

Tabled by Hon. A. Noor on 14/5/19
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EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY

EAST AFRICAN LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

**REPORT OF THE DELEGATION TO THE TRAINING
WORKSHOP ON RESEARCH AND EVIDENCE USE IN
THE PARLIAMENTARY CONTEXT**

KAMPALA, UGANDA

FROM 23RD TO 25TH OCTOBER, 2018

Clerk's Chambers,
EAC Headquarters Complex,
EALA Wing, 2nd Floor,
Arusha, Tanzania

May, 2019

PARLIAMENT
OF KENYA
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1.0 Introduction

The training workshop on research and evidence use in the parliamentary context was held in Kampala, Uganda, from 23rd to 25th October 2018 for Members of Parliament and Researchers from different Parliaments. The aim of the workshop was to share experiences, to learn from one another and discuss good practices that enhance the use of evidence in Parliament.

The workshop was jointly organized and facilitated by the Centers for Learning on Evaluation and Results- Anglophone Africa (CLEAR-AA) of the Wits School of Governance at the University of Witwatersrand, *Twende Mbele*, African Parliamentarian's Network on Development Evaluation (APNODE), African Centre for Parliamentary Affairs (ACEPA), African Institute for Development Policy (AFIDEP), and the Centre for Parliamentary Studies and Training (CPST). It was hosted by the Parliament of Uganda with logistics support provided by its Institute of Parliamentary Studies (IPS).

Rt. Hon. Martin Ngoga, Speaker of the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA) nominated Hon. Nooru Adan Mohamed and Hon. Francine Rutazana to attend the training workshop. The EALA delegates were accompanied by Dr. Anatole Nahayo, Senior Research Officer and Mr. Adam Mamuya, Research Assistant. The training brought together 29 Members of Parliament and parliamentary staff from eight Parliaments across the region (Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, Uganda, the East African Legislative Assembly, South Africa, Malawi, and Ghana).

2.0 Official Opening

The opening address was delivered by the Clerk to the Parliament of Uganda, **Mrs. Jane Kibirige**. She highlighted the importance of research and evidence use in the work of parliament and the need for profiling of systems that promote evidence use. She applauded the workshop approach of interaction and open

engagement to encourage learning. She thanked the partner organisations for organising the workshop.

3.0 Opening Ceremony Statements and Speeches

Ms Josephine Watera, Assistant Director Monitoring & Evaluation and Head of Monitoring & Evaluation Division, in the Parliament of Uganda welcomed the participants and organising partners to the Parliament of Uganda.

Mr Charles Binwe, Director of the Institute of Parliamentary Studies (Parliament of Uganda), informed the participants on the history, objectives, missions and achievements of the IPS. He underscored the importance of experience sharing and networking with similar institutions, and Members and staff of Parliaments.

Ms Hermine Engel from CLEAR-AA, on behalf of the partners, thanked the Parliament of Uganda for hosting the workshop and expressed her gratitude to the delegates present for their interest in sharing and learning through the workshop.

4.0 Presentations and Discussion

The following presentations were made followed by interactive discussions.

4.1 Evidence in the Parliamentary Context- Understanding Concepts

The presentation was facilitated by **Mr Issifu Lampo**, Senior Governance Expert, ACEPA- Ghana.

He shed some light on how evidence is understood and the factors affecting evidence use, particularly within the political context of the parliamentary space. He also explained that evidence is defined as a factual, accurate, verifiable, validated, substantiated, tested and contested information. It serves the purpose

of having the right information for the right purpose in relation to specific issues being discussed and decisions that have to be taken.

Participants noted that, in some instances, a Member of Parliament may need to act as a private investigator so as to scrutinize the agenda behind the evidence. Participants also identified a number of factors that affect the use of evidence in the parliamentary context. They include political will and the political climate, such as at election time where certain issues may be prioritised as a result of party politics and bias as opposed to considering evidence for the national good.

The workshop further observed that, more often, there are very small research departments serving a huge number of parliamentarians and committees. Thus, the need to look for additional support from external organisations such as Parliament Watch hosting dialogues on specific issues to assist Members of Parliament with information which can be used as evidence.

Experiences were shared on how evidence is gathered, through the oversight process, from the media and whistleblowers (but these sources require careful scrutiny), through public participation processes such as public hearings and surveys. It was noted that parliamentary evidence is also gathered and presented through production of short videos capturing relevant information required for Members of Parliament, and engaging in post-legislative scrutiny to evaluate whether the laws passed by Parliament achieve their intended outcomes.

The workshop observed that an effective induction system and continuous capacity building opportunities for new Members of Parliament was paramount to enhance evidence- use in Parliament.

4.2 Evidence Use in the Budget and Electoral Cycles

The presentation was facilitated by **Ms Aisha Ali**, Evaluation Researcher, CLEAR-AA- South Africa.

She unpacked the processes that trigger demand for evidence within Parliaments. It was noted that there is generally high demand for research and evidence by new Members of Parliament and within the first three years of the parliamentary term; but as the parliamentary term comes to an end, the demand for evidence tends to reduce. Budgets were also said to trigger demand for evidence because there is always need for evidence to support implementation and prioritization of projects and programs and to ensure appropriate budgetary allocation.

4.3 Identifying the Stakeholders: Interest and Influence in Parliamentary Oversight

The presentation was facilitated by **Ms Linda Khumalo**, Monitoring & Evaluation Officer, CLEAR-AA – South Africa.

Ms Linda indicated that parliamentarians and researchers engage with various stakeholders in obtaining, synthesizing and using evidence for the oversight, lawmaking and representative roles of Parliament. She underscored the value of stakeholder mapping which is described as “the process of understanding who the key stakeholders are ... that have interest in and influence over decisions and the implementation of interventions”. Stakeholder mapping plays a role in understanding which evidence / whose evidence gets used.

The workshop noted that in the stakeholder mapping matrix, government and political parties dominate the high interest / high influence category. Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), appeared in different categories of influence and interest.

Participants were however reminded to bear in mind that different countries have different political dynamics that shape the interest and influence levels of the different stakeholders, and that the stakeholder types are not monolithic entities (they are diverse with different agendas).

4.4 National Monitoring and Evaluation Systems and the Roles of Parliament

The session was facilitated by **Ms Hermine Engel**, Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) Technical Specialist, CLEAR-AA.

Ms Hermine focused on the value of national M&E systems in terms of the functions important for the work of parliament and the current strengths and challenges in relation to these functions.

It was explained that Parliament itself could be considered an M&E tool, as it involves overseeing the implementation of policies and programmes, and serves as a means of enforcing accountability. The workshop however observed that parliament's oversight role is often more reactive and as such might not always achieve the desired results.

Participants further observed that national M&E systems could play an important role for the work of parliament as follows: -

- i. The evidence use function facilitates decision making and serves as an indicator of commitment.
- ii. Evidence production and research is as a core function that helps Members of Parliament access evidence and make solid decisions based on the evidence provided.
- iii. Performance monitoring serves to enhance accountability by monitoring layers of results and ensuring quality service delivery by interacting with beneficiaries to understand how they have benefited.

- iv. Disseminating evaluation results / findings is important in terms of access to information and making sense of information. In this respect, it is important to synthesize the information for Members of Parliament to use the evidence effectively.

4.5 Evidence Synthesis

The session was facilitated by **Dr Rose Oronje**, Director of Science Communications & Evidence Uptake, AFIDEP.

Dr Oronje described evidence synthesis as the “packaging and unpacking of information”, and “sieving of a wide range of information”, noting that synthesis is central to effectively inform the work of Members of Parliament in terms of oversight and making laws. She highlighted that common practices involved in the evidence synthesis process include review and analysis of a wide range of documents as well as information from committee hearings; field visits; public participation processes; and responses to official parliamentary questions to ministers and government departments.

4.6 Parliamentary Work-plans and Performance Measurement

The presentation was facilitated by **Ms Josephine Watera**. She focused on the planning and monitoring and evaluation processes that guide the work of a parliament, particularly at committee level. She shared the experience of the Parliament of Uganda’s planning process emphasizing the importance of the Parliamentary Strategic Plan (2016-2020) which builds on the experience and lessons learnt from the implementation of the previous plan and the mid-term review exercises.

The workshop noted that various Parliaments follow different planning processes:

- i. South Africa develops a five-year strategic plan for the entire Assembly; each committee then develops from the general Plan its strategic plan (quarterly plans).
- ii. Rwanda uses the Results Based Management (RBM) System with each department entering its plans into the system. For the implementation of the Strategic Plan, the Clerk assigns each department an activity to be undertaken throughout the year and reported on quarterly. At the end of the fiscal year, the RBM system indicates the results achieved on the plans submitted.
- iii. In Malawi, the Committee Clerks plan the activities and then discusses the work-plan with Chairpersons of Committees who in turn discuss the plans with the committee members who then adopt the work-plan.
- iv. Uganda ensures alignment of the Strategic Plan of the Assembly with national plans. The development of the Draft Parliamentary Strategic Plan includes consultation with organs of Parliament, input of top management and approval by planning committee. The implementation of the Strategic Plan is monitored by the Monitoring and Evaluation department which informs the review of the outgoing strategic plan by the planning committee.

4.7 Equity-focused and Gender-responsive Evidence in the Parliamentary Context

The presentation was facilitated by Ms Agripinner Nandhego, Programme Specialist Political Participation and Leadership, UN Women – Uganda .

She briefed the participants on the work of UN Women in promoting the equal participation of women in all aspects of life. She also shared insights on the ways in which gender is understood, emphasizing that gender constructs the expected roles, relationships, behaviours, values and relative status, and power or influence of males and females in society.

The discussion focused on the importance of generating and using evidence on gender equality and equity as framed within the Sustainable Development Goals-Goals 5 (on gender equality) and 10 (on reduced inequalities).

It was observed that parliaments can play a key role in addressing gender inequalities and other inequities. The example of Uganda was shared where Members of Parliament refused to pass the budget unless the health budget was increased to cater for the recruitment of midwives.

4.8 Profiling Good Practices of systems that promote evidence use in parliaments

The session was facilitated by **Ms Claire Mathieson**, Consultant, *Twende Mbele*.

Participants discussed the good practices by their own parliaments and from other parliaments worth emulating in promoting evidence use. The following practices were indicated:

- i. requirement that Members of Parliament use evidence at all times during debates;
- ii. requirement of evidence to support resource allocation during budget sessions, for legislation purposes, and for inquiries being conducted;
- iii. the powers of parliament to sub-poena relevant persons for questioning;
- iv. networking with the academia, Civil Society Organisations, development partners, voluntary professional bodies, the media which serve as entry point for evidence generation at the invitation of committees of Parliament, as well as providing opportunity for the public to submit petitions;
- v. production of legacy reports which provide highlights of the previous parliament as well information on parliamentary business that remains outstanding at the end of the term of each Parliament;

assistance has been provided to set up similar services in more than 10 countries.

5.0 General Recommendations

Participants made the following recommendations which are critical to improving parliamentary processes.

- i. decision-making by Parliamentarians should be evidence-based;
- ii. there is need to understand and effectively navigate the political context of evidence-use;
- iii. evidence should be informed by multiple perspectives including, among others, research studies, evaluation reports, departmental reports and what is seen on the ground;
- iv. evidence generators should be able to access and easily submit their findings to parliament;
- v. evidence generators and users should apply a gender equality and equity lens that examines issues around social inclusion and power relations; and
- vi. the public should be able to access all parliamentary information online.

6.0 Lessons Learnt by the EALA's Delegation

From the interactions with participants from different Parliaments, particularly in terms of sharing and learning from good practices related to evidence use, the following lessons were learnt:

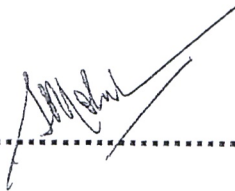
- i. evidence use is crucial for quality debate in parliament;
- ii. evidence use requires sufficient human and financial resources as well as sustained capacity building for Members and Staff of the Assembly;
- iii. collection of accurate information for evidence use requires networking with other stakeholders such as academia, policy research think- tanks, business community, media and civil society organisations;

- iv. access to parliamentary information by the public provides a conducive environment for the Parliament to collect the relevant information from multiple sources.

7.0 Recommendations to the EALA

On the basis of the above-mentioned lessons learnt, the EALA delegation would like to recommend the following: -

- i. The Assembly should request to the Council of Ministers for additional human resource to beef up the Research Section of the EALA.
- ii. The Assembly should ensure continued capacity building of Members and Staff in collection and use of evidence in parliamentary business.
- iii. The Assembly should establish a platform for networking with relevant stakeholders such as academia, policy research think- tanks, business community, media and civil society organisations in order to collect and use evidence from different perspectives.
- iv. EALA Members should consider joining the African Parliamentarian's Network on Development Evaluation (APNODE) to share experience for enhanced use of evidence in carrying out their laws making, oversight, and representation functions.
- v. The Assembly should strengthen its dissemination of parliamentary information to the public.



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Hon. Nooru Adan Mohamed



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Hon. Francine RUTAZANA