



Southern Africa Development Community Organization of Public Accounts Committees

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EMPOWERING SECRETARIAT NETWORKS OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEES IN AFRICA

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on 16th January , 2017 held in Lome, Togo.***



Presentation Outline

- Introduction
- SADCOPAC secretariat
- Stakeholder analysis
- Communication strategies
- Secretariat resources
- Sub – committees (TWG)
- Challenges
- Conclusion / recommendations



Introduction

- The purpose of this presentation is to provide practical experience in working with networks of Public Accounts Committees in Africa.
- My name is Athumani Amir Kitojo holds Masters in Accounting & Finance (MSCs A & F) also holds Post Graduate Diploma in Business Administration (PGDBA) and Project Management.
- I have been working with SADCOPAC since 2009 to date as Project manager at SADCOPAC secretariat hosted at National Audit Office of Tanzania in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.
- From 2010 to 2014, I coordinated and supported two strategic projects such as GIZ (German cooperation - (4 years project) and World Bank IDF Grant for the Good Financial Governance in Southern / Eastern Africa (the Role of parliament & Audit institution Grant no TF 99399 – P120617 (3 years project). The projects successfully implemented and ended on 31st December 2016.
- Also selected as consultant to coordinate the Steering Committee for the formation of AFROPAC. Successfully achieved the formation and launch of AFROPAC on 2nd September 2013 at Arusha Tanzania . In 2014 participated in the Steering Committee for the formation of Commonwealth Association of Public Accounts Committee (CAPAC).



SADCOPAC Secretariat

- SADCOPAC Secretariat is based at National Audit Office of Tanzania (NAOT) in Dar es Salaam and operates as the core support mechanism for the SADCOPAC activities. The Secretariat provides the day to day running of SADCOPAC, coordination, organizes activities promoting the aim of SADCOPAC, strategic support as well as information management, communications and implements the decisions necessary for functioning of SADCOPAC in accordance with the plan of operation and the annual work plan approved by the Annual General Meeting (AGM). The SADCOPAC Secretariat performs a central project management role with overseeing SADCOPAC activities and funded projects. SADCOPAC annual budget is also administered by the SADCOPAC Secretariat.



Stakeholder Analysis “essentials”

Identify

Analyze

Engage

Manage

- Above 4 essentials are based on power and interest of the stakeholders e.g. Speaker of Parliaments, Clerks, PAC chairperson, PAC support staff and Auditor General - e.g. in Angola all communications must be addressed to the Speaker of Parliament. Other SADC countries Clerk of Parliament .
- The secretariat must update its e-mail list and addresses after every 3 months by requesting updates from member states.

Communications strategies

i) Communications Plan Management/ Governance

At SADCOPAC, we have well defined procedures, policy and constitution that defined and guide the work of secretariat. This help to understand the scope and work of Secretariat.

ii) Manage Communications & Coordination

This involves creating, collecting, distribution, storing & retrieving of the information. It involves formal (e.g. letters, reports, minutes, briefings, website) and informal (emails, and other tools – wiki spaces portal).

Internal (within the organization) and external depends on activity involved, if its network policy issues documents are addressed to PAC chairpersons and copied to PAC clerks. If issues involve cost or country interest (need Parliament decision) the matter is addressed to top decision maker e.g. the Speaker or Clerk of Parliament.

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iii) Control Communications

- Follow up usually made through formal and informal communications. Formal communications is decided on 1st, then 2nd informal communications through PAC clerks using informal tools such as emails, whats app and other tools (phone calls).
- In order to be effective the secretariat always personalise letters and correspondences in order to draw attention to the receiver. Avoid to involve third party to deliver the message to the network beneficiaries.
- In case feedback from member countries are not received due to language barriers usually we use countries which use the same language to assist secretariat and Office Bearers to find out difficulties of miscommunications. E.g Portuguese speaking countries such as Angola vs. Mozambique and French speaking Seychelles vs. Madagascar.

Secretariat resource

These are very crucial points which help to empower the network secretariat in Africa as follows:

- Strong and dedicated SADCOPAC Office Bearers, SADCOPAC has elections policy for office Bearers which call for rotational elections after every 3 years. This system helps to produce very strong and visionary leadership that, help SADCOPAC secretariat as well as SADCOPAC to achieve its objectives.
- Well structured TWG members (explanation see next slide).
- Defined Strategic and Business plans (explanation see next slide).
- Dedicated full time staff (my self - Mr. Kitojo) who is supervised by the Head of secretariat (Mr. Edwin Rweyemamu) from the Office of CAG of Tanzania. The NAOT support SADCOPAC by providing office facilities and technical advise to the Secretariat.
- Adequate budget to SADCOPAC secretariat which covers salary, full time internet facilities and mobile phone airtime. Also SADCOPAC provides local training for secretariat staff.

Sub – Committee (TWG)

- SADCOPAC had established a Technical Working Group (TWG) that provides, or source, the necessary expertise to plan and execute the capacity building and research projects of SADCOPAC. Technical Working Group consists of officials (PAC clerks) from elected Office Bearers.
- The overall objective and purpose of TWG is to assist support and strengthen SADCOPAC, by facilitating training initiatives of member states and promoting effective parliamentary oversight and good governance through research and benchmarking of good practices.
- Members of the Technical Working Group meet at least four times a year to discuss strategic issues and prepare technical documents so as to enhance capacity of SADCOPAC members.



SADCOPAC Strategic plan & Business plan

- SADCOPAC usually approve thorough AGM its Strategic Plan and Business Plan after every three years. The current plans were from 2016-2018.
- These two documents used as source of discussion for engaging the development partners in order to secure funding support of SADCOPAC activities.

Secretariat challenges

Complexity in coordination (alignment of secretariat work plan vs. member countries work plan)

- ***Time commitment***: PAC work can be demanding and require greater time commitments from its members than other parliamentary committees.
- ***Work load***: not enough time allocated to PAC work due to other priorities from Parliament.

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Alignment of Secretariat policy vs. members countries policy/standing orders

- ***Continuity:*** Some PACs experience frequent turnover of members due to redeployment. In some cases, PACs are reconstituted on an annual basis. These have very negative effects on the continuity and capacity of PACs.
- ***Limitations on PACs' powers:*** PAC's recommendations are not binding on the Executive. There is nothing therefore that forces the Executive to accept and act on PAC's recommendations. This may be limiting on the part of PAC in enforcing improved financial management practices and accountability in the public sector.
- ***Legislative environment and political support:*** In some countries, PACs do not have sufficient support from Parliament or Speaker. Often in some countries there are statutory provisions that constrain the work of the oversight committees.
- ***Lack of follow-up procedure on PAC's recommendations:*** in some countries, there is no structured and systematic way of following-up on the actions taken by the Executive on the recommendations of the PAC. Current motion will be discussed on 24th February 2017 during SADCOPAC governance meeting about introducing modern law in member states regarding the matter.

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Limited resources - Majority of PACs in SADC operate with limited budgets and support staff who have limited skills

- **Lack of planning tools:** Lack of Parliamentary calendar to enable planning of the Committee's activities.
- **Attendance of meetings, workshop & seminars:** Unsatisfactory attendance of members - capacity building activities.



Conclusion/ Recommendations

- AFROPAC needs strong secretariat with full time staff and support from its member states in order to deliver quality programme.
- Well structured work plan which will not interfered with member states activities.
- Strong coordination and collaborations with regional bodies especially in the preparations of capacity building activities.

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- Proper funding of secretariat and some member states which are facing budget constraints.
- The executive committee & AFROPAC secretariat need to have a marketing strategy that will convince the Speakers in Africa to support AFROPAC.
- AFROPAC secretariat needs to invest in research activities and ICT tools.

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