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THE AFRICAN PEER REVIEW MECHANISM (APRM): AN ASSESSMENT OF CONCEPT AND DESIGN

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An Assessment of Concept and Design**

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Abstract

The African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) has been proposed as a key element of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). It is important that the APRM be thoroughly debated in terms of concept and design. This paper is a contribution to the debate. The paper derives design criteria for peer review mechanisms after looking at some functioning examples. These criteria are—Competence, Independence, and Competition. It is argued that while the APRM is a welcome addition to pan-African institutional structure, its design will have to be improved for it to be truly successful. First, APRM should greatly narrow the scope of its reviews if it is to deliver competent assessments. Second NEPAD should devote significant resources to allow civil society in the reviewed country to do assessments of their own, and to critique the APRM assessment.

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1. Introduction

The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) was launched in 2001. There has been a flood of commentary on it, even as NEPAD has been developing its mandate. I have commented elsewhere on the dangers of NEPAD taking on too much, and on the need for it to focus on its comparative advantage¹. I have argued that this comparative advantage flows from the fact NEPAD is an Africa-wide initiative that is self-consciously democratic in its roots and aspirations. This gives it, or should give it, an African voice rooted in principles of democracy and human rights. This voice can speak externally, to the court of world opinion, and internally, to African nations themselves. NEPAD's comparative advantage is simply this, and all proposed activities for NEPAD should be judged against the standard of whether they specifically and peculiarly require these strengths—so much so that no other current institution could do that job.

My focus in this paper is on NEPAD as an African voice speaking to African nations.² Specifically, it is about the proposed African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM). In my view, the APRM is potentially an excellent use of NEPAD's comparative advantage. But we still need to analyze the concept and the design and its implementation in detail. This paper is a contribution to the debate. I first describe the APRM as currently conceived, based on publicly available documents.³ I then develop three criteria for assessing a peer review mechanism (PRM) inductively, by considering three actual functioning mechanisms—academic peer review, OECD country review, and IMF Article IV consultations. This analysis leads to three criteria for successful peer review mechanisms—Competence, Independence, and Competition. The paper then assesses the APRM against these criteria. It concludes that although the APRM is a welcome addition to the African institutional landscape, considerable improvements will be needed along these three dimensions for it to be truly successful.

2. The APRM: An Outline Description

The envisaged structure of the APRM is described in a number of publicly available documents.⁴ Participation in the APRM is voluntary. At the time of writing, 16

¹ See Ravi Kanbur, "The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD): An Initial Commentary," www.arts.cornell.edu/poverty/kanbur/POVNEPAD.pdf; Ravi Kanbur, "NEPAD Commentary: The First Wave," www.arts.cornell.edu/poverty/kanbur/NEPRev.pdf. Accessed 2 January, 2004.

² I discuss its role in addressing the court of world opinion, and its role in African peer review, in the broader context of NEPAD as an international public good, in Ravi Kanbur, "Conceptualizing RFI's versus GFI's," <http://www.arts.cornell.edu/poverty/kanbur/RFI%27sGFI%27s.pdf>. Accessed 2 January, 2004.

³ All the APRM documents referred to in this paper are available on the NEPAD website, <http://www.touchtech.biz/nepad/>. Accessed 6 December, 2003.

⁴ Go to <http://www.touchtech.biz/nepad/files/en.html>, click on Documents, then Core Documents, and then APRM. The following documents are available: [Countries Acceded to the APRM](#), [African Peer Review Mechanism \(base document\)](#), [Memorandum of Understanding of the APRM](#), [African Peer Review Mechanism Organisation & Process](#), [Objectives, standards, criteria and indicators for the APRM](#), [Outline of the memorandum of understanding on technical](#)

countries have acceded to the APRM.⁵ Accession entails “undertaking to submit to periodic peer reviews, as well as to facilitate such reviews, and be guided by agreed parameters for good political governance and good economic and corporate governance.”⁶

The supreme political authority of the APRM is the committee of the Participating Heads of State and Government (PHSG). This committee appoints a Panel of Eminent Persons to direct and manage the APRM. The first APRM Panel has as members: Marie-Angelique Savane (Chair), Dorothy Njeuma, Graca Machel, Adebayo Adedeji, Bethuel Kiplagat, Mourad Medelci and Chris Stals. As required and expected, although panel members are appointed as individuals, the panel has diversity of representation from different parts of Africa. It is also interesting, and heartening, to see that three out of the seven members of the panel are women, and the Chair is also a woman.

Five stages of the peer review process are envisaged. The first stage will involve a background study and collection of information from different sources by the APRM Secretariat, including the completion of a detailed questionnaire by the government of the country being reviewed. In the second stage, the APRM Review Team will pay a visit to the country to consult with the government, political entities such as the parliament and political parties, and civil society broadly construed. In the third stage the report is prepared in draft form, and discussed with the government. The government’s responses are to be attached to the report as it goes to the next stage. The fourth stage is the crux of the process. The report is submitted to the Participating Heads of State and Government and considered by them. What happens at this stage, as envisaged in the APRM base document, is worth quoting in full:

“If the Government of the country in question shows a demonstrable will to rectify the shortcomings, then it will be incumbent upon participating Governments to provide what assistance they can, as well as to urge donor governments and agencies also to come to the assistance of the country reviewed. However, if the political will is not forthcoming from the Government, the participating states should first do everything practicable to engage it in constructive dialogue, offering in the process technical and other appropriate assistance. If dialogue proves unavailing, the participating Heads of State and Government may wish to put the Government on notice of their collective intention to proceed with appropriate measures by a given date. The interval should concentrate the mind of the Government and provide a further opportunity for addressing

[assessment and the country review visit](#). Accessed 6 December, 2003. A comprehensive collection of NEPAD and APRM documents is maintained by the Southern African Regional Poverty Network (SARP), <http://www.sarpn.org.za/nepad.php>. Accessed 6 December 2003. For example, from this site can be downloaded: [Communiqué issued at the end of the third meeting of the African Peer Review Mechanism Panel of Eminent Persons](#). This is dated 15 November, 2003, and at the time of writing is the most recent official communiqué on the APRM.

⁵ These countries are: Algeria, Burkina Faso, Congo, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Nigeria, Ghana, Kenya, Rwanda, Senegal, Uganda, Gabon, Mauritius, Mali and South Africa.

⁶ See [African Peer Review Mechanism \(base document\)](#). This is African Union, Assembly of Heads of State and Government, AHG/235 (XXXVIII), Annex II.

the identified shortcomings under a process of constructive dialogue. All considered, such measures should always be utilized as a last resort.”⁷

The fifth and final stage is that the report is lodged with regional and sub-regional institutions.

What will the peer review cover? The APRM documents provide a fairly clear roadmap, although the details are still being worked out. The general direction flows from the Declaration on Democracy, Political, Economic and Corporate Governance.⁸ The review is intended to cover four areas: (1) Democracy and Political Governance, (2) Economic Governance and Management, (3) Corporate Governance and (4) Socio-economic Development.⁹ For each of the areas, objectives, standards, criteria and indicators are to be developed. The Appendix to this paper lists the indicators that are currently being considered. There are almost 100 of these. Even allowing for some repetition, and the initial attempt at comprehensiveness, there is a sense in which this list is too long to implement competently. Discussions are currently underway on how these indicators are to be actually collected and collated for the country being reviewed, asking partner institutions to undertake the task, and designing a questionnaire for the country to fill out. The capacity required to actually carry out a comprehensive exercise is considerable, and care has to be taken to ensure that the whole effort does not sink under its own weight. We will return to this issue more fully later on in the paper.

3. Three Peer Review Mechanisms

How are we to assess the concept and design of the APRM, as described in detail in APRM documents and as outlined in the previous section on the basis of these documents? It might be useful to consider some functioning peer review mechanisms in order to derive criteria for assessment. In this section we consider three such peer review mechanisms—academic peer review, OECD country review, and IMF Article IV consultations. The main focus will be on the OECD peer review process, since this may come closest to what the design of APRM is aiming at.

3.1 Academic Peer Review

The system of peer review that most academics are familiar with is that of peer review for publishing in scholarly journals. A typical process for this looks as follows. After finishing a paper, an academic sends it off to a scholarly journal. The Editor of this journal, himself or herself a scholar of some reputation, makes an initial assessment of the suitability of the paper for the journal, and then sends it to a number of specialist reviewers, sometimes called “referees”. The number of referees varies by journal—usually between two and four. The names of these reviewers are not revealed at any stage to the author(s) of the paper. The reviewers send back their assessment, with recommendations of various strengths to publish or not to publish, or to ask for revisions.

⁷ See [African Peer Review Mechanism \(base document\)](#).

⁸ African Union, Assembly of Heads of State and Government, AHG/235 (XXXVIII), Annex I

⁹ See [Objectives, standards, criteria and indicators for the APRM](#).

Based on these reports, the Editor of the journal makes a decision. If all reports go in one direction the Editor generally follows the recommendation. If the reports differ in their recommendations, the Editor has to balance these considerations. Whatever the decision, this is explained in a letter to the author(s) from the Editor, enclosing the anonymous reports on which the decision is based. If the paper is rejected, in general there is no recourse—the author(s) accept the decision and submit to another journal.

The above is a stylized account of the core peer review process in academia. There are many variations, but the process is at the heart of assessment of academics. Despite many criticisms, often of the detail of this or that variation, but sometimes of the key elements of the core process, academic peer review survives and prospers, and no viable alternative has as yet been proposed. The vast majority of academics accept, by and large, the results of the current academic peer review process.

What accounts for the success of academic peer review, as evidenced by its acceptance by most academics most of the time? Clearly, the notion of competence of the reviewers and of the Editor(s) is important. Since the reviewers are anonymous, this competence is revealed in their comments. But as important is the reputation of the Editor as an authority in the field, able to select competent reviewers and to make judgments on differences between them.

That the reviewers are anonymous is also important, because this is meant to provide independence of the review—the referee report is more likely to be critical if the referee knows his or her name will not be revealed. Indeed, increasingly, journals are adopting a “double blind” system of refereeing, where the author identification is removed from the paper before it is sent to the reviewer. Of course the notion of anonymity of peer review is not practically feasible in the case of country reviews, and perhaps not desirable, but it should be clear that anonymity is not the issue. What is at issue is the independence that anonymity gives to the reviewer. Indeed, in other contexts, for example where whole academic departments are reviewed, the reviewing committee is known—it is the stature of the members of the committee in the profession which is meant to guarantee their independence.

There is a third aspect of academic peer review in scholarly journals that is important—there are always plenty of alternatives if one journal rejects an article. No single journal is the “only game in town”. In economics, for example, some contributions that eventually won the Nobel Prize were rejected by the first journal they were sent to! This pluralism, and the competition it generates, means that when we talk of the review system we do not talk about one, two or a few journals, but many journals competing with each other, willing to give a different verdict on a paper.

3.2 OECD Country Review

While yielding some useful insights, it might be thought that academic peer review may not be directly relevant to the issue of country peer review for Africa. Let us therefore turn to a specific country review mechanism, that of the OECD. The OECD website states that dialogue, consensus, peer review and pressure, are at the heart of OECD.¹⁰ A recent OECD document, Pagani (2002), clarifies and develops the idea of peer review and pressure, and describes the OECD peer review process in general terms.¹¹ It will be useful for us to dwell on it at some length.

Pagani (2002) starts with the following useful definition of peer review:

“Peer review can be described as the systematic examination and assessment of the performance of a State by other States, with the ultimate goal of helping the reviewed State improve its policy making, adopt best practices, and comply with established standards and principles. The examination is conducted on a non-adversarial basis, and it relies heavily on mutual trust among the States involved in the review, as well as shared confidence in the process. When peer review is undertaken in the framework of an international organization—as is usually the case—the Secretariat of the organization also plays an important role in supporting and stimulating the process. With these elements in place, peer review tends to create, through this reciprocal evaluation process, a system of accountability.”

Pagani (2002) distinguishes peer review from judicial proceedings (since the final outcome of peer review is not a binding act or judgment), fact-finding missions (since peer review goes beyond this, to assessments) and simple reporting and data collection (although these can be useful components of a peer review). He further distinguishes the concept of “peer pressure”:

“The effectiveness of peer review relies on the influence and persuasion exercised by the peers during the process. The effect is known as “peer pressure.” The peer review process can give rise to peer pressure through, for example: (i) a mix of formal recommendations and informal dialogue by the peer countries; (ii) public scrutiny, comparisons, and, in some cases, even ranking among countries; and (iii) the impact of all of the above on domestic public opinion, national administration and policy makers.”

How does the OECD peer review mechanism work? First of all, the peer review is not necessarily an all encompassing review as envisaged in the APRM. Most OECD reviews are specific, focusing on particular sectors or particular policies. For example, Ireland’s aid program was recently peer reviewed through the Development Assistance Committee of the OECD. A key role is played by “examiner countries”. These are the countries in the peer group who will conduct the peer review. In fact, it will be officials

¹⁰ Go to <http://www.oecd.org/home/> and then to “About OECD”. Accessed 11 December, 2003.

¹¹ Fabrizio Pagani (2002), “Peer Review: A Tool for Cooperation and Change—An Analysis of the OECD Working Method,” OECD SG/LEG (2002)1, <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/33/16/1955285.pdf>. Accessed 11 December 2003.

from the examiner countries who will lead the review, but they represent not themselves or their countries, but the collectivity.

Once the topic of the review, the principles, standards and criteria are decided by the collectivity, there are three phases of an OECD review—the preparatory phase, the consultation phase and the assessment phase. The first phase (“the preparatory phase”) corresponds to the APRM’s first stage. Information is collected, from existing sources and from questionnaires sent to the reviewed country Government, and background studies are conducted. The second phase (“the consultation phase”) corresponds to the second and third stages of the APRM. There are site visits, discussion with government and broad civil society, and a draft report which is usually discussed with government. The third phase of the OECD review (“the assessment phase”) corresponds to the crucial fourth stage of the APRM. It is worthwhile quoting in full from Pagani (2002) for comparison with the earlier description of the fourth stage of the APRM:

“The assessment phase: the draft report is discussed in the plenary of the body responsible for review. The examiners lead the discussion, but the whole body is encouraged to participate extensively. Following discussions, and in some case negotiations, among members of the body, including the reviewed State, the final report is adopted, or just noted, by the whole body. Generally, approval of the final report is by consensus, unless the procedures of the particular peer review specify otherwise. In some cases, the procedures may call for the final report to state the difference among the participants. In some cases, non-governmental organizations also have the opportunity to influence the decision by submitting papers and documents.”

Why is the OECD peer review mechanism a generally accepted success? Technical competence of the OECD secretariat, and the examiners is very important. The basic facts and analysis have to be gotten right in phase one and phase two. Also in these phases, independence of the secretariat and the examiners is crucial. The third phase is seen to be explicitly political, the final report involves negotiations and consensus building, but for this to work there has to be confidence that such negotiation has not already gone on in the earlier phases, compromising competence and independence there. But a crucial aspect of the success is that OECD peer reviews enter an already rich domain of policy dialogue in a country. The peer review is not “the only game in town”, on which everything depends. If this was the case, then it is easy to see that there would be enormous incentives for political interference in the technical phases, and even the political discussion in the third phase would be poisoned by the amount at stake. But because it is one review among many that are conducted routinely, so to speak, by the reviewed country’s civil society, it is a valuable input to the dialogue. Competing voices are important. It is through its influence on domestic public opinion, as one voice in a pluralistic dialogue, that OECD peer reviews seem to have their biggest impact.

3.3 IMF Article IV Consultations

The IMF's Public Information Notice (PIN) No. 03/139, issued November 26, 2003, announces the conclusion of an Article IV consultation with Austria.¹² Footnote 1 of this PIN says the following:

“Under Article IV of the IMF's Articles of Agreement, the IMF holds bilateral discussions with members, usually every year. A staff team visits the country, collects economic and financial information, and discusses with officials the country's economic developments and policies. On return to headquarters, the staff prepares a report, which forms the basis for discussion by the Executive Board. At the conclusion of the discussion, the Managing Director, as Chairman of the Board, summarizes the views of Executive Directors, and this summary is transmitted to the country's authorities.”

In fact, the same footnote appears in all PINs announcing the conclusion of Article IV consultations. At face value, this process looks remarkably like the process of OECD peer review. The actual articles of agreement¹³, however, have a much more severe tone. Article IV is entitled “Obligations regarding exchange arrangements.” Specifically, Section 3 of Article IV is called “Surveillance over exchange arrangements,” and says:

“(a) The Fund shall oversee the international monetary system in order to ensure its effective operation, and shall oversee the compliance of each member with its obligations under Section 1 of this Article.

(b) In order to fulfill its functions under (a) above, the Fund shall exercise firm surveillance over the exchange rate policies of members, and shall adopt specific principles for the guidance of all members with respect to those policies. Each member shall provide the Fund with the information necessary for such surveillance, and, when requested by the Fund, shall consult with it on the member's exchange rate policies....”

The tone of these stipulations makes clear that the role of the IMF is more supervision and compliance than “peer review,” albeit that the members have entered voluntarily into the agreement defined by the articles of agreement. Yet it can be argued that it is in rich countries, where IMF resources are not used, that the Article IV consultations tend to play the same role as OECD peer reviews. In these countries, the visit of an IMF mission, and the subsequent report, is one among a number of assessments of the economy, produced by domestic and international entities (including in the latter, OECD peer reviews). There is a vibrant and domestic dialogue which the IMF Article IV consultation feeds into and makes a contribution—the final policy decisions of the governments are influenced by, not determined by, the IMF review.

¹² See <http://www.imf.org/external/np/sec/pn/2003/pn03139.htm>, accessed December 16, 2003.

¹³ See <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/aa/index.htm>, accessed January 2, 2004.

This is a very different picture from poor countries where IMF resources are often in play. There are program missions, conditionalities of the program, and the IMF's assessment is almost invariably the gateway to resource flow from private and public sources. The anticipation around the visit of an IMF mission in Africa (and in Latin America and Asia) is of a different order to that in the UK, or Finland. And, as we all know, there is a great deal of mistrust and misapprehension on the part of government and civil society alike. Why is this? While specific charges are leveled at the competence of the IMF, this is often that they take too narrow a perspective—within the macroeconomic sphere, most people would grant that the IMF has excellent staff. The concerns arise not so much on competence but on independence and competition, and the two are related. On independence, there is a strong feeling among poor countries that the IMF is too much driven by the interests of its major, G7, stakeholders. On competition, in many African countries certainly, there do not exist many alternative authoritative sources of analysis that can “take on” an IMF assessment on its own terms. Finally, crucially, when IMF resources are in play, the IMF assessment is the key that unlocks non-IMF resources as well—it is the only game in town.

4. Three Criteria and An Assessment of APRM

The three functioning peer review mechanism discussed, their successes and their failures, suggest three requirements for success: Competence, Independence and Competition.¹⁴

4.1 Competence

Technical competence is essential. Academic peer review relies on the competence, authority and reputation of journal referees and editors. The OECD secretariat is central to the functioning of its peer reviews. The IMF is criticized more when it steps outside of its basic competence in macroeconomics. A crucial issue, thus, is not just a technically competent staff, but that the review mechanism not take on too much, and not be stretched too thinly across a very wide range of issues, at least not until it gets a staff that can manage this.

On Competence and APRM, a lot will depend on the quality of the APRM secretariat. This is of course partly a matter of resources, but also a matter of hiring staff based solely on criteria of technical competence. We will have to wait and see how this develops as the secretariat expands. But there is one fundamental issue that is already clear. No matter how technically competent a staff is, if it is asked to do too much and it is stretched too thin, it will become incompetent to deliver what is asked. My fear is that the APRM review is too broad, and too detailed (just look at the Appendix to this paper), to be sensibly handled. Of course it can be argued that some or much of this work will be

¹⁴ These criteria are not new, novel or surprising. Indeed, the base document of the APRM mentions two of them: “Every review exercise carried out under the authority of the Mechanism must be technically competent, credible and free of political manipulation.” The contribution here is to develop these criteria in the context of other experiences, and to then to assess the APRM design with respect to the criteria.

contracted out, but this has its own dangers, and does not in any event absolve the secretariat from managing and, crucially, synthesizing the input from the subcontractors.

4.2 Independence

Any suggestion of influence on the reviewers, either from those reviewed or from forces extraneous to the review, would undermine the integrity of the review. In academic review, anonymity assures this independence, as well as the professional stature of the reviewers and editors. OECD peer reviews explicitly include a political phase where the reports and their conclusions are discussed, and negotiated, but prior to this, in the analysis and fact finding stage, there is independence of the technical work. This is helped by the fact that there is (most of the time) no resource flow directly attached to OECD peer reviews. The IMF's independence from the interests of its major stakeholders, however, is widely questioned by governments and civil society in poor countries.

On Independence and APRM, much depends initially on the personal authority of the APRM Panel. Certainly, very distinguished Africans have been chosen for the Panel. An assessment of independence must await the outcomes of actual reviews.

4.3 Competition

Peer review mechanisms work best when they are part of a wide range of assessments. There are many academic journals to which authors rejected from one journal can take their paper; OECD peer reviews feed into a rich and ongoing policy dialogue and debate in the reviewed country; IMF reviews work like OECD reviews in rich countries not using IMF resources, but not so in poor countries dependent on them. When a review is, or is perceived to be, the “only game in town”, or “too big a game in town”, the high stakes set up a dynamic of pressures that can undermine trust.

On Competition and APRM, there is a mixed picture. On the one hand, the APRM may itself provide a counterweight to IMF and donor assessments (although a lot will depend on the technical competence of the APRM, discussed above). But, on the other hand, there is a worry that the APRM will be “too big” a game in an African country, especially if the domestic policy dialogue, and domestic civil society, is not sufficiently well developed and active to provide a range of counterweights to it (and to IMF and other external assessments).

5. Conclusion: Two Specific Suggestions

I welcome the APRM process, and the progress made to date in concept and design. I believe that the APRM utilizes a strong comparative advantage of NEPAD, its democratic roots and aspirations, to provide a forum that speaks with an African voice to African nations.

However, there are two key areas in which improvements are called for. First, the APRM must not spread itself too thin. It must, initially at any rate, narrow down the scope of its reviews, and focus on what it can do well. This is a general point about NEPAD, but it applies with equal force to APRM. Given the menu already developed, further discussions, perhaps of a political nature, will be needed to restrict the APRM agenda. There are two ways to do this—cut down on the broad areas, or cut down on coverage within each area. On areas, in keeping with NEPAD’s special comparative advantage, I would suggest an initial focus on democracy and political governance. But if this focus on one area is not possible then there has to be some pruning down of the mass of assessment sub-areas listed in the Appendix to this paper—how can we possibly imagine that all these can be covered competently, no matter how good the staff?

Second, the success of the APRM depends on the seeds of its assessment of a country falling on the fertile soil of a vibrant civil society dialogue in that country. This requires a civil society that is itself competent to understand and respond to the APRM assessments. Somewhat paradoxically perhaps, but in keeping with the OECD peer reviews experience, the success of a peer review mechanism depends on it being only one of a range of reviews that are carried out by the civil society of a country. So, as a part of the APRM process, NEPAD should set aside significant resources to allow civil society in the reviewed country to do assessments of its own, and to critique the APRM assessment.

Appendix: APRM Indicators¹⁵

1. Democracy and Political Governance
 - 1.1 Level of ratification and accession to relevant African and international instruments for conflict prevention, management and resolution
 - 1.2 Existence and effectiveness of early warning capacity
 - 1.3 Existence of institutions to manage, prevent or resolve conflicts
 - 1.4 Level and trends of drug trafficking
 - 1.5 Adequacy of express provisions in the constitution
 - 1.6 Effectiveness of democracy and law enforcement institutions
 - 1.7 Independence and effectiveness of Electoral Commission to ensure fair and free elections.
 - 1.8 Adequacy of legal framework for free association and formation of non-governmental organizations and unions.
 - 1.9 Effectiveness of independent media in informing the public and providing freedom of expression.
 - 1.10 Public perceptions of and the degree of satisfaction with democracy and political governance.
 - 1.11 Congruence of the national Constitution with the Constitutive Act of the African Union
 - 1.12 Effectiveness of institutions and processes for implementation, oversight and public awareness of human rights principles and the country's obligations therein
 - 1.13 Regularity and quality of country reporting to treaty bodies
 - 1.14 Adequacy of budgetary provisions and effectiveness of interdepartmental committees to give effect to the country's international obligations
 - 1.15 The overall state of these rights in the country
 - 1.16 Security of tenure of the judiciary and its access to resources
 - 1.17 An effectively independent judicial services commission to ensure professionalism and integrity with responsibility for the appointment of judges
 - 1.18 Inter-party committees within Parliament exercising effective oversight functions over various areas of public interest
 - 1.19 Overall assessment of the state of governance in these areas
 - 1.20 Mandated reports by the Executive branch of Government to the Country
 - 1.21 Provision for public hearings to which public officials can be called to account
 - 1.22 A constitutionally mandated public service commission that is effectively structured and resourced
 - 1.23 A legal instrument embodying a code of conduct for public office holders

¹⁵ Taken from [Objectives, standards, criteria and indicators for the APRM.](#)

- 1.24 Results of overall assessments or citizen charter reports
- 1.25 Constitutional provision for fighting corruption and effectiveness of institutions carrying out the mandate
- 1.26 Accessibility of the proceedings of Parliament and the reports of its various committees to the public
- 1.27 Requirements for periodic public declaration of assets by public office bearers and senior public officials
- 1.28 Results of overall assessment of corruption in the country
- 1.29 Accession and ratification of the relevant African and international instruments on the rights of women and girls
- 1.30 Effectiveness of constitutional provisions and laws, and institutions protecting and promoting the rights of women
- 1.31 Consequential steps taken to ensure full and meaningful participation of women in all aspects of national life, particularly in political and economic domains
- 1.32 Results of overall assessment of status of women
- 1.33 Effectiveness of constitutional provisions and institutions to advance the rights of the child and young persons
- 1.34 Accession to and ratification of the relevant international instruments on the rights of the child and young persons, and the measures taken to implement them
- 1.35 Consequential steps taken to ensure the realization of the rights of children and young persons
- 1.36 Results of overall assessment of status of children and youth in the country
- 1.37 Adequacy of constitutional provisions on promotion and protection of vulnerable groups and legal and regulatory steps to enforce them
- 1.38 Accession to and ratification of the relevant international instruments on the rights of vulnerable groups, including internally displaced persons and refugees, and the measures taken to implement them
- 1.39 Consequential steps taken to ensure the realization of the rights of vulnerable groups
- 1.40 Enactment and enforcement of legislation to stop human trafficking
- 1.41 Results of overall assessment of status of vulnerable groups

- 2. Economic Governance and Management

- 2.1 Measures of sound macroeconomic management (deficit to GDP and its sustainability, Revenue to GDP, inflation rate, debt to GDP and its sustainability, and share of deficit financed by Central Bank)
- 2.2 Positive impacts on socio-economic development, including rate of unemployment or job creation in both formal and informal sectors
- 2.3 Autonomy and effectiveness of the national auditing body
- 2.4 Credible and reliable Budget Process
- 2.5 Preparation and publication of interim financial reports
- 2.6 Demonstrable autonomy of the Central Bank

- 2.7 Enactment and enforcement of effective competition regulation
- 2.8 Medium-term-expenditure framework or other domestic medium-term-planning instruments or other predictable planning framework
- 2.9 Results of overall assessment of adherence to the above mentioned standards and codes and steps taken to address shortfall and capacity gaps
- 2.10 Ratification and implementation of International codes and the Africa Union anti-corruption code
- 2.11 Enactment and enforcement of effective anti-corruption and anti-money laundering laws
- 2.12 Effectiveness of institutions and programmes eg Public Protector, Prosecutor-General
- 2.13 Results of overall assessment of the prevalence of corruption and money-laundering in the country
- 2.14 Country's social and sectoral policies are coherent with and supportive of regional economic integration objectives
- 2.15 Implementation of MOUs and other regional economic agreements and treaties

- 3. Corporate Governance
 - 3.1 Effective regulation of accounting and auditing professions
 - 3.2 Effectiveness of legal framework and enabling environment
 - 3.3 Effectiveness of protection of property rights and creditors' rights
 - 3.4 Timeliness and effectiveness of resolving corporate disputes
 - 3.5 Effectiveness of private sector regulation
 - 3.6 Cooperativeness of employer-employee relations and positive assessments of labour unions
 - 3.7 Results of overall assessment of corporate integrity
 - 3.8 Level and application of international codes and standards
 - 3.9 Level of compliance to reporting and disclosure requirements covering capital markets, state-owned enterprises and agencies, banking, insurance and financial sector, etc
 - 3.10 Existence of effective Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) programme

- 4. Socio-Economic Development
 - 4.1 Alignment to NEPAD principles and priorities
 - 4.2 Level of food security
 - 4.3 Contribution of high value-addition industries (eg Manufacturing) to the GDP and exports
 - 4.4 The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) indicators
 - 4.5 The WSSD indicators
 - 4.6 The Human Development Index
 - 4.7 Efforts dedicated to poverty eradication

- 4.7.1 Extent to which small, medium and micro enterprises (SMME's) are promoted and developed
- 4.7.2 Percentage of GDP spent by the country on scientific and technological research and development
- 4.8 Extent and promotion of integration of production structures, and physical and institutional infrastructure
- 4.9 Existence and the extent of implementing planned capacity building programmes for the public sector
- 4.10 Population living under the poverty line
- 4.11 Gini coefficient
- 4.12 Indicators in National Social Development statistics and reports
- 4.13 Indicators in National HIV/AIDS and health reports
- 4.14 Indicators in National MDG report
- 4.15 Indicators in other relevant National reports
- 4.16 Percentage of budget allocated to components of social development and the effectiveness of the delivery
- 4.17 Percentage of population with affordable access to water, sanitation, energy, finance (including micro-finance), market and ICT
- 4.18 Official government policy documents and actions specifying programmes undertaken and implemented
- 4.19 Results of overall assessment of progress
- 4.20 Effectiveness constitutional, legal, policy and budgetary provisions for gender equality
- 4.21 Gender segregated statistics in official government reports permitting assessment of gender equality in all spheres of life
- 4.22 Extent to which rural communities are empowered to manage their own development
- 4.23 Measures of budgetary and fiscal decentralization
- 4.24 Adequacy and effectiveness of participatory practice in the country
- 4.25 Availability of micro-credit to SMME's and rural communities

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