment to its success, through public education and engagement.

### Public Education and Engagement

The focus now should be on creating fora for public education and engagement to review and/or adopt the current vision of NEPAD/APRM. This will genuinely bring the people on board to take ownership of the initiative, which is indispensable. For this purpose, a Special Programme may be termed **'Rebirth of NEPAD/APRM: National and Continental Ownership'** and pursued, employing as many youth volunteers as possible. The programme should be thoroughly and participatorily planned and pursued with all seriousness and devoid of any political undertones, individual interests and considerations.

The personnel who will be involved in executing this programme, especially the public educators should be given at least one month training, comprising both orientation on the subject matter and physical training. This will make them mentally and physically fit for the exercise, invoke a sense of patriotism, and instill in them discipline and endurance to go to remote communities in difficult areas. Above all, they should be dealt with transparently, fairly rewarded, and provided with the necessary logistics, in order to keep the morale high and ensure success.

This programme will most likely be expensive in the short term, but will turn out more beneficial in the long term and rejuvenate the people's energy to participate in APRM, as well as other governance and development processes. Application of transparent and accountable processes in the use of resources as well as genuine involvement of all stakeholders, including the private sector, will help to attract their sponsorship in cash and/or kind, to complement government's effort.

## 4.4 Ensuring Effective Stakeholder Participation in the Process

Irrespective of the models that inform methods employed, the APRM process is based on popular participation and requires the use of good multi-stakeholder processes (MSP). A good MSP design commences with a thorough 'situation analysis' to inform 'stakeholder analysis'. The tendency is to take some of these steps for granted. However, the situation analysis, for instance, helps in understanding the issue and its related dimensions, and subsequently help to identifying the stakeholders and how they can be involved, especially at the initial planning stage of the process. This will in turn guarantee participation in the implementation of the PoA, which is the most important aspect of the whole APRM process. As discussed in Chapter two, attaining meaningful participation of all stakeholders is a process and should be treated as such. Attention should be paid to ensure careful planning and execution of all the stages which are: Determination of stakeholders, ensuring effective participation through sensitization and awareness raising among the general public; creation of suitable avenues to engage various stakeholders; and reaching consensus with all stakeholders.

### 4.4.1 Determining stakeholders (Stakeholder Analysis)

Lessons from Ghana, Kenya and South Africa clearly show that irrespective of who is responsible, stakeholders desire to be involved in determining the key stakeholders. Consequently, invitation for the public to participate in the APRM process should be widely publicized as required. This will ensure that no relevant stakeholder is excluded and also provide equal opportunity for



67 Steven Gruz, 'Kenya and the APRM', draft chapter for forthcoming book on 'APRM Lessons Learned' by Ross Herbert and Steven Gruz, to be published by the South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA), Johannesburg, 2007.

68 Multi-Stakeholder Processes Resource Portal:  
<http://portals.wi.wur.nl/msp/>

participation. Subsequently the number can be trimmed to representatives of broad categories of stakeholders agreed upon through nominations, consensus or election. These representatives will constitute the core team of planners and managers. This in itself is a process and takes time, considering how the Kenyan process was held back for months for lack of consensus, but is worth pursuing.<sup>67</sup> The stakeholder analysis should result in the development of agreed criteria such as who is affected by the APRM process; who has a critical role in ensuring its success; who is legally required to participate; and who has specific knowledge on the processes or issues involved.<sup>68</sup> The analysis should also take cognizance of the socio-economic and cultural characteristics of the stakeholders, among others, to determine the manner and level of their engagement at the various stages of the process. Ideally, the national focal point should seek feedback from stakeholders to ensure common agreement on the processes and their respective roles at various stages or levels.

In effect, there are five main but inter-related stages in a typical stakeholder analysis, namely:

- Analyse the situation or issue – nature and processes, causes and effects.
- Identify individuals and groups (actors) involved in the various dimensions.
- Analyse the socio-economic and cultural characteristics of the identified actors.
- Categorise the actors into engagement groups based on their interests, level of education and means of access to information, etc.
- Determine appropriate means of engaging the various categories of stakeholders to ensure effective participation in the process.
- Secure agreement among stakeholders on processes, stages of engagement and their roles.

Stakeholder analysis is therefore central in determining stakeholders and designing a comprehensive multi-stakeholder participation process to facilitate popular engagement. The analysis and 'selection must be done with different people in order to lessen the risk of having a biased selection'. It should be seen as 'a process that continually evolves and must be repeated throughout the life of a project/programme in order to ensure that 'new' stakeholders are not missed'<sup>69</sup>.

69 Ibid

#### 4.4.2 Building Capacity for Effective Stakeholder Participation

The APRM, like the democratic governance it seeks to promote, is essentially a decision-making process by all relevant stakeholders. Identifying stakeholders is one step and ensuring that they participate effectively is another. The question then is: how do we ensure effective stakeholder participation? The obvious answer is provision of adequate and timely public education and access to relevant information. Based on discussions in the previous chapters, particularly chapter three, as well as available literature on best practices by UNDP and other development institutions, the following steps are suggested for this purpose:



1. Sensitize the public and initiate discussions on the issue (e.g. APRM) with selected key stakeholders, dwelling on its objectives and intended follow up activities (plan of action).
  - a. Develop a matrix of stakeholders indicating their characteristics, location, means of reaching them and method of communication, etc.
  - b. Document and share a summary of the outcome of the meeting with the stakeholders immediately to validate it, before the group disperses.
2. Get more comments from interested stakeholders and finalize the plan of action, with clear definition of the various steps or stages such as those indicated in step 3-8 below.
3. Develop public education materials (manuals, booklets and leaflets), as well as the education strategy, taking into consideration the following:
  - Background to the issue (Where have we come from?)
  - Current situation (Where are we now?)
  - Goals and Objectives (Where do we want to go?)
  - Opportunities and Constraints (Available resources and challenges)
  - Key Issues (Critical areas of focus for the attainment of the goals)
  - Strategy (Methodology, processes, key actors and their roles)
  - Budget (Sources of funds and items of expenditure)
  - Implementation of Strategic Plan
  - Monitoring and Evaluation framework (Roles of stakeholders in reviews)
4. Recruit, orientate and train public educators intellectually, mentally and physically to meet the challenges involved.
5. Educate and have in-depth engagement with the public on the subject and provide them with adequate information regarding the issues outlined above.
6. Allow time for feedback while organizing and preparing to commence actual implementation of the main programme such as the country self-assessment.
7. Integrate relevant feedbacks received, finalize the strategy and commence implementation of the main programme, and
8. Continuously monitor and review the strategy where necessary to respond to emerging issues for the attainment of desired goals.

#### 4.5 Integration of the APRM Process into the National Decentralized System of Governance and Planning

The broad purpose of NEPAD/APRM is to build national capacity for democratic governance and sustainable development. It is for this reason that APRM Guidelines indicated that '[i]t is the responsibility of the participating country to organize participatory and transparent national process' through the establishment of a Focal Point which may be 'an integral part of existing structures or as new ones'. 'However, it is critical that the work of the APR Focal Point is inclusive, integrated and coordinated with existing policy-decision and medium-term planning processes'.<sup>70</sup> This illustrates the designers' appreciation that stages of the APRM process fit well into the basic stages of the planning process, which are: Situation Analysis, Planning, Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) (see Figure 4).

70 Guidelines for countries to prepare for and participate in the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), NEPAD/APRM/Panel3/guidelines/11-2003/Doc8, paragraph 34.

71 The assemblies are classified based on population thresholds as either a District Assembly (75,000 people and over), Municipal Assembly (95,000 and over) or Metropolitan Assembly (250,000 people and over).

In Ghana, the APRM process can be integrated in the National Decentralized Planning System (NDPS), which also guides governance at the regional and local levels, to improve public awareness and widen participation across the country. As illustrated in Figure 6, the country is divided into ten (10) Administrative Regions and one hundred and thirty-eight (138) Metropolitan, Municipal or District Assemblies (MMDAs)<sup>71</sup>. Each Assembly is required by Local Government Act, 1993 (Act 462) and the National Development Planning System Act (Act 480) to assess the area under its jurisdiction and prepare medium-term development plans. Each plan comprise a profile describing the socio-economic conditions pertaining in the area and the proposed development interventions (projects). This structure is obviously similar to the structure of the APRM report and lends to easy integration whereby each Assembly would be required to develop and structure its profile and interventions to cover the four APRM focal areas. The District plans are sent to the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC) through the Regional Co-ordinating Councils (RCCs), and are intended for the development of the National Development Plan or framework (see Figure 5).

Apart from the area-specific picture of issues that can be identified and addresses aptly, such integration compels governments to strengthen their existing decentralized governance and planning system including constitutionally mandated bodies such as the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC) and the National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE), to function effectively for the APRM requirements to be met. It will also help bring more people, especially the grassroots, on board. For instance, open public education for about 1000 people in all the 138 districts, in collaboration with the NCCE that has presence in all the MMDAs, will amount to informing about 138,000 people across the length and breath of the country. This point is corroborated by ISSER's finding under the APRM country assessment that in the 'process of preparing development programmes, particularly, the GPRS has been perceived to be satisfactory. However, a structured participation with District Assemblies and their planning processes will widen participation and ownership.'<sup>72</sup> Furthermore, it will be cost effective as such integration will increase coverage, and rely less on consultants and more on existing public machinery which has been established for similar purposes and run with scarce national resources.

72 Presentation by ISSER at APRM Country-Assessment Report Validation Workshop, GIMPA, Accra.

In order to avoid concern of governmental manipulation, a 'verification team' comprising representatives of civil society, private sector and public officials should be tasked to work with the Planning and Co-ordinating Units of the various Assemblies to ensure accuracy and authenticity of information collected and general ownership of the outcome. Again, early and detailed planning and preparation right from the on set are crucial, if the desired impact is to be attained.

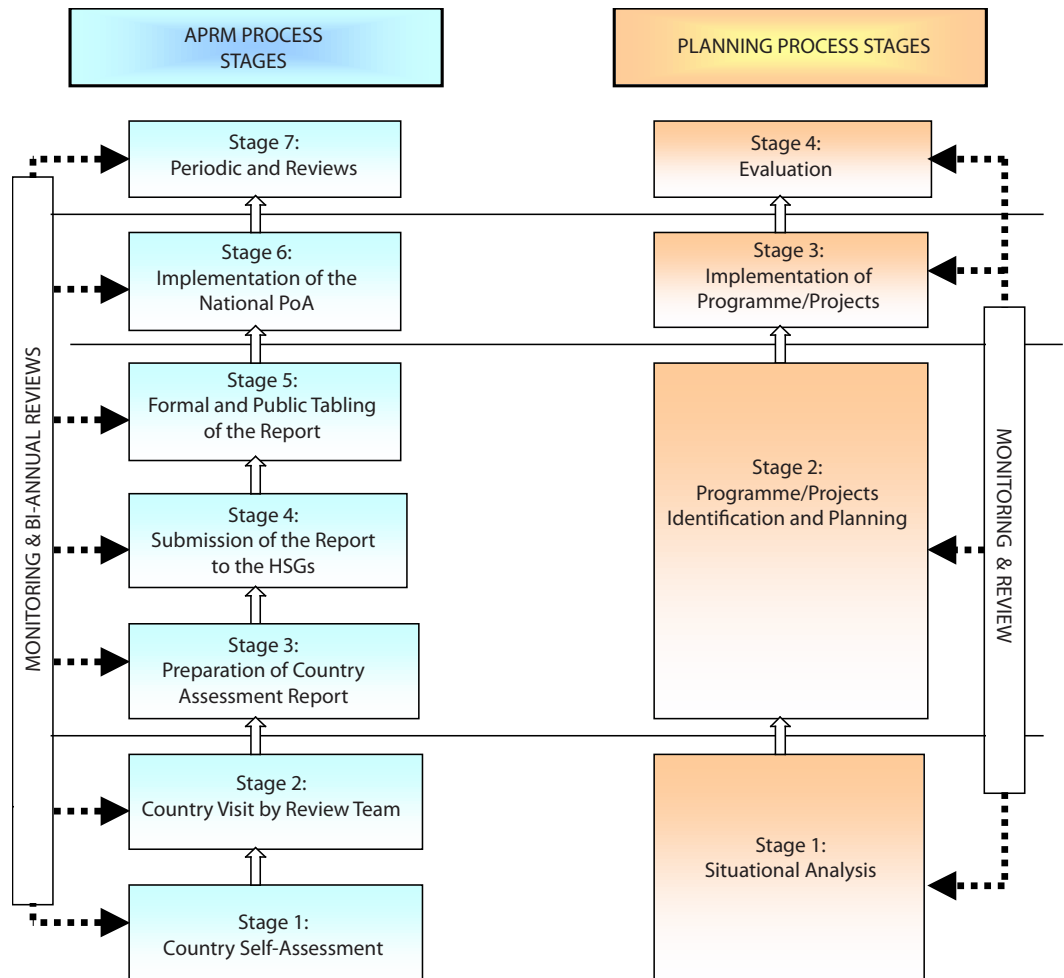
**FIGURE 4: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE STAGES OF THE APRM AND THE PLANNING PROCESSES**

FIGURE 5: BASIC CONCEPT OF THE DECENTRALIZED PLANNING AND GOVERNANCE SYSTEM OF GHANA

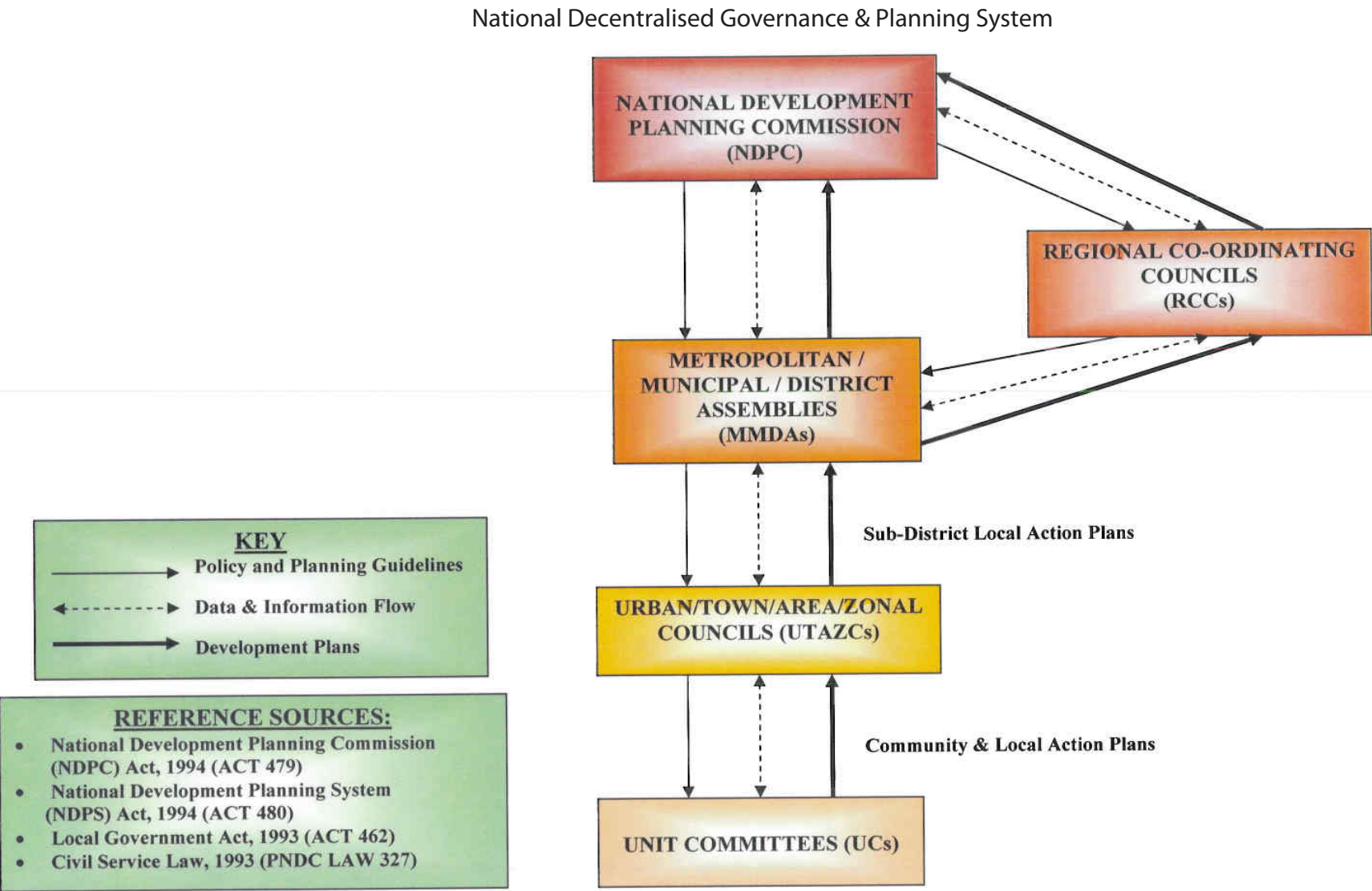
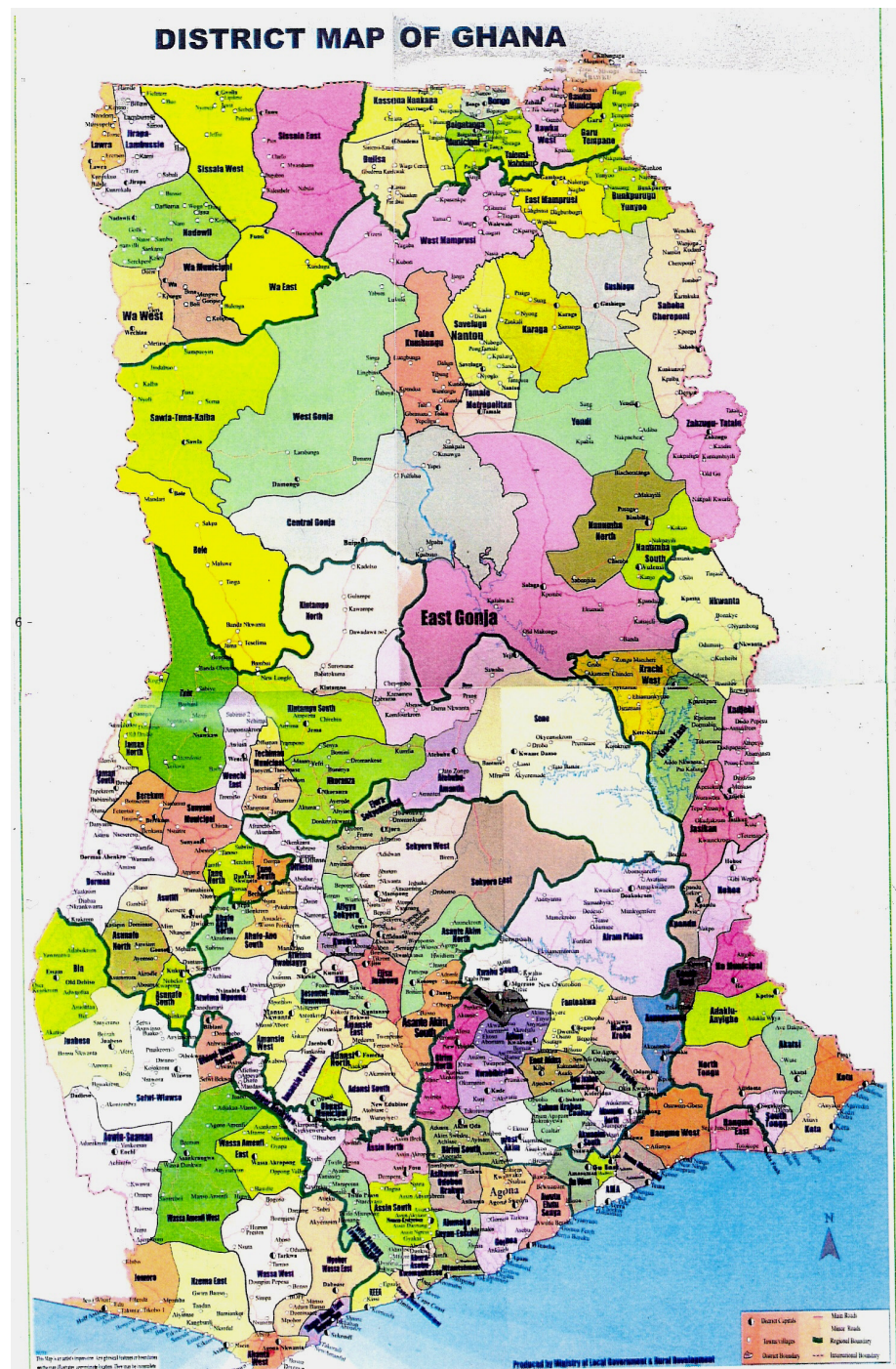




FIGURE 6: DISTRICT MAP OF GHANA



The boundaries and names shown on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

#### 4.6 Implementation of the PoA

Among the project cycle stages, implementation seems to be the weakest point of Ghana, and indeed of the entire African continent, although this is the stage that makes the desired transformation into reality. A clear manifestation of this point is our failure to implement numerous development plans drawn over the years and enforce provisions intended to improve governance and development such as the decentralization concept. Again, the limited time devoted to discussing and drafting the PoA with stakeholders, compared to the time spent on the identification of problems and issues, underscores this point.

Some of the recommendations of the APRM report have been integrated into Ghana's Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS II) to facilitate implementation as required by the APRM guidelines. However, there is little information to the public on the status of implementation of the PoA. This can create concern that the APRM report might suffer the same fate as its predecessors, that is previous development programmes, and even kill interest in the process. Apart from initial debates, the report generated after the APR Forum peer-reviewed Ghana in Khartoum, in January 2006, there is virtually no public debate on the implementation of PoA in the country.

The GC's continuous effort to deepen public awareness and ownership is most appropriate. It will raise public interest and promote participation in the implementation and monitoring of the PoA. At this point, national bodies such as the NCCE, NDPC and MDAs should take over the process and in partnership with civil society and private sector educate the public and implement the PoA. This will give the GC ample time to concentrate on its monitoring and periodic reporting to the APR Panel, while at the same time; it advises government on accelerating the implementation process. Above all, civil society need to be proactive, show interest in the process and demand for progress report on status of implementation from both the GC and Government, and also fulfil their obligations to make the implementation successful.

#### 4.7 Conclusion

Under the circumstances within which Ghana pioneered the implementation of the APRM process, the GC made concerted effort to involve a wide spectrum of stakeholders representing various categories of society in the process. However, intensity and coverage of public education was quite low. While representative stakeholder participation was good, public awareness and involvement in the process was weak, and seem to have weakened public ownership and commitment to some extent.

The APRM is a continuous process and the lessons learnt justify the current public education at the district levels. Indeed APRM should be integrated into the country's decentralized system of governance and development planning as advocated in the APRM Guidelines document. Such interventions should be undertaken to strengthen stakeholder awareness, participation, ownership and commitment to the planning and implementation of the various stages of the process, especially the implementation of the PoA.



#### 4.7.1 Values, Ethics and Principles

As mentioned in the introduction, successful achievement of the APRM objectives is dependent on appropriate values and principles informing the process, such as courage, honesty, altruism, transparency and accountability. Our code of ethics will decide whether we will make the right decisions, or opt for the easy, but less successful alternatives.

In effect, the choice of promoting, respecting, and upholding human rights, or the right of stakeholders to participate fully in the APRM process, is influenced by the values and principles of the leadership. This also explains why ‘eminent’ people are chosen to lead at both national and continental levels. Leadership accompanied by simplicity and modesty stimulates popular and dedicated participation, especially when the state of eminence of the leaders does not make them lose their humanity and susceptibility to acknowledging mistakes. Consequently, leadership at all levels should be supported to guide the process effectively through feedback mechanisms. The same factors, especially courage, should stimulate to participate and provide feedback when necessary through appropriate structures. The good sense of undertaking the right action for the benefit of all stakeholders, even if it offends anybody or group, is the only way to realize the NEPAD/APRM dream of good governance and development.

The APRM process, if thoroughly implemented, will build the capacity of all stakeholders involved for effective participation in democratic governance. As best practice and experience indicate, participatory processes such as the APRM should not be rushed. There must be respect for value systems and self-esteem of all stakeholders. Mindsets and power differentials should be challenged through frank dialogue and a collective culture of transparency. In addition, decisions should be made in terms of sustainable outcomes, while external inputs are integrated into national priorities, processes and systems to build capacity of existing institutions, instead of creating new and parallel ones. Above all, we should establish positive incentives for positive change and stay engaged even under difficult circumstances<sup>73</sup>.

In the light of the above, the onus rests on each stakeholder of the APRM to participate actively and pursue development or remain apathetic and maintain the status quo. In any case, we will bear the consequences of our choice. We should also remember that posterity will judge us, as the poor majority of the populace look up to leadership to make APRM work for the promotion of democratic governance and improvement in their standard of living.

<sup>73</sup> Carlos Lopes and Thomas Theisohn, ‘Capacity, Leadership and Transformation: Can we do better for capacity development?’, 2003, Published by UNDP and Earthscan Publications Ltd., London and Sterling, Virginia.

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1: CONCEPT AND STAGES OF THE APRM PROCESS

#### The Concept of the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM)

The APRM is a mechanism by which African Heads of States who have acceded assess (peer review) the situation pertaining in members countries regarding the four focal areas of the APRM. Member countries then assist the country under review to implement a programme of action (PoA) it has developed to address shortcomings identified, and thus improve governance in the reviewed country. APRM is therefore an innovative 'instrument voluntarily acceded to by Member States of the African Union as an African self-monitoring mechanism'<sup>74</sup> to facilitate the attainment of the NEPAD objectives. Along the line of a peer review, which is usually a process of performance assessment among people of similar standing (peers) and sharing of experiences for development, it is a sort of performance assessment among the member Heads of States or governments (peers).

74 APRM Base Document

The mandate of the APRM is 'to ensure that the policies and practices of participating countries conform to the agreed political, economic and corporate governance values, codes and standards contained in the Declaration on Democracy, Political, Economic and Corporate Governance'<sup>75</sup>. The innovative aspect of APRM is its voluntary nature. Countries accede to the mechanism on their own volition, without any compulsion from the AU. This is intended to ensure that countries that accede are fully committed to the APRM.

75 Determined at the 38th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organisation of African Union (OAU), held in Durban South Africa on 8th July 2002

A country is reviewed under the four focal areas of the APRM, namely:

- Democracy and Good Political Governance,
- Economic Governance and Management,
- Corporate Governance, and
- Socio-economic Development.

Through the review, a country identifies its strengths and weaknesses and develops a Programme of Action (PoA) to facilitate accelerated growth and improved standard of living for its population. APRM is implemented through the structures and processes described below. Currently 25 out of the 53 African countries have acceded to the mechanism (see Table below).

APRM invites public participation through fora for dialogue, experience-sharing, and mutual support within and among the participating countries towards the attainment of the set objectives. The mechanism inculcates in participating countries the idea of being their 'brother's keeper' by providing feedback regarding how the country under review is doing and/or perceived to be doing in respect of four focal areas: Democracy and Good Political Governance, Economic Governance and Management, Corporate Governance, and Socio-Economic Development.

### Countries that have Acceded to the APRM

NO.	COUNTRY	DATE OF SIGNING MoU	NO.	COUNTRY	DATE OF SIGNING MoU
1	Algeria	09 March 2003	13	Rwanda	09 March 2004
2	Burkina Faso	09 March 2003	14	Senegal	09 March 2004
3	Republic of Congo	09 March 2003	15	South Africa	09 March 2004
4	Ethiopia	09 March 2003	16	Uganda	09 March 2004
5	Ghana	09 March 2003	17	Egypt	09 March 2004
6	Kenya	09 March 2003	18	Benin	31 March 2004
7	Cameroon	03 April 2003	19	Malawi	08 July 2004
8	Gabon	14 April 2003	20	Lesotho	08 July 2004
9	Mali	28 May 2003	21	Tanzania	08 July 2004
10	Mauritius	09 March 2004	22	Angola	08 July 2004
11	Mozambique	09 March 2004	23	Sierra Leone	08 July 2004
12	Nigeria	09 March 2004	24	Zambia	January 2006
			25	Sudan	January 2006

### Structures and Processes of the APRM (Strengths and Weaknesses)

The APRM is implemented via its designed structures and five-stage process described below.

#### The APRM Structure

The APRM process is managed through a well-designed and simple structure that clearly defines the roles of the various components. The APR Forum (of participating Heads of States and Governments) is the highest decision-making authority in the structure. It oversees the entire APRM process and is responsible for the establishment of the other components of the structure such as the APR Panel and the APR Secretariat. It also considers and adopts the final country review reports submitted by the APR Panel, discusses it with the peer Head of State and assists the government in implementing her PoA to improve governance and socio-economic conditions in the country.

Below the Forum is the seven-member APR Panel (of eminent persons)<sup>76</sup> appointed by the Forum to direct and manage the Continental APRM process. The Panel considers review reports and makes recommendations to the APR Forum. The mandate of the APR Panel includes, but is not limited to, overseeing the selection and appointment of the APR Review Teams.

The APR Panel and Forum is supported by the APR Secretariat in South Africa. The Secretariat provides secretarial, technical, coordinating and administrative support services for the APRM. It is headed by an Executive Director. The functions of the Secretariat include providing technical assistance to participating countries, maintaining an extensive database and information on the four areas of focus of the APRM, organizing the Country Review visits and ensuring full documentation of the APR processes at country, sub-regional and continental levels to facilitate learning.

<sup>76</sup>The members of the Panel are Ms. Marie-Angelique Savane of Senegal (Chairperson), Ambassador Bethuel Kiplagat of Kenya, Dr. Chris Stals of South Africa, Prof. Adebayo Adedeji of Nigeria, Dr. Graca Machel of Mozambique, Dr. Dorothy Njuma of Cameroun and Mr. Mourad Midelci of Algeria who has appointed a Minister of State and has been replaced by his country man - Mohammed Babes.

77 African Peer Review Mechanism  
Organisation and Processes: NEPAD/  
HGSIC-3-2003/APRM/Guideline/O&P 9  
March 2003

The Country Review Team (APR Team) is constituted only for the period of the country review visit. It is appointed to visit countries that have completed the country self-assessment to review progress with the country's programme of action. The team produces the APRM report on each country after its review<sup>77</sup>.

At country level, the APRM is overseen by the National Focal Point, which may be a Council, Commission, Ministry, Department or under the Office of the President, according to a country's preference.

### **The APRM Process**

The APRM Process involves periodic reviews of the policies and practices of participating states to ascertain progress being made toward the attainment of mutually agreed goals. It has five main stages. As much as the APRM process is broadly clear, it only provides the framework and each country determines its national processes for conducting the country self-assessment (Stage 1). This design may be a strength as it allows adoption of conducive situation-specific approaches. At the same time, it may be a weakness if countries employ approaches that tend to be less participatory and transparent and dominated by one group or another. What is evident from the different approaches employed by countries that have implemented the first stage, is that the intended six-month duration for the submission of the country report to the APR Forum (i.e. the entire 5-stage process), is inadequate for even stage 1 alone. This is due to the participatory nature of the process and the time it takes for consensus to be reached by the different stakeholders. The key units or components of the structure responsible for the different stages of the APRM process are as depicted in Figure 1 and explained below:

#### **Stage 1:**

##### **Country Self-Assessment**

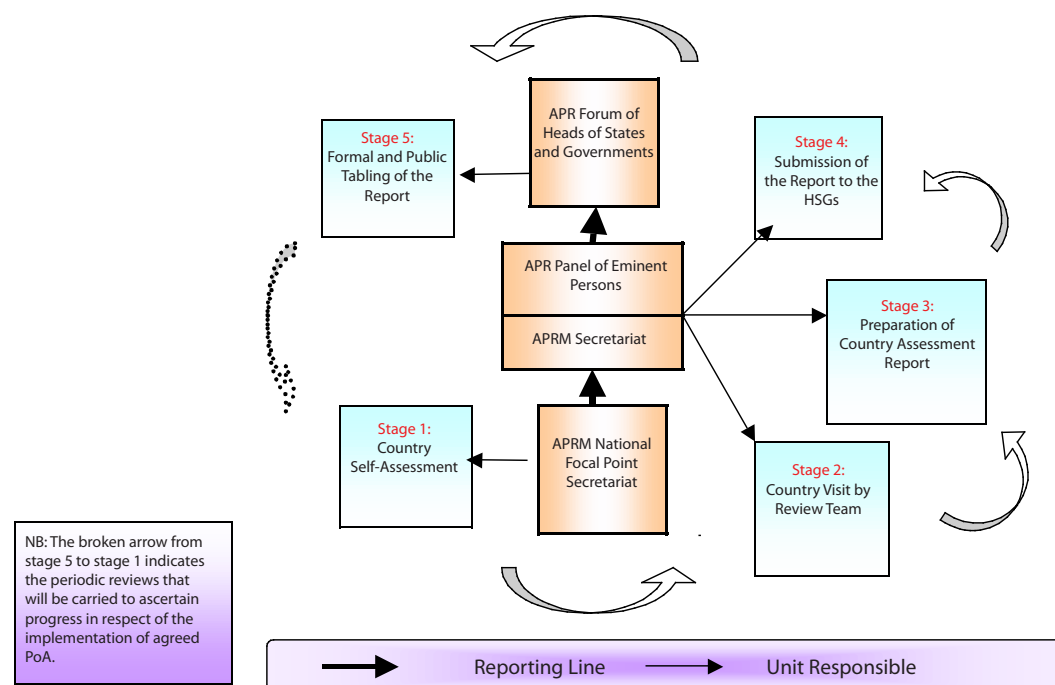
The stage involves an assessment of the prevailing political, economic, corporate and development environment in the country concerned. It is conducted by stakeholders within the country, and facilitated by the National APRM Focal Point. A standard APR Questionnaire developed by the APR Panel and Secretariat is modified by the country into a survey instrument. A final country report on the prevailing situation on the four focal areas and a Programme of Action (PoA) is prepared and sent to the APR Secretariat.

#### **Stage 2:**

##### **Country Visit by APR Review Team**

An APR 'Review' Team visits the country under review to consult with a wide range of stakeholders, including government officials, parliamentarians, political parties' representatives, CSOs etc. The consultations of the team are to ascertain if the final report submitted by the country reflects the situation on the ground. The APR Secretariat assembles the Review Team and submits the list to the APR Panel to review. When the Panel is satisfied with the individual members' qualification and competence, it appoints the Team to undertake the country review visit.



**FIGURE1: THE APRM STRUCTURES AND PROCESSES**


### Stage 3:

#### Preparation of Country Assessment Report

The Review Team of the APR Secretariat prepares its report on the country. The report is prepared on the basis of the APR Secretariat's briefing materials and information gathered during the wide-ranging consultations and interactions with stakeholders in the country under review. The report is discussed with the Government concerned and the responses of the government are appended to the Team's report.

### Stage 4:

#### Submission of the Report to the HSGs

The Review Team's Report is sent to the APR Forum of participating Heads of State and Governments (HSGs) through the APR Panel, after they have added their recommendations. The HSGs discuss the report, provide their comments, decide on the report and finally adopt it.

### Stage 5:

#### Formal and Public Tabling of the Report

This final stage completes the cycle for any country and involves making the final report which contains all essential elements public. Firstly, the report is formally and publicly tabled in key regional and sub-regional structures such as the Pan African Parliament, the African Commission on Human Rights and peoples' Rights, the envisaged Peace and Security council and the Economic, Social and Cultural Council (ECOSOCC), etc, before it is released to the general public. Though this was supposed to be done six months after the report has been considered by the HSGs<sup>78</sup>, delays in the process and the fear of suspected censorship by the HSGS led to an early release of Ghana's report.

## Appendix 2: Questions for Syndicate Groups' Discussions

### APRM Section 1: Democracy & Good Political Governance

1. What in your view is the state of democracy & political governance in Ghana?
  - Involvement and participation of citizens in decision-making.
  - Infrastructure and capacity of political and governance structures (both constitutionally mandated and civil society organizations)
2. What, in your assessment, has led to the current state of democracy & political governance in Ghana?
3. Are stakeholders involved in the design, adoption and implementation of national governance policies?
4. What issues pertaining to democracy & political governance, in your view, should be included under the APRM?
5. How can the APRM facilitate the improvement of democracy & political governance in Ghana?

### APRM Section 2: Economic Governance and Management

1. What, in your view, is the state of economic governance and management in Ghana?
  - Involvement and participation of citizens in decision-making.
  - Infrastructure and capacity of economic governance and management (both constitutionally mandated and civil society organizations- e.g. Regulatory bodies such as Public Utilities and Regulatory Commission)
2. What, in your assessment, has led to the current state of economic governance and management in Ghana?
3. Are stakeholders involved in the design, adoption and implementation of national economic policies?
4. What issues pertaining to economic governance and management, in your view, should be included under the APRM?
5. How can the APRM facilitate the improvement of economic governance and management in Ghana?

### APRM Section 3: Corporate Governance

1. What, in your view, is the state of corporate governance in Ghana?
  - Involvement and participation of citizens in decision-making.
  - Infrastructure and capacity of corporate governance structures (both constitutionally mandated and civil society organizations)
2. What, in your assessment, has led to the current state of corporate governance in Ghana?
3. Are there any policies pertaining corporate governance?
  - a. If there are any policies, what are they and are they adequate?
  - b. If the policies are inadequate, how can they be strengthened?
4. Are stakeholders involved in the design, adoption and Implementation of national policies pertaining to corporate governance?
5. What issues pertaining to corporate governance, in your view, should be included under the APRM?
6. How can the APRM facilitate the improvement of corporate governance in Ghana?

**APRM Section 4: Socio-Economic Development**

1. Are stakeholders involved in the design, adoption and implementation of national development programmes?
2. Do development projects meet community needs?
3. What is the extent of monitoring and evaluation of development programmes?
4. To what extent are development policies country-owned?
5. Is Ghana aid dependent? If yes, how do we resolve this problem?
6. To what extent would you say that Ghana's development policies are donor-driven?
7. What is the government doing to accelerate socio-economic development?
8. Do development programmes incorporate environmental management?
9. What policies do we have in place and how are resources allocated to achieve this goal?
10. Are there policies in place to ensure that Ghanaians have affordable access to:
  - Education
  - Health
  - Water
  - Sanitation
  - Financial markets
  - ICT
  - Land
11. What steps has the government taken to ensure gender equality?
12. Have stakeholders effectively participated in national development policies?
13. What policies and structures promote science and technology?