



Southern Africa Development Community Organization of Public Accounts Committees

SADCOPAC SECRETARIAT
C/o National Audit Office,
Audit House, Samora, Avenue
P.O.Box 9080 Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

Tel: +255 222 115157-8
Fax: +255 222 117527
e-mail: secretariat@sadcopac.org

SADCOPAC – EMPOWERING PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEES

***Presented by: Hon. Nthabiseng Khunou, SADCOPAC Chairperson from South
Africa
on 16th January, 2017 in Lome, Togo.***



Presentation Outline

- Introduction
- Vision and Mission of SADCOPAC
- Objectives of SADCOPAC
- SADCOPAC Constitution & policy document
- SADCOPAC Organs & Sub- Committee (TWG)
- SADCOPAC Funding Base
- SADCOPAC Strategic plan and Budget
- SADCOPAC Auditors
- Performance & Achievements
- SADCOPAC Good Practice Booklet
- SADCOPAC Strategic Collaboration
- Challenges
- Conclusion



Introduction

- The purpose of this presentation is to provide an overview of SADCOPAC's activities & achievements in promoting accountability, good governance and transparency in SADC countries as well as in African continent as a whole.
- The Southern Africa Development Community Organization of Public Accounts Committees (SADCOPAC) is an association of the Public Accounts Committees from SADC member states. It was launched in October 2003.



Vision and mission

VISION

- “SADCOPC shall strive to distinguish itself as an organization empowering the Members of each SADC Member State to effectively carry out their functions as oversight committee over public sector finances, as well as promoting good governance”

MISSION

- SADCOPAC is an autonomous and independent association of Public Accounts Committees from SADC states established to promote mutual support; foster the exchange of ideas, knowledge, and experiences; act as a recognized voice of Public Accounts Committees within SADC community; and promote accountability, good governance and transparency in the SADC states.



SADCOPAC Objectives

- The aims and objectives of SADCOPAC, as set out in its Constitution, are as follows:-
- Work with governments and other relevant role players in meeting the people's expectations of sound and accountable governance;
- Build capacity and expertise among SADCOPAC members to diligently and efficiently carry out their oversight functions and duties;
- Improve the effectiveness of Public Accounts Committees or similar committees in the SADC region;
- Share best practices and innovation, and, where appropriate and possible, harmonise and standardize the work of Public Accounts Committees in the SADC region;
- Promote good governance;

Continue.....

- Conduct research and introduce new best practices and innovations to improve and enhance the effectiveness of Public Accounts Committees in the SADC region;
- Communicate and build relationships with individuals and organizations with relevant expertise (nationally and internationally);
- Empower members to disseminate information on the work and activities of Public Accounts Committees among elected representatives, the media and general public, as well as oversight or similar committees;
- Liaise with Southern African Development Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions (SADCOSAI) on areas of mutual concern; and
- Strengthen relationships with appropriate SADC structures.

SADCOPAC Constitution & policy documents

Current Constitution was adopted at the 2016 AGM at Free State, South Africa. It covers 18 articles in 4 chapters

- Chapter 1; (articles 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 & 7 - Definitions, Name, Principles, Vision, Aim and Objectives, Non- Profit Organization, legal Personality and Powers.
- Chapter 2: (articles 8, 9,10, 11 & 12 - Membership, Membership Fees, Source of Income, Expenses of the Organization, Financial Records and Annual Reporting)
- Chapter 3: (articles 13,14,15 & 16 – Organs of SADCOPAC, Annual General Meeting (AGM), Governing Council (GC), Secretariat & Technical Working Group (TWG).
- Chapter 4: (articles 17 & 18 – Language & Dissolution of SADCOPAC.

SADCOPAC policy :

- Financial Regulations of SADCOPAC
- Development partners
- Elections
- Procurement

SADCOPAC Constitution is attached for easy reference.

SADCOPAC Organs & Sub – Committee (TWG)

Article 13 of SADCOPAC Constitution state that, organs of SADCOPAC are as follows:

- Annual General Meeting
- Governing Council
- Secretariat
- Annual Conference
- Technical Working Group

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) is the highest decision-making body in the organisation. The AGM consists of the Governing Council and two delegates per Member states. It meets at least once a year and is responsible for determining the strategic direction and policy of SADCOPAC. The Governing Council consists of office bearers and a representative of each Member state. It meets at least two times a year and its purpose is to oversee and ratify the decisions of the AGM and also to perform any task or duty requested by the AGM.

Continue.....

- The Office Bearers consist of the Chairperson (South Africa), Deputy Chairperson (Tanzania), Secretary General (Zambia), Deputy Secretary General (Swaziland), Treasurers (Seychelles). These are responsible for ensuring that decisions taken by the Governing Council are implemented and also for overseeing the operational activities of the Secretariat. The Secretary General manages the Secretariat and reports to office bearers on progress of activities and programmes as well as on expenditure and revenue management.
- SADCOPAC annual conference consists of all SADCOPAC member states and invited guests as determined by the Governing Council. It meets once a year and its hosting is rotated among the member states.



Secretariat

- The 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.



Sub – Committee (TWG)

- SADCOPAC had established a Technical Working Group (TWG) that will provide, 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 are from 2016-2018.
- These two documents are used as source of discussion for engaging the development partners in order to secure funding support of SADCOPAC activities.
- The two documents are attached for easy reference.



Annual Operational Budget of SADCOPAC

- SADCOPAC usually approve thorough AGM its operational budget every years. The current budget is from 1st April 2016 – 31st March 2017.
- The Budget for year 2017/ 18 was passed during AGM which was held in Free state, South Africa.
- Budget for 2015/16 depends on members subscription of \$ 5,000 per country yearly.
- The Office Bearers formed fundraising task team to help secure funding of SADCOPAC.



SADCOPAC Funding Base

- SADCOPAC operations depend on membership fees that are paid by its member states. Previous fee was \$ 2,500 each country per year and revised current fee is \$ 5,000 each country per year starting financial year 2013/2014 (13 countries).
- Member states take turns in hosting annual conferences (In-kind contribution) which puts more strain on their own resources. Not all member states are in a position to host the annual conference as such those that can afford must be willing to do it more than once.
- Support also comes from offices of Auditors -General (AGs) of SADC member states Tanzania, Botswana, Zambia, Malawi, Namibia & South Africa.



Continue.....

- GIZ and World Bank Institute have been supporting SADCOPAC for a period of 4 years (2010-2014).
- EU through Speakers Forum of South Africa supported SADCOPAC by sponsor two members training in Lesotho & Seychelles (March & April 2014).
- SAPST supported SADCOPAC by sponsor a two days training for the members of PACs from Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia and Zambia which was held in Johannesburg, South Africa from the 29th – 30th April 2015.

SADCOPAC Auditors: 2004 - 2016

SADCOPAC was audited by private audit firms up to 2007. Prior to May 2007, the Financial Statements of the SADCOPAC were audited annually by the independent audit firm from the country where the Secretariat was hosted.

- i. Independent Auditor of South Africa (SAB & T Inc Chartered Accountant): 2004/2005.
- ii. Independent Auditor of Tanzania (Stephen Shayo & Co : 2005/2006, and 2006/2007.

Continue.....

- At the AGM held in Mozambique in May, 2007, SADCOPAC Members resolved that Auditors General in SADC region should be requested to audit the Financial Statements of SADCOPAC. The 5th SADCOPAC AGM in Malawi in September 2008 appointed the Auditor General of Namibia to audit the Financial Statements of SADCOPAC.
- Timeline of previous & current Auditors:
 - i. Auditor General of Namibia: 2007/2008, 2008/2009 and 2009/2010.
 - ii. Auditor General of Malawi: 2010/2011, 2011/2012 and 2012/2013.
 - iii. Auditor General of Zambia: 2013/2014 & 2014/2015
 - iv. Auditor General of Botswana: 2016/2017

Continue.....

- **The audit opinion**

- For the last thirteen years the SADCOPAC has been doing very well on the arena of financial management & accountability. This is evidenced by the clean audit opinions which were issued by different independent auditors for ten consecutive years.

- **Performance Reporting**

- The SADCOPAC, through its Secretary General, has been preparing annually the performance report. The purpose of the annual performance report is to comply with Article 14(2) of SADCOPAC Constitution and to provide the readers with a high level overview of SADCOPAC. These reports have been very instrumental in doing self assessment of the successes made, challenges encountered and in articulating the way forward.

Performance & Achievements

- The Birth of African Organisation of Public Accounts Committees (AFROPAC) which was preceded by the birth of EAAPAC and WAAPAC.
- The SADCOPAC 10th Years Anniversary
- PACs in SADC member states spearheaded improvements in public financial management.
- Key factors contributing to PACs effectiveness in the SADC region include:
- ***Symbiotic working relationship between the Auditors-General and PACs-***
 - This relationship has contributed to the successful accomplishment of PACs activities; Auditors-General have been key stakeholders and supporters of PACs in their day to day activities.

Continue.....

- ***Effective PACs Secretariat and good internal operations:***
 - PACs support staff have attended training programmes and as a result the quality of their work and the output derived from it has also improved.
- ***Commitment of members to the tasks of PAC:***
 - There is an increased enthusiasm among the PAC members to ensure that PACs activities are completed on time. The region is increasingly experiencing more serious discussions of audit reports by PACs. At the same time, nearly all PACs are deliberating on Performance Audit Reports.
- ***Non-partisan culture:***
 - Most of PACs understand the concept of a non-partisan. This leads to attaining unanimous decision-making in their deliberations.
- ***Effective meetings:***
 - The Chairperson and members prepare in advance for PAC meetings and the chairpersons facilitate meetings in a professional way.

Continue.....

- ***Timely completion:***
 - Timely completion of audit reviews and submission of Committee reports to the House and Regular publication of PAC reports.
- ***Calling upon the executive to account for public sector spending without fear or favour:***
 - Hearings have been conducted with an intention of improvement. The hearings are not meant to be a witch-hunt or punish anybody unnecessarily.
- ***Continuity of membership:***
 - SADCOPAC very successfully lobbied to ensure that there is continuity of PAC membership. Previously, turnover was very high because Speakers were making frequent reshuffles in the portfolio committees.
- ***Committee preparations prior to hearings:***
 - Well prepared members with effective questioning skills, led by competent and knowledgeable chairpersons make it possible for PACs to be objective and focused.



SADCOPAC Good Practice Guide for PACs

- PACs do not only demonstrate differing practices in the manner in which they discharge their oversight function; they also face varying challenges in doing so.
- A Good Practice Guide was developed as a minimum standard of practice amongst PACs in SADC.
- Following the introduction of the Good Practice Guide in 2009, SADCOPAC has noted tremendous improvements in the performance of PACs from Member states.
- Many member states were able to request changes in their operations in line with the prescriptions of the Good Practice Guide



Continue.....

- At every conference, member states are expected to report progress in ensuring compliance with the prescriptions of the Good Practice Guide
- Where challenges are experienced, SADCOPAC assists them in dealing with the challenges
- SADCOPAC organizes various in-country trainings, seminars and workshops for PAC members and their support staff from time to time.

SADCOPAC Strategic Collaboration

- SADCOPAC has built strong working relationships with various international organisations and institutions in extending its network.
 - African Organisation of Supreme Audit institutions for English Speaking countries in Africa (AFROSAI-E),
 - Association of European Parliamentarians with Africa (AWEPA)
 - East Africa Association of Public Accounts Committee (EAAPAC),
 - West Africa Association of Public Accounts Committee (WAAPAC),
 - Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) & Commonwealth Public Accounts Committees (CAPAC),
 - Pan-African Parliament (PAP),
 - SADC Parliamentary Forum (PF),
 - SADC Accountant General Forum,
 - Speakers Forums and other strategic development partners like GIZ, and World Bank Institute.
- Through these networks, SADCOPAC managed to share experience with a much wider audience and at the same time benefited on the technical and financial support from some of them.

Continue.....

- Despite the fact that SADCOPAC has achieved a lot in the past 13 years of its existence, there are still some challenges which provide an opportunity for further improvements in the near future.
- Some of these challenges include:
 - ***Not all SADC states have confirmed their membership:***
 - SADC has 15 member states but only 13 have confirmed their membership to the SADCOPAC. The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Madagascar are yet to confirm their membership.
 - ***Lack of sustainable finances to accomplish SADCOPAC projects and activities:***
 - For the last ten years, SADCOPAC embarked on a number of initiatives meant to foster dialogue, networking and experience sharing among PACs in the SADC region. These initiatives include: training, dialogue, and research.

Continue.....

- ***Lack of coordinated oversight:***
 - There are no clear mechanisms in the SADC parliaments for facilitating coordinated oversight by PACs and other oversight committees.
- ***Lack of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms by some PACs:***
 - PACs in the SADC region have not institutionalised Monitoring and Evaluation of their work. It has been a challenge to measure the impact of their work since there is no well-defined follow up mechanism.
- ***Time commitment by PACs:***
 - PAC work can be demanding and requires greater time commitments from its members than other parliamentary committees.
- ***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.

Continue.....

- ***Lack of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms by some PACs:***
 - PACs in the SADC region have not institutionalised Monitoring and Evaluation of their work. It has been a challenge to measure the impact of their work since there are no well-defined follow-up mechanisms.
- ***Limited or lack of technical expertise:***
 - PACs do not always have the required technical expertise in their support staff, which negatively affects their effectiveness.
- ***Limitations on PAC powers:***
 - PAC's recommendations are not binding on the Executive. There is nothing that forces the Executive to accept and act on PAC's recommendations. Our SADC parliaments need to create mechanism
- ***Limited resources:***
 - Majority of PACs in SADC operate with limited budgets and support staff who have limited skills.

Continue.....

- ***Programming challenges:***
 - Not enough time is allocated to PAC work due to other priorities from Parliaments.
- ***Legislative environment and political support:***
 - In some countries, PACs do not have sufficient support from the Parliament or Speaker and in some countries there are statutory provisions that constrain the work of the oversight committees.
- ***Lack of planning tools:***
 - Lack of Parliamentary calendar to enable planning of the Committee's activities.
- ***Backlog of audit reports:***
 - Some Committees have to deal with old and long outstanding AG reports.
- ***Attendance of meetings:***
 - Unsatisfactory attendance of Committee meetings by members.



Conclusion

- Once again I thank the Government and the people of Republic of Togo and GIZ.
- I wish to also recognize the wonderful technical and financial support provided by Parliaments and in-kind support by Auditors-General in the SADC member states during SADCOPAC activities.

Thank you