

WORKSHOP ON THE EXPERT LEVEL VALIDATION OF THE APRM GOVERNANCE INDEX FRAMEWORK

Concept Note

29th June – 1st July 2022

Johannesburg, South Africa

(Seven Villa Hotel & Spa)

1. Background and rationale

The African Peer Review Mechanism was established in 2003 by the African Union Heads of State and Government with the primary purpose of fostering practices that lead to political stability, high economic growth, sustainable and inclusive development, as well as accelerated regional and continental integration. It seeks to rectify underlying deficiencies in governance and socioeconomic development processes among member states of the African Union. Since its inception in 2003, the APRM has covered four main thematic areas in all its base reviews: (i) Democracy and political governance (DPG); (ii) Economic governance and management (EGM); (iii) Corporate governance (CG); and (iv) Socio-economic development (SED). In 2020, the base questionnaire was reviewed to include a fifth thematic area on States Resilience to Shocks and Disaster (SRSD).

The APRM is unique both in its scope and breadth, with the review process extending to all levels of government, parliament and the judiciary as well as the private sector and civil society organisations. Using its Self-Assessment Questionnaire (SAQ) also known as the Base Questionnaire, the mechanism covers simultaneous evaluation, largely from a qualitative perspective in the various thematic areas. In each thematic pillar, the questionnaire stipulates an overall objective and the relevant African Union “Standards and Codes”. This follows a list of questions, the “objective” being to establish what the country has done to achieve the objective and implement the Standards and Codes. The questionnaire then provides “indicators”, as well to measure the extent to which the country has achieved the objective and implemented the Standards and Codes.

One of the critical steps of the review process when a country accedes to the Mechanism is self-assessment. This consists of the country under review evaluating itself and defining its governance problems using the SAQ. The ultimate end products of the country self-assessment is a comprehensive National Program of Actions (NPOA) developed to address the governance challenges identified in the country. Thereafter, the country undergoes a Country Review process resulting in the production of a report, which is peer reviewed at the level of Head of States and Government. The country then starts submitting an annual progress report on the implementation of the NPOA to the continental Secretariat.

Following the expanded mandate of APRM which states that “*the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) should be strengthened to track implementation and oversee monitoring and evaluation in key governance areas of the Continent*”, the APRM sought the need to augment its qualitative approach with a concrete and reliable quantitative approach for monitoring and tracking the progress of governance on the continent through the development of APRM Governance Index. The project, supported by the African Development Bank (AfDB), entails two main activities: (i) Development of Comprehensive Governance Framework and (ii) Building of Governance Index. *The rationale behind the index is not necessarily to compare one country with another but to compare each country’s performance against itself over the reference period.* The APRM governance index will provide, on a regular basis, at the frequency of the voluntary APRM exercise and on a longitudinally basis, a measure of the overall degree of achievement of the countries’ government vis-à-vis the five pillars.

On 21st April 2022, a virtual meeting was held to launch the External Steering Committee that will provide supervisory and technical support to the project. The purpose of the meeting was to launch the steering committee, have an overview of the conceptual framework methodology including the guiding terms of reference, arrangements and activation of the working groups on the proposed conceptual framework of the Index. The thirty (30) experts were put into five working groups based on their area of interest around the five pillars of the framework – DPG, EGM, CG, SED and SRSD.

It's worth noting that the framework development was initiated from the recent version of the SAQ used by the APRM in its country review mechanism which include the fifth dimension of SRSD. The strategy for leveraging the SAQ and all desk reviewed documents is to start deriving a first comprehensive conceptual framework draft and a first measurement framework draft. The Steering Committee is therefore expected to fine tune the framework both at the level of nested sub-dimensions and indicators resulting in a sound and meaningful overall framework.

In the light of the above, the APRM continental secretariat would like to organize a three-day technical workshop at the level of the steering committee to finalize the conceptual and measurement framework of the APRM Governance Index.

2. Objectives of the workshop

The physical meeting in Johannesburg, South Africa will give the opportunity to meet in flesh, consolidate the group cohesion and update and exchange on the groups' work. The objective of the upcoming workshop is to offer the opportunity to finalise the conceptual and measurement framework before its submission for validation to APRM member states and Focal Points. Specifically, the workshop will offer the steering committee an opportunity to:

- i. Validate the conceptual and measurement approach of the framework
- ii. Finalise the various sub-dimensions across each of the five pillars of the framework
- iii. Propose and validate the different indicators based on the agreed criteria.
- iv. Finalise the entire framework which will be shared among the APRM Focal Points and validate at the continental level.

3. Expected Outcomes

By the end of the workshop, it is expected that experts involved in the steering committee will be able to:

- i. Make inputs and agree on the conceptual and measurement approach of the APRM Governance Index
- ii. Agree at the group level, the various sub-dimensions and indicators deemed necessary and policy relevance for the production of the first APRM Governance Index
- iii. Consolidate and finalise the framework for the continental validation.

4. Participants

The training workshop is meant for all external and internal steering committee members providing the supervisory and technical support to the project. These include following:

- The president and the vice president of the external steering committee
- APRM Internal Steering Committee members,
- External Steering Committee members which include different institutions working on governance measurement on the continent, governance experts on the African continent including academia and researchers, among others.

5. Date and venue

The workshop is scheduled to take place from **29th June – 1st July 2022** in Johannesburg, South Africa at Seven Villa Hotel and Spa in Sandton.