

Report of Third Partners' Meeting of the African Human Security Initiative held on 28th June 2004 at ISS Offices in Pretoria, South Africa

1. Participants

Dr Jakkie Cilliers	: ISS (Chairperson)
Ms Kathryn Sturman	: ISS
Mr Charles Goredema	: ISS
Ms Jemima Njeri	: ISS
Mr Prince Mashele	: ISS
Ms Grace Mulinge	: ISS
Mr Gordon Hughes	: DFID
Ms Gill Wright	: DFID
Ms Cecily Smyth	: Commission for Africa
Mr Alfa Fall	: IHRDA
Dr Kwesi Aning	: ASDR
Mr Sam Doe	: WANEP
Mr Kizito Sabala	: APFO
Ms Elizabeth Sidiropoulos	: SAIIA
Mr Noel Kututwa	: SAHRIT

2. Opening and welcome

Dr Jakkie Cilliers opened and welcomed participants to the meeting. He outlined the purpose of meeting as being to:

- Evaluate the progress made regarding the project;
- Discuss the lessons learned from the first phase of the project;
- Decide which of the monographs, if any, are not suitable for publication;
- Discuss the dissemination strategy of the outcome of the project; and
- Discuss the way forward regarding the project.

As background information to the meeting, Dr Cilliers refreshed memories of the participants about the processes and meetings that led to the current stage of the project.

3. Progress report

Ms Kathryn Sturman gave a progress report to the meeting. She reported that while the project was almost at its final stage, there were a few monographs that needed to be worked on before their final submission to Compress for production and that a decision needed to be made on the one developed by SAHRIT, since little progress had been made in that regard. Ms Sturman further reported that there was urgent need to finalize work related both to the ISS and ASDR monographs. In view of this and the need to ensure buy-in by stakeholders, Ms Sturman advised the meeting that it would be necessary to postpone the launch of the project.

3.1. Discussion

The meeting appreciated the important and strenuous work done by Ms Sturman in coordinating the project. There was unanimity that Ms Sturman's proposal for the postponement of the launch was in order. It was, therefore, agreed that the launch should be on 26 August. However, the meeting impressed on project partners to work harder to ensure that all outstanding work was finalized by no later than 9 July. Regarding the SAHRIT monograph, it was agreed that Mr Alpha Fall would help in soliciting information from Algeria since there was a language barrier and that the draft monograph would be given to Ms Elizabeth Sidiropoulos for editing before it goes to Compress. It was also agreed that Mr Fall would also assist with French translation that needed to be done on some papers.

4. Issues related to the launch

The meeting noted the importance of the project-outcomes reaching out to a broad range of stakeholders. Among others, the meeting identified NEPAD focal points in each NEPAD country as important targeted recipients of the project reports. It was further agreed that project partners should ensure that they communicate project reports to the embassies of concerned countries in their respective countries. In this regard, it was agreed that the ISS would send final electronic versions of each monograph/paper to project partners in order for partners to convey to relevant embassies. The meeting also emphasized the importance of conscientising sections of the concerned governments and civil society about the issues addressed by the project. It was therefore agreed that partners should organize one-on-one meetings with the relevant governments to inform them about the outcome of the project. In this regard, partners were assigned as follows:

- Nigeria :WANEP
- Senegal :IHRDA
- Algeria :ISSCT
- Ethiopia :SAIIA
- Ghana :ASDR
- Uganda :SAHRIT
- South Africa :ISS
- Kenya :APFO

The meeting agreed that, following the official launch in Pretoria, South Africa, each partner organization would organize national launches in their assigned countries and that partners would take boxes containing documents for the launches with them after the launch in August. In the interim, partners were advised to take boxes of the SAIIA monograph, which were already available, back home after the meeting.

4.1. Review of indicators

Following a suggestion in the meeting for the indicators on peace and security to be reviewed the issue was discussed at length. It was agreed that the ones contained in the document outlining the APRM indicators on Democracy and Political Governance

Standards should be linked to the AHSI project, while not deviating from the original project indicators.

5. Lessons learned from the pilot project:

Dr Cilliers outlined the lessons for the ISS and made some suggestions. He observed that building an institutional partnership has been quite difficult and there that had been an uneven level of commitment. Different partners approached the project differently – some subcontracted experts to get depth into the research, while others did the work in-house, over and above their other usual work. In his view, this resulted in a bias towards partners' regions in some cases. Dr Cilliers further advised that in future there would need to be greater transparency on how each partner utilized the funds allocated for the project. He also observed that there was uneven quality in the research reports and that, in many cases, the reports delivered needed far more than comments on one draft and some language editing and that the comments from ISS were not always responded to or dealt with.

On the positive side, Dr Cilliers observed that, the comparative approach, looking at eight countries worked well, as did the development of indicators from the OAU/AU commitments. It was an innovative approach, which broke away from the one-size-fits-all way of reviewing countries in Africa.

Dr Cilliers advised that there needed to be greater continuity in who was responsible for the research, as several of the researchers left and some of the reports were written by several different people.

In terms of budgeting, Dr Cilliers noted that the ISS underestimated the costs of the publications. He further made the observation that provision should have been made for the translation of the monographs into French, not just the papers.

Regarding the website, Dr Cilliers observed that the project launched an ambitious website and that the discussion forum was not used. He further observed that the website contained no information at present, as information would only be ready at later stages of the project. In that regard, he observed that the website should have been launched later, when there was more information available to post on it. He therefore advised that there needed to be a relaunch of the website when the publications launch took place.

Regarding editorial work, Dr Cilliers observed that there should have been more sharing of tasks, e.g. every report could have been checked by two other project partners. As the monographs were completed, they should have been circulated to other partners as examples of their work. There needed to be an editorial review board made up of all partners so that the editing task doesn't fall on one or two individuals. He further observed that there needed to be more quality control at the partner level before going to editing by the contracted agency.

Regarding indicators, the meeting noted that it would have helped to agree on the indicators as a group from the outset, before the information was gathered, instead of having to fix the reports retrospectively. IHRDA felt that the approach to human

rights was imposed by the network, while they would have preferred to include socio-economic rights as well as political rights in the review.

The meeting noted that now that the “brandname” of AHSI had been established, the partners needed to be open-minded about how the project would continue - maybe with more partners and a different approach to reviewing different countries.

It was observed that lack of information and difficulties in gaining access to information in Africa became clear during the project. Some of the themes were more difficult than others, e.g. civil society engagement is a subject which hadn't been measured before, in the same way that human rights or democracy had been measured by other projects.

It was further observed that African research and resources on the issues the project has been looking at were very scarce and thus made it difficult not to rely on international non-African sources such as Transparency International, Human Rights Watch, etc. The meeting therefore observed that there was need to start conscientising African NGOs on the need to write reports on African countries and also create more public awareness of the numerous commitments of the OAU/AU and the lack of implementation of those commitments.

Regarding the use of in-country researchers, it was noted that research by subcontracted researchers would have to be paid for by project partners. The meeting observed that the questionnaire process didn't work so well, as it held the researchers hostage to the governments' co-operation. The response from the various governments was uneven and took a long time. To an extent, project partners had to try and get access to government officials and network with them directly.

Lastly, the meeting observed that the aim to launch the reports at the AU Summit was too ambitious and that it was not clear why they should have been launched there.

6. An overview of the NEPAD African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM)

Mr Prince Mashele from ISS presented an overview of the APRM. He mentioned that the presentation was forwarded to the ISS by the APRM secretariat and that he only updated it with latest information.

He started the presentation by pointing out that the APRM was part of NEPAD and that it was a voluntary process to which countries needed to accede. He mentioned that, among others, the APRM was based on the principles of national ownership, credibility, stakeholder participation and technical competence. The APRM was meant to promote good governance and investment in African countries, especially those that have acceded to the process.

Mr Mashele pointed out that the APRM Forum was the structure that had the final control of the APRM process and that there was a committee of eminent persons driving the process, with the APRM secretariat providing secretarial assistance.

Mr Mashele outlined the processes of the APRM from the first stage when a questionnaire is sent to the country under review and the development of a national

program of action to the last stage when the APRM panel submits a report to the APRM forum for consideration and for it to be made public.

According to Mr Mashele, the APRM process was a bit behind schedule and that the process was at a stage where APRM support missions were visiting the first five countries to be reviewed (Ghana, Mauritius, Rwanda, Mozambique and South Africa).

The countries that had by then acceded to the APRM were SA, Senegal, Algeria, Nigeria, Uganda, Ethiopia, Kenya, Ghana, Burkina-Faso, Cameroon, Gabon, Mauritius, Mali, Rwanda, Congo, Benin, Mozambique, Angola and Egypt

7. Briefing on the UK Commission for Africa

Ms Cecily Smyth briefed the meeting on behalf of the British Commission for Africa. She started by observing that much success had been achieved in Africa in the recent past, but still huge challenges needed to be confronted. She reported that Prime Minister Tony Blair wanted to focus the G8 Summit in 2005 on Africa, since it would be held in Scotland. The Prime Minister, therefore, formed the Commission in order to prepare for the meeting. Ms Smyth noted that the Commission was working in partnership with existing African initiatives such as NEPAD in the context of the Africa Partners Forum, launched by Mr Blair in Feb 2004.

The Commission consisted of 17 Commissioners, 9 from African countries, working in an independent capacity. It aimed to take a fresh look at the role of the international community in Africa. The Commission was supported by a secretariat based in the UK. Ms Smyth was the only South African representative (management consultant), seconded to liaise locally on behalf of the Commission. The overall objective of Mr Blair, through the Commission, was to deliver on existing commitments to Africa, especially G8 commitments. The Commission met in February 2004 and decided to focus on 6 themes: economy, governance, human development, natural resources, culture and participation, and peace and security. The peace and security theme was clustered with governance, because of the role of governance in preventing conflict. Ms Claire Hickson was the secretariat person responsible for peace and security. The Commission was organizing a number of events, which included online discussions and consultations around existing events and networks and field trips. AHSI was invited to get involved with this work, as well as each NGO individually. Ms Smyth lastly advised that further background information about the Commission could be found at www.commissionforafrica.org and requested AHSI reports to be shared with the Commission.

7.1. Discussion

Important questions related to the Commission were raised during discussion. They included the status of the Commission in relation to its access to African governments for information, what would happen when the G8 presidency of Mr Blair ended and how the Commission differed from previous similar initiatives.

Participants also raised a number of issues that the Commission would need to tackle for it to be useful. They included issues of market access of African products to EU

markets, the need to phase out EU agricultural subsidies and addressing issues of economic justice between Africa and Europe.

The Commission's representative and Mr Gordon Hughes clarified that it was part of the Commission's plan to work with existing African initiatives and that one of the Commission's objectives was to facilitate access for Africa to the developed world and for African concerns to be placed on the agenda of the developed world. It was further clarified that the concerns raised in the meeting were also part of what the Commission sought to address.

The meeting further requested the Commission to link up with African civil society organizations in order for it to draw from the expertise of the organizations. This was a welcome suggestion for the representative of the Commission. It was therefore agreed that a meeting between the Commission and African civil society organizations, particularly those dealing with issues related to peace and security needed to be organized. The ISS was to pursue the proposal with the Commission.

8. The way forward

The meeting resolved that:

1. AHSI needed to think about how to feed into the process of the Commission for Africa as that could also help in getting buy-in from DFID.
2. AHSI needed to continue with the project, taking into consideration the lessons learned from the first phase. The second phase of the review would focus on four APRM countries: Mauritius, Rwanda, Mali and Mozambique. The use of local partners, where possible, was encouraged, while the original network of project partners would take responsibility for coordinating and writing up reports. In this regard, the methodology could work in two ways, i.e. either by commissioning a researcher in each country, or have one researcher traveling to each country, depending on which is the most appropriate approach.
3. The third phase of the review would cover: Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Congo, Gabon, Egypt, Benin and Angola.
4. Indicators used in the first phase would be retained, with some refinement where necessary.
5. A three-year project proposal, providing for the appointment of a dedicated researcher, needed to be developed by end of August. The proposal also needed to promote more equity among project partners.
6. Findings and comparison to the first review should be included in the conclusion of volume two.
7. Many inaccessible documents and legislation had been gathered during the first phase of the project. Part of the follow-on project would need to create a

database of these documents and post them, in their original form, on the AHSI website.

8. The launch of the publications and discussion of draft proposal would be on 26th August. Individual country launches would take place a week thereafter.
9. Due to lack of funds, the translation of full monographs into French would not be possible in the first phase of the project. This would, however, be left open for consideration in the next phase of the project

9. Closure

There being no other business, the chairperson adjourned the meeting, thanking participants for attending and was looking forward to see them at the next meeting on the 26th August 2004.