



THE AFRICAN CAPACITY BUILDING FOUNDATION | FONDATION POUR LE RENFORCEMENT DES CAPACITES EN AFRIQUE

# NETWORKING FOR AFRICA'S FUTURE

7<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL MEETING OF THE ACBF TECHNICAL  
ADVISORY PANELS & NETWORKS (TAP-NETS)

**FIELD-TESTING OF PARLIAMENTARY SCORECARD INDICATORS:  
TOWARD A METHODOLOGY FOR MEASURING  
PARLIAMENTARY EFFECTIVENESS AND THE RANKING OF  
AFRICAN PARLIAMENTS**

by

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CAMEROON***

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INDICATORS: TOWARD A METHODOLOGY FOR MEASURING  
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AFRICAN PARLIAMENTS**

**CONSOLIDATED REPORT**

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September 2011.

# **‘FIELD -TESTING OF PARLIAMENTARY SCORECARD INDICATORS: TOWARD A METHODOLOGY FOR MEASURING PARLIAMENTARY EFFECTIVENESS AND THE RANKING OF AFRICAN PARLIAMENTS’.**

## **1. BACKGROUND**

PARLIANET is one of six ACBF Technical and Advisory Panels and Networks (TAPNETS), serving as networks and communities of knowledge and expertise. Thus, PARLIANET provides guidance and knowledge sharing on parliamentary performance improvement and strengthening across sub-Saharan Africa.

Developing a framework for evaluating parliamentary performance as rigorously as possible, is the primary *raison-d’être* of PARLIANET’s proposed study.

Earlier work in this direction was spearheaded by Hon. John Bosley, with a ‘Review of the Parliamentary Scorecard Paper’ (ACBF Working Paper, No.14, September 2007).The use of scorecards with the associated methodologies has proved useful, for instance, in assessing whether an election has been ‘free and fair’.

A set of Scorecard Indicators was developed and presented by Jeewan S Ramlugun, at the TAPNETS’ Meeting in Gaborone, Botswana, in 2008.And, in the 2008-2009 Work Plan, a case study approach was proposed for the purpose of testing the Scorecard Indicators, which were subsequently incorporated in a PARLIANET Working Paper.

At the Special TAPNETS’ Meeting in Johannesburg in 2009, it was agreed to study a select sample of parliaments using the proposed Scorecard Indicators to establish standards of parliamentary performance.

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE STUDY**

As part of its 2010 Work Plan, the ‘PARLIAMENTS AND PARLIAMENTARY INSTITUTIONS (PARLIANET)’, received ACBF approval to undertake the field-testing of the Indicator Scorecards.

National Parliaments of the following countries were selected: Botswana, Cameroon, Mauritius, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, and Zambia. One Regional Parliament also chosen was the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA).

The study methodology, *inter alia*, entailed administering questionnaires and conducting interviews with a common ‘cast’ of each parliament e.g. Clerks (SG), House Leaders, Leaders of the Opposition, and the Heads of Research. The sample also included Representatives of NGOs and the editors of national newspapers.

The identified indicators in the study relate to the following: Law-Making; Budgetary Oversight and Scrutiny; Representation; Parliamentary Performance and Governance; and Parliamentary Capacity Building.

The above core functions of parliament constitute the universally accepted fundamental criteria by which parliament, in terms of its balanced performance, is judged.

## **STUDY OBJECTIVE AND RELEVANCE**

The study has primarily aimed at field-testing a set of balanced parliamentary scorecard indicators to gain an insight into the status of the parliaments being studied and derive an understanding of the driving or constraining forces behind parliamentary performance, affording key learning points in terms of development needs and capacity building interventions.

Reliable indicators are indispensable in evaluating performance effectiveness, and critically important as a diagnostic tool to assess the health and vitality of the institution of parliament, as well as identifying suboptimal functioning and its underlying causes.

The use of Scorecard Performance Indicators has been well-established as a tool for assessing how well parliaments are doing across their core functions and in meeting their objectives and desired outcomes.

By using a standardised measurement tool, once tested and rendered robust, it will be possible to more objectively measure the effectiveness of parliaments and derive a valid performance rating scale. In this context, the feedback from the study group will be used to review and redesign the survey instrument.

## **RATIONALE**

There is a general consensus that, not only are there wide variations in parliamentary performance standards, but that in many cases they are critically below par. The African Governance Report<sup>1</sup> (2005, p127) states : ‘in terms of enacting laws ,debating issues, checking on the activities of the government and in general promoting the welfare of the people, these duties and obligations are rarely performed with efficiency and effectiveness in many African Parliaments’.

Although many explanations are put forward , such as lack of knowledge, skills and competence; weak and under- resourced institutions, the nature of political and electoral systems, the nature of the constitution, *inter alia*, a more thoroughgoing analysis of parliamentary performance is needed from the perspectives of the key players as well as the wider stakeholders.

Existing parliamentary evaluation frameworks seem to have been designed to identify problem areas that a project can reasonably work to repair in a short time frame. In that sense, they meet the needs of the cooperating partners but do not address the needs and concerns of all parliamentary stakeholders.

Most of parliamentary evaluation frameworks emphasise the needs and priorities of parliamentary development practitioners. Consequently, the needs of parliamentary members and staff, civil society, the media, and others are not well served by these assessment frameworks.

1. Although the frameworks are generally adaptable to a wide variety of institutional settings, they tend to emphasise creating a disaggregated assessment of a parliament covering many different areas. These assessments, while extremely useful to those seeking to design a parliamentary strengthening programme, are typically not geared towards creating cross-nationally comparable evaluations.
2. Qualitative data is most often gathered in a narrative and descriptive form for initial assessments. It is therefore not comparable either cross-nationally or over time. Furthermore, such data is often difficult and time-consuming to sort through, a particular concern in the resource-limited context of African civil society and media practitioners.
3. Existing frameworks tend to emphasise the mostly easily, rapidly obtained and rigid quantitative data, such as chamber composition, bill passage and amendment rates, and numbers of bills involving ‘public debate’ or ‘civil society,’ for use as indicators. More nuanced data, both quantitative and qualitative, is often glossed over by these frameworks. For example, the high

number of amendments made could be indicative of a number of phenomena – strong parliamentary influence on the legislative process, high quality of research available to committees and members, poorly prepared bills emanating from the executive, to name a few.

4. Thus, there is a disparity between overall parliamentary assessment – primarily qualitative – and regular collection of monitoring data – primarily quantitative. More disturbingly, qualitative data frequently serves as an apology for poor results using quantitative indicators.
5. These frameworks emphasise locating weaknesses, failures, and areas for improvement, an intrinsic bias in frameworks designed for the purpose of building parliamentary strengthening programmes. Highlighting strengths and successes is not given the same weight.
6. Specifying ‘Best Practices’ for the purposes of strengthening parliamentary institutions is an essential component of all viable democracies.

Thus far, parliamentary improvement efforts (from the perspectives of multilateral agencies and parliamentary networks), have been hampered by difficulties in tracking progress.

As a direct consequence of these gaps, existing parliamentary evaluation processes are easily perceived as both threatening and of no direct use to parliaments. Civil society concerns have also not been addressed in frameworks designed by and for practitioners. Any attempt to design a universally acceptable parliamentary assessment methodology must bridge these gaps if it is to gain the wide acceptance of not only practitioners and researchers, but also parliaments, civil society, and the media.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **USING THE BALANCED SCORECARD TO MEASURE PARLIAMENTARY EFFECTIVENESS**

#### **The Balanced Scorecard Concept**

The concept of the Balanced Scorecard is attributed to Robert Kaplan and David Norton<sup>2</sup> It developed out of the recognition that failing organisations focused on too narrow a set of objectives, whereas the successful ones target a broader and more balanced range of critical activities over a longer time span. The essential features of the Balanced Scorecard approach entail:

- Identifying concrete performance indicators and measurement metrics, based on factual and statistical data as well reliable qualitative information.
- Having a systematic performance feedback mechanism.
- Tracking the progress of key activities and events (such as by using the traffic light coding system to indicate which objectives are on track and which are not).
- Ensuring intentions are translated into actions and desired outcomes.

Preliminary results indicate that parliamentary performance scorecards have the potential to assist in parliamentary development from several directions. First, scorecards would be a helpful means to easily identify performance gaps. This information could assist in designing more effective and better-targeted parliamentary reform programmes, whether internally or externally funded. Second, one of the most valuable aspects of parliamentary scorecard development and implementation would be to focus discussion on setting standards and objectives for parliaments, even if no scorecard is ever fully implemented. Third, score-carding facilitates time series, cross-national, and longitudinal studies of parliamentary performance. These studies could assist in demonstrating the need for and benefits of parliamentary strengthening. They could also assist periodic reviews of the overall progress of

parliaments, rather than focusing entirely on indicators designed to monitor and evaluate a specific reform programme. Fourth, even if parliamentary scorecards could not be designed to be cross-nationally comparable, they would still prove valuable for tracking single country progress over time. Finally, the scorecard could provide civil society with information on parliaments that is easy to understand and present to the wider public. This possibility demonstrates how an evaluation tool could serve the dual purpose of assisting with civic engagement with national parliaments.

This study has largely involved operationalising the scorecard indicators (see Appendix A).

The scope of this study has been (i) diagnostic: applying the proposed scorecard indicators to gain an objective understanding of how the sampled parliaments were currently functioning, identifying strengths and weaknesses, (ii) exploratory: in pinpointing areas of concern, to seek to explain possible causes, (iii) prescriptive: for the purpose of proposing improvement interventions, from the perspectives of the stakeholders, hence demand-led, as advocated by the Paris Declaration (iv) developmental and heuristic: in refining the methodology and alternative techniques for further, more focused, studies.

The ultimate aim is to develop a benchmark of good practice and derive a model of parliamentary effectiveness across all its core functions, thus enabling the evaluation and the possible ranking of parliaments in Africa.

To this end it must be ensured that the scorecard indicator measures are entirely 'fit for purpose' and that they will realistically focus on the critical performance factors. In that respect, it is not an attempt to systematically measure African Parliaments at this stage, but more specifically it is a test of the scorecard and the questionnaire.

When the scorecard indicator instrument is rendered indisputably robust in the light of feedback received and through refined reformulation, a more rigorously sampled list of parliaments could be studied to evaluate their performance *per se*.

It is noted that the study's motivation is not to 'name and blame' individuals or systems where deficits become apparent, but rather it is to understand the reasons and causes in order to propose ways and the necessary support to effect the desired improvements.

In the context of organisational analysis, Stiffler<sup>3</sup> notes that 'It is not a prelude to assigning blame but is the foundation for more effective performance in the future. The emphasis here is not rounding the usual culprits, in case of poor performance, but determining what need to be changed to improve performance' (Stiffler.2006).

## **SAMPLING**

The parliaments in this sample were chosen for the practical reasons of cost minimisation in terms of travel and associated expenses. This meant each researcher selecting one home parliament. Only in the case of one researcher longer-distance travels to 2 parliaments were necessary due to the person being based externally.

The parliaments of Nigeria and Senegal were not finally studied due to the assigned researcher not being able to continue with the project.

The East African Legislative Assembly (EALA) was also left out, as at the time that the assigned researcher planned to undertake the study, the EALA was in session elsewhere, in Rwanda, and not in its usual base in Arusha.

In consultation with ACBF, in view of the time-frame available, it was agreed to limit the study to the remaining parliaments in the sample.

The target sample of 9 parliaments was, therefore, reduced to 5. It is hoped that these outstanding studies can take place at another phase.

This Report is based on the findings from the fieldwork carried out in: Botswana, Cameroon, Mauritius, Namibia, and Zambia.

The following PARLIANET Team Members were assigned to the studies:

- Botswana & Mauritius: Jeewansing Ramlugun
- Cameroon: Dr. Bernard Nzo Nguty
- Namibia: Hon. Dr Elizabeth Amukugo
- Zambia: Hon. John Bosley

## **STUDY PARTICIPANTS**

In regard to the study participants, the list proposed was on the basis of both the researchers' experience in the field and expedience in terms of ease of access and availability of interviewees. It has been the experience of members of parliament that there are three groups of people who have direct experience of parliament, who know it well and have informed opinions about it: the MPs; the permanent staff, particularly the staff who work with the Committees (which usually means the research branch and the committee branch staff); and those civil society actors who work with parliament: activist NGOs, commercial or professional interest groups, and the newspapers and journalists who cover parliament.

The 'common cast' as part of the study group were identified at the outset and stated in the project proposal, which received the assent of the ACBF Secretariat. As will be evident the target group was modified due to circumstances on the ground at the time of the study. This was deemed acceptable, the study being exploratory in intent and scope.

The senior parliamentarians' co-operation proved to be critical and this factor may well be advantageous in prospective follow-ups.

Nevertheless, an interviewee cohort balance has been assured in that leading parliamentarians from the government and the opposition were invited to have their say. By also including, where feasible and applicable, the Heads of Research, the parliamentary media, as far as possible both state-directed and independent private media, and representation from civil society organisations, a breadth of viewpoints and perspectives on parliament has been obtained.

It has been a distinguishing feature of this study to consider how parliament perceives itself and how it is perceived by other actors internally and externally within their respective jurisdictions.

The sample sizes have varied from parliament to parliament due to the eventual scenarios at the point of implementation, where the planned 'common cast' did not pertain in every case.

In this event the sample sizes have varied across the parliaments studied. The sample frame was devised on a 'convenience sample' basis which is a methodologically valid procedure, given the constraints upon more systematic sampling in terms of opportunities, resources and timelines. In as much as data are derived from the considered and honestly expressed views of seasoned personnel in their various positions, the deductions could safely be held to be true in the individual country cases.

Where, however, it has been noted that the respondents have felt constrained to freely voice certain sensitive opinions, this would have required some further exploration, but during this phase this option could not be pursued.

## **DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE**

The Indicator Schedule was intended to be administered to parliamentarians only. The views and opinions of other non-parliamentarians were elicited via interviews. Some documentary data were also sourced.

The quantitative responses are tabulated and interpreted in the body of the consolidated report. More detailed background data, analysis and commentary are found in the individual country reports as submitted.

## **THE CONCEPT AND THEORY OF PARLIAMENTARY EFFECTIVENESS AND DEMOCRACY**

It is an accepted wisdom that Parliament is the most important pillar of democracy. As the guardians of an open and free society, the expectations placed on parliamentarians, perhaps nowhere more so than in Africa, with starkly limited institutional alternatives, are understandably high.

Parliament is the main institution linking the people with the government by ensuring the latter is representative and responsible.

Democracy can be a protean and more of a portmanteau concept with varied presentations. However, there is a consensus on the essential features pertaining to a democratic government. According to Arend Lijphart<sup>4</sup>, in his book *Patterns of Democracy* (1999, p48) 'the eight criteria proposed by Robert A. Dahl (1971,3) in his seminal book *Polyarchy* still commands widespread support: (1) the right to vote, (2) the right to be elected (3) the right for political parties to compete for support and votes, (4) elections that are free and fair, (5) freedom of association, (6) freedom of expression, (7) alternative sources of information, and (8) institutions for making public policies depend on votes and other expressions of interest'.

Civil liberties such as freedom of speech, conscience and assembly are the basic building blocks of a democratic constitution.

Parliament fulfils its key functions in 3 crucial arenas (Hudson, Alan & C. Wren<sup>5</sup>, 2007):

- (1) Legislature: to ensure state capability.
- (2) Oversight: to ensure accountability.
- (3) Representation to ensure responsiveness.

Lijphart (1999) also makes an instructive distinction between the majoritarian model of democracy with political power vested 'in the hands of a bare majority 'and which is typically 'exclusive, competitive and adversarial' and the consensus model which 'tries to share, disperse and limit power in a variety of ways'.

The concept of a limited government is an important one in terms of the democratic tenet of accountability. For it means that government's power is 'subject to limitations and checks, providing protection to the individual, the opposite of arbitrary government' (Heywood<sup>6</sup>, 2011).

To the extent that parliament, as the supreme legislative body and protector of the constitution, is perceived to be capable of holding the executive to account in key areas of policy and momentous national decisions, it is a measure of its independence and sovereign status. Thus, the sum total of

the actions and behaviours of parliamentarians in enacting their roles in the theatre of the polity marks their standing.

However, fears of parliamentary decline following the golden age of parliament in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century have over time been surfacing in the very foreground of the Westminster Parliamentary system (Lijphart, 1999). The explanation lies in 'party dominance relied upon and sustained by tight party discipline' (ibid). The disempowerment of parliament argument is given credence, given the overriding commitment by the ruling party (particularly a majority one) to fulfilling election pledges and manifestoes with unequivocal intraparty support to this end, coupled with the executives' specialised knowledge and near monopoly over decision-making expertise and at most times a predominantly quiescent back-bench.

On the other hand, in the context of Africa, the African Governance Report 2005 (ibid), pointed to a relative decline of executive dominance in a number of African states. The factors underlying these conclusions are: the end of the cold war; globalization; constituency and political demands; pressure from civil society organizations and the media; checks and balances; demands for accountability and transparency.

Expectations of parliamentary performance and political accountability are dynamic across space and time. In mature democracies, the more rigorous checks and balances ensure eternal vigilance and a wariness of complacency. More is demanded of parliament and the gap between expectations and outcomes can be starker. In recent and aspiring democracies even modest improvements can have a significant perceptual and bottom-line social impact.

At another level, of undoubted intriguing interest is the tectonic shift in the political terrain of the old paradigmatic democracies of the West occurring currently in Greece and also in Italy in the context of the profound ongoing European debt crisis. In its 'Analysis & Comment' section (November 12, 2011, p80) the UK Financial Times paper refers to 'the surgical removal of elected leaders in Greece and Italy and their replacement with technocratic experts... The sidelining of elected politicians in the continent that exported democracy to the world was, in its way, as momentous a development as this week's debt market turmoil. In effect, eurozone policymakers have decided to suspend politics as normal in two countries, because they judge it to be a mortal threat to Europe's monetary union. They have ruled that European unity, a project of more than 50 years in the making is of such overriding importance that politicians accountable to the people must give way to unelected experts who can keep the show on the road'.

The foregoing scenario suggests that assessing and judging parliamentary effectiveness is never straightforward. Parliament subsists within a web of external forces and influences.

According to Hudson and Wren (ibid), 'Explanations for poor parliamentary performance can be found at many levels: the MPs themselves, parliament as an institution, the position of parliament in the wider political and electoral system, the cultures and societies within which they are embedded and the wider network of relationships, including relationships between developing countries and developed countries. As such, whilst strengthening parliament as an institution is important, attention also needs to be paid to the wider environment and political systems, within which parliament operates'.

The Inter-Parliamentary Union<sup>7</sup> (IPU, 2008) had put forward similar caveats in formulating 'universally applicable statistical or similar measurements of parliamentary performance'. Nevertheless, IPU refers to universal core values that should apply to all parliaments, in terms of their effective capacity to: (1) legislate; (2) exercise oversight; (3) be transparent and (4) be accessible.

Against this background, even if strict comparability of parliamentary effectiveness is problematic and challenging, the Balanced Scorecard Methodology utilised in this study, with discrete indicators for

each performance parameters, but rendered more precise and rigorous as a result of the field-test, can prove reliable in meaningfully profiling individual parliaments. A similarly standardised approach to surveying other stakeholders such as the media and civil society organisations, would add to the validity of the measures. For findings to be reliably conclusive, perceptions and impressions must be matched by objective measures.

## **CONSTITUTENTS OF PERFORMANCE**

There exists a plethora of theories on the subject of performance and no definitive universally applicable definition of the concept on offer. Nevertheless, at a basic level, it is simply a measure of how plausibly are inputs and activities connected with outcomes and impacts as judged against stated goals and their attainments. The effects of optimal performance must be palpable and demonstrable. Parliaments have clear remits and mandates to guide their actions. Thus, to the extent parliaments fulfill their roles and embrace their briefs in practice, defines their performance level, albeit, as discussed there may be external negative forces militating against parliaments, but these can be usually accounted for. Admittedly, measurements of performance must take into account contextual specificities and focus improvement efforts on what can be attained in given situations.

As Lawler and Worley<sup>8</sup> have put it: ‘There is no single management practice or organization structure that can make an organization perform effectively. It takes a “family” of practices that converge to create an organization that has the “right” performance capabilities’ (p21, 2011). Accordingly, a clear identity and purpose are crucial in fostering commitment and motivating high performance.

The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development<sup>9</sup> (CIPD, UK) refers to the ‘importance of having an organisational vision or ‘big idea’ in underpinning performance in individual and team performance’ (People and Performance: Defining the HR process for maximum performance delivery’, CIPD 2005). It is pointed out that in ensuring effective performance the following 3 variables count:

- Ability( the necessary skills and capabilities).
- Motivation (positive reinforcement and recognition).
- Opportunity( room to grow and develop).

For instance, the Parliament of Botswana has espoused its vision thus: ‘The Administration of the Parliament of Botswana will be a World class organization that provides efficient and effective service which facilitates quality legislative process.’

## **THE IDEAL PARLIAMENTARIAN**

According to Jogerst<sup>10</sup> the ideal parliamentarian (‘professional legislator’) displays the following traits:

- Desires an active role in influencing and forming national policies.
- Supports parliamentary reforms that give backbenchers and private members. Increased participation in parliament.
- Seeks opportunities to focus on and specialise in particular policy areas.
- Rejects the assumption that they can be ‘lobby fodder for party leaders
- Possesses identifiable goals that are pursued and satisfied in parliament
- Considers the job of an MP as full-time and supports as well as uses resources to be able to accommodate the burdens imposed by increases legislative –related activities.

A decline in party unity with greater scope for dissension on contentious issues - in reference to the Westminster Parliament ,can be attributed to newer MPs being generally better educated and professionally established, being more critical and independent-minded, and hence less prone to blindly toe the party line (Heywood,2011,ibid).

## **Parliamentary Performance Indicators**

The Fundamentals of Parliamentary Effectiveness (a summary):

### **1. Law-Making**

Parliament must demonstrate autonomy and independence in terms of:

- Structure(constitution & legitimacy)
- Resources
- Staffing(institution)
- Functions

The appropriate rules of procedure, the legislative and policy-making framework, and technically sound drafting of legislation respecting all due democratic principles, define the effectiveness of parliament's law-making role.

### **2. Budget Oversight & Scrutiny.**

Parliaments must:

- Evidence a sound understanding of the budget function, supported by an independent research capability.
- Work effectively with public accounts committees and audit bodies, to ensure fiscal probity.
- Recognise and mitigate institutional and political obstacles to oversight.
- Have the capacity to enforce compliance with requests for relevant information.
- Follow up, monitor and ensure the implementation of decisions and directions.

The aim is for parliament to exercise effective budgetary oversight and scrutiny, having an input at all stages of the budget process.

### **3. Parliamentary Representativeness**

Parliament's standing and credibility vis-a-vis the public rest on how well it represents, reflects and articulates the interest and concerns of the citizens.

In this role it is judged by the extent to which it demonstrates:

- Strong outreach and constituency relations (meaningfully engaging with constituencies and civil society representatives)
- A commitment to issue-based budgeting (e.g. gender-responsive budgeting, poverty reduction)
- Raising its profile, image and credibility, taking the initiative to inform and educate the public about its role and activities (and not rely only on the media)
- Awareness of and willingness to overcome legal, social and political constraints on effective representation

Parliament must be held in high public esteem and confidence and actively engage with the wider society.

### **4. Parliamentary Performance and Governance**

Parliament must be perceived and seen to be above reproach in both how it comports itself as an institution, manages its activities and fulfills its remit.

Florence Mughasa<sup>11</sup> at the Workshop for Parliamentarians of Swaziland on 9 May 2007 stated:

‘...Governance is all about how decisions are made in societies, how countries are governed, how a government conducts itself, how different stakeholders, including citizens are engaged in the governance process.’

Mo Ibrahim<sup>12</sup> (Economist World 2008), originator of the Ibrahim Index of African Governance’ caps it well: ‘It is clear that one issue above others will determine Africa’s future: Good Governance’.

“Governance refers to the system of actors, processes and rules through which decisions are made and authority is exercised in a society. As such the nature of governance plays a major role in shaping the nature of a society” (Hudson & Wren, 2007,ibid).

## **5. Parliamentary Capacity Building**

The strength of any institution resides in its repertoire of expertise. The right complement of knowledge, skills and organisational resources, is critical to the attainment of satisfactory or better still peak performance, assuming that these are strategically aligned to the identified goals. Also, the right mindsets, the right degree of engagement and commitment must prevail. However, having all the key success factors is necessary but may not be sufficient. The test is turning these assets to advantage. A parliament with the appropriate capacity must be able to exert its influence where needed, within the scope of its roles and constitutional ambits.

An understanding of the contexts in which parliamentary effectiveness is assessed, is crucial .Applying a common yardstick can be problematic, in that the expectations of better output and outcomes would be higher from a parliament which is better resourced and better positioned than the one which is resource poor on many counts and politically constrained.

Hence, it has been long evident, and confirmed in this particular study, that there are wide variations in parliamentary performance in Africa. The explanations are equally varied. On the one hand, the right boxes can be ticked concerning constitutional, institutional and resource capacities, yet serious performance gaps still exist at the level of application, outcomes and impacts. On the other hand, parliaments with more limited capacities may perform relatively better in some respects.

## **SCORING SYSTEM**

Responses were rated as follows:

Agree	+1
Strongly	+2
Disagree	-1
Strongly Disagree	-2

This study being also exploratory in scope, it aimed to elicit comments and suggestions on the Indicators being tested to help better reformulate them where necessary for further applications.

## **RESEARCH SAMPLE**

The target sample of 9 parliaments was reduced to 5.For constraints experienced by particular PARLIANET researchers; the Parliaments of Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal and the East African Legislative Assembly were not surveyed. It is hoped that these studies can take place at another phase.

This Report is based on the findings from the fieldwork carried out in: Botswana, Cameroon, Mauritius, Namibia, and Zambia.

The following PARLIANET Team Members were assigned to the studies:

- Botswana & Mauritius: Jeewansing Ramlugun (Team Leader)
- Cameroon : Dr Bernard Nzo Nguty
- Namibia: Hon. Dr Elizabeth Amukugo
- Zambia: Hon. John Bosley

### **A NOTE ON FINDINGS:**

The quantitative results are tabulated and interpreted in the body of the Report.

The findings on individual Parliaments are presented first, followed by a comparative analysis.

### **BOTSWANA PARLIAMENT**

#### **RESPONDENTS:**

1. Deputy Leader of the House and Acting Vice-President
2. Leader of the Opposition
3. Clerk of Parliament

(The Head of Parliamentary Research, 1 Director of a major NGO and 3 newspaper Editors covering parliamentary affairs were also interviewed). The researcher sat in several parliamentary sessions to observe debates and proceedings.

Background Country profile and information on Botswana Parliament and the House of Chiefs are contained in the full Country Report.

#### **SNAPSHOT OF RESPONSES**

##### **Law-Making capacity & Sovereignty of Parliament**

Strongly Agree: 6  
Agree: 21  
Disagree: 14  
Strongly Disagree: 4  
Total = 45

##### **Budget Oversight & Scrutiny Effectiveness**

Strongly Agree: 16  
Agree: 20  
Disagree: 16  
Strongly Disagree: 5  
Total = 57

##### **Representativeness**

Strongly Agree: 2  
Agree: 7  
Disagree: 2

Strongly Disagree: 0  
Total= 11

## **Parliamentary Performance & Governance**

Strongly Agree: 10  
Agree: 19  
Disagree: 11  
Strongly Disagree: 7  
Total= 47

## **Parliamentary Capacity Building**

Strongly Agree; 0  
Agree: 13  
Disagree: 18  
Strongly Disagree: 1  
Total= 32

### **SUMMARY COMMENTS ON THE STUDY FINDINGS**

#### **1. Law-Making Capacity /Sovereignty of Parliament( 16 items)**

Overall, on this dimension, the Parliament in Botswana fares well, with a stronger positive score (27 against 18).Nevertheless, there is a shared perception of executive dominance.

#### **2. Budget Oversight & Scrutiny Effectiveness(20 items)**

In terms of Budget Oversight and Scrutiny, the higher positive score (36 against 21), reflects creditably on the ability of Botswana Parliament to perform its scrutiny role. It is agreed by all the 3 respondents that there is an independent Audit unit.

With the exception of the Leader of the Opposition, it is acknowledged that there is effective coverage of audit matters and that the audit office has the power to obtain all the relevant information.

It is unanimously agreed that the budget debates are vibrant and candid. However, both the Deputy Leader of the House and the Leader of the Opposition disagreed that Parliament was involved at every stage of the budget cycle, the Clerk's response being ambivalent.

Significantly, the Deputy Leader of the House and the Leader of the Opposition did not consider that Parliament had access to independent, impartial ,timely information, and expert opinion on policy and technical matters .The Clerk's response was equivocal and qualified. Nevertheless, the Deputy Leader of the House and the Clerk expressed confidence in the Budget and the Public Accounts Committee's capacity to tackle key institutional and political obstacles to oversight, the Leader of the Opposition disagreeing.

On there being measures in place to enhance transparency and accountability in regard to resource allocation and accountability, the Deputy Leader of the House and the Clerk strongly agreed this was the case. The Leader of the Opposition disagreed.

There was strong support on the part of the Deputy Leader of the House and the Clerk for a UK style Scrutiny Unit, the Leader of the Opposition being against it.

#### **3. Representativeness(4 items)**

The overall view is that the Botswana Parliament performs well in this function, albeit there is much scope for progress, particularly from the perspective of the Clerk.

The Deputy Leader of the House and the Clerk were satisfied that Parliament succeeds in empowering and engaging the public and encouraging their input into the legislative and oversight functions. The Leader of the Opposition did not agree in this case.

#### **4. Parliamentary Performance & Governance (15 items)**

Here the positive responses outweighed the negative ones (29 against 18).

That the right legislative framework and parliamentary processes exist to ensure Good Governance received affirmation from the Deputy Leader of the House and the Clerk. The Leader of the opposition did not agree this was the case.

On the openness of the Committee Meeting to the media and the public, both the Deputy Leader of the House and the Leader of the Opposition disagreed, while the Clerk agreed, but specified there were limitations in this regard.

On whether strategies existed for strengthening the electoral processes in order to promote free and fair elections, both the Deputy Leader of the House and the Leader of the Opposition disagreed. The Clerk agreed.

Parliament's role in the creation and support of the Ombudsmen's offices and independent audit institutions were positively acknowledged by the Acting Leader of the House, as well as the Clerk. The latter also suggested the need for greater support here. The leader of the Opposition disagreed strongly on this point.

All 3 respondents concurred that Botswana Parliament is widely viewed as the legitimate forum for deliberations, and substantive policy formulations and negotiations.

There was general disagreement that currently the monitoring of Governance and Parliamentary Performance was conducted objectively on the basis of results-based indicators.

On whether the staff of Parliament was appointed on a non-partisan merit-based system, there was agreement from the Deputy Leader of the House and the Clerk, but not from the Leader of the opposition.

#### **5. Parliamentary Capacity Building(10 items)**

On the subject of training being provided by Botswana Parliament, as compared with other core functional areas, the responses received here were overwhelmingly in the negative (19 for Disagree/Strongly Disagree, 13 for Agree/Disagree).

On training facilities for Oversight and Legislative Drafting Skills, only the Clerk expressed agreement.

All 3 respondents disagreed that opportunities for 'Relationship Building Skills' were available.

As for the provision of Leadership Skills development opportunities, only the Clerk responded affirmatively.

In the case of the availability of Research Skills Training, the Deputy Leader of the House responded negatively. The Leader of the Opposition did not indicate a response. The Clerk agreed, but only to an extent.

In regard to opportunities for Legislative Drafting Skills Training, the Deputy Leader of the House and the Leader of the Opposition did not indicate a response. The Clerk regarded this as a priority.

The Deputy Leader of the House disagreed there existed any provision for training in Public Administration (in the parliamentary context). The Leader of the Opposition did not indicate a response. The Clerk emphasised the need for skills development in this area.

Both the Deputy Leader of the House and the Leader of the Opposition disagreed that training skills in parliamentary roles, rights and responsibilities within the parliamentary process were available. The Clerk's response was ambivalent, stating this was 'only at the time of orientation'.

## **SCOPE FOR STRENGTHENING**

### **1. Parliament**

It has been noted the Botswana Parliament is not as independent as expected. It has not been possible to explore this issue in this study. Aside from historical or institutional reasons, lack of confidence due to certain skills deficits or lack of the right experience on the part of some parliamentarians, their interests and orientations, may be explanatory factors.

Internal parliamentary development has not proven to be adequate, suggesting a case for external regional level programmes.

Key Skills Needs:

- IT
- Budget & Finance
- Pre-legislative and post-legislative scrutiny
- Grounding in parliamentary matters for legal experts
- Implementation of the Digital Chamber
- Leadership
- Legislative Drafting
- Research
- Public Administration (in the context of parliamentary working)
- Roles, Rights & Responsibilities within the parliamentary process

### **2. Research Division**

Strengthening assistance is indicated in the following areas:

- Staffing
- Equipments and IT
- ICT support
- Closer working with Parliamentarians
- Linkage with the Botswana Institute of Public Policy
- Joint working with key sectors
- Research skills in budget and finance

### 3. NGO & PARLIAMENT

The NGO (Ditshwanelo-a Human Rights Organisation) involved in this study pinpointed concerns over:

- **Lack of funding**
- **Inability to make progress with government in the areas of HIV/Human Rights, and the Death Penalty**
- **A national development strategy that is not sufficiently people-centred and rights-based**
- **Lack of interest on the part of parliamentarians to participate in awareness training on Human Trafficking and the Death Penalty.**

### 4. MEDIA & PARLIAMENT

The pressing issues from the standpoint of the media and their constituents were:

- **Need for a review of the country's Constitution**
- **Need for a review of Presidential powers**
- **Better understanding of the budget process**
- **More objective debating by parliamentarians and not just toeing party line**
- **Insufficient exposure of the Opposition**
- **Perceived tightening of security**
- **Executive Dominance**
- **Lack of progress over the Information Act**

## CAMEROON PARLIAMENT

### SAMPLE

Minister Delegate at the Presidency in Charge of Relations with the Assemblies  
Secretary General, National Assemblies  
Director of Legislation & Linguistic Affairs  
MP& Deputy Speaker  
MP, Retired High Court Judge  
MP, Leader of the Opposition  
Lawyer, President, Cameroon Bar Association  
Country Programme Director, American Bar Association, Rule of Law & Initiative  
Publisher, Eden Newspaper  
Journalist, CRTV, covering NASS activities.

### **SUMMARY OF RESPONSES (AGGREGATE)**

1. LAW MAKING & SOVERIGNTY  
POSITIVE: 68  
NEGATIVE: 68
2. BUDGET OVERSIGHT:  
POSITIVE: 44  
NEGATIVE: 128(-2=40)
3. REPRESENTATIVENESS  
POSITIVE: 4  
NEGATIVE: 20
4. PARLIAMENTARY PERFORMANCE & GOVERNANCE  
POSITIVE: 74  
NEGATIVE: 70
5. PARLIAMENTARY CAPACITY BUILDING  
POSITIVE: 33  
NEGATIVE: 45

### **FEEDBACK ON THE INTERVIEW PROCESS**

The respondents were generally satisfied with the questions raised in each of the five (5) main areas of the study. Their general observation was that some of the questions were “loaded” and others not applicable in the Cameroon Parliamentary System. “Loaded”, in this context, meaning that some of the questions contained more than one issue which should have been posed separately. The researcher’s reaction to the criticism of the ‘loaded’ nature of the questionnaire was a calm explanation relative to the research objectives of obtaining pertinent responses on each of the five (5) main areas of the study.

Given that the researcher was assigned only to Cameroon, the Team Leader, as Coordinator of the Research Team, is better placed to determine (from the other country reports) whether this issue came up only in Cameroon or other countries. Some made notations such as **‘not applicable’, ‘not yet functional’ or ‘not yet operational’** on the scorecard questionnaire in addition to their scores. The length and content of the questionnaire were considered adequate and pertinent. Therefore, there

were no expressed concerns about the instrument used. However, the sub categories of each main area of the study which were not applicable in the Cameroon context were noted as such. For example, **Section 1.9:** ‘Sunset Clauses’ are applied when normative Government acts exceed the agreed time; **Section 1.15:** Where there is a bicameral system two chambers are properly co-ordinated, ensuring complementarities and **Section 4.9:** Parliament plays a key role in the creation and support of Ombudsmen’s offices, and independent audit institutions.

Although reassured of the confidentiality of their scores since the scorecard questionnaire does not require the identity of the respondent, almost all the respondents retorted to the researcher **“you should know better the way our Parliamentary System works.”** In other words, aware of the fact that the researcher worked in the Cameroon Parliamentary System for twenty-five (25) years, they felt that he was better placed to assess its merits and demerits. The researcher gathers from this declaration that some of the respondents on the side of the political party in power were cautious on their scoring in order to avoid any eventual reprimand if the results of the study were to be published or that the researcher will be aware of their thinking on critical issue-areas. The variation in the scores and notations of the respondents could therefore be perceived as objective or subjective depending on the political leanings or professional background of each of them.

## **ANALYSIS OF CAMEROON PARLIAMENTARY PERFORMANCE SCORECARD INDICATORS**

Given the limitations of the number of interviews per parliament, ten (10) completed questionnaires indicate an interesting picture of the perceptions of the respondents on the five (5) main areas of the study, namely: (1) Law-making Role of Parliament (2) Budget Oversight & Scrutiny (3) Representativeness (4) Parliamentary Performance and Governance, and (5) Parliamentary Capacity Building. A breakdown of the scores in each area is presented hereunder.

### **(1) Law-making Role of Parliament**

Five (5) respondents strongly agree that “Parliament is sovereign in its law-making role and autonomy relative to the Executive.” On other related functions in this domain, their scored range from strongly agree to strongly disagree. One respondent agrees on both sub categories while other scores in related fields range from agree to strongly disagree. The score of three (3) other respondents disagree on both sub categories and other related functions. Only one respondent strongly disagree on the first sub category and agrees on the second and item (1.13) while other related functions were scored disagree to strongly disagree. These scores reveal that although the majority of the respondents agree with the above proposition, there are deficiencies in other related functions, facilities and structural inadequacies in this domain.

### **(2) Budget Oversight & Scrutiny**

Six (6) respondents strongly agree that “Budget debates in Parliament are vibrant and unrestricted, with candid questionings of Government Ministers and officials”. One respondent also strongly agrees on items 1.19 relative to the Audit Office vested with power such as obtaining all relevant information and 1.24 concerning key economic and financial issues publicly aired by Parliament. Generally, the six respondents agree on very few items in this category while disagreeing and strongly disagreeing on many items. Only one respondent disagrees and strongly disagrees on all the items in this domain except item 1.36 which is scored agreed. The other three (3) respondents agree and disagree on all the items in this category. Remarkably, nine (9) respondents agree and strongly agree on items 1.36 on the need to establish a **“Scrutiny Unit”** to provide specialist support to Committees to ease their workload.

These scores suggest that while Budget debates in the National Assembly of Cameroon are vibrant and unrestricted, MPs of the Finance / Budget Committee need special assistance to enhance their effectiveness in Budget Oversight and Scrutiny. No questions under this sub-category concerned

perceptions of sentiments from media and CSO. The researcher could not therefore extrapolate his narrative or analyses of the data to reflect this concern. Cameroon, constitutionally, is not a francophone country. Conversely, Cameroon is a bilingual country with a bi-cultural parliamentary structure which uses French and English as official languages.

### **(3) Representativeness**

Three (3) respondents disagree on all the sub categories of this area of the study. Six (6) respondents agree on items 1.39 relative to Parliamentarians being able to determine if the debates and discussions are reached impartially and independently, and have the capacity to ensure collective measures but disagree and strongly disagree on other items. Only one respondent strongly agrees on items 1.38 that Parliamentarians actively empower and engage citizens, and encourage public inputs into the legislative and oversight functions of parliament. This respondent also agrees on other items. The responses indicate a divergence of the views of the respondents on each sub-category regardless of their different professional background and expertise. The difference between **'clearly disagree'** and **'strongly disagree'** is a matter of emphasis on the level of disagreement.

Apparently, nine (9) respondents clearly disagree or strongly disagree on all sub items in this domain other than item 1.39. This means, in effect, that the representative functions of the National Assembly of Cameroon suffers from some systemic deficiencies. While most of the respondents (6) agree on their ability to determine if debates and decisions are reached impartially and independently, their capacity to ensure collective measures are affected by the systemic or structural deficiencies

### **(4) Parliamentary Performance and Governance**

Seven (7) respondents strongly agree on the proposition that good governance is enhanced by relevant enabling legislation. Within this group there is a dispersion of their scores on other sub categories in this domain ranging from strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree.

Two (2) respondents disagree and strongly disagree on all sub categories except items 4.6 and 4.14 where one of them agrees while the other agrees on items 4.10 and 4.13 respectively. The only respondent who strongly agrees on items 4.5 and 4.7 respectively, agrees, disagrees and strongly disagrees on other sub categories.

In this domain, one gathers the impression that most of the respondents (8) agree on the proposition that good governance is enhanced by relevant enabling legislation. All the respondents disagree or strongly disagree that Parliament takes the lead in conflict resolution. Conversely, they all agree that Parliament is generally perceived as promoting national integration through the democratic process. Most of the respondents (8) also agree that Parliament is managed by a Committee or Board on which all the parties with seats in the Legislature are represented. In Cameroon this Committee or Board is known as the **'Bureau'** composed of 23 MPs reflecting the political configuration of the Assembly. The researcher, having served in the Cameroon Parliamentary Institutions for 25 years confirms that these responses are objective and in accordance with existing regulatory documents. The comparative analysis in this domain will be coordinated by the Team Leader who is in possession of all country reports of the study.

### **(5) Parliamentary Capacity Building**

Two (2) respondents disagree on the proposition that training is provided for the MPs in all the sub categories except study tours and regional seminars. Conversely, the scores of most (8) respondents agree on some indicated types of capacity building programmes offered, disagree on legislative drafting, relationships building and parliamentary groups.

The scores in this domain suggest that the types and scope of capacity Building programmes offered to both MPs and staff do not adequately take cognizance of their functional needs.

## **CONCLUSION**

From the above analysis, it is clear that the scorecard indicators capture to a large extent Parliamentary Performance in general and that of the National Assembly of Cameroon as well. A few of the Scorecard Indicators which are not applicable (1.9, 1.15, and 4.9) in the Cameroon context have either been omitted or scored with the notation **“not applicable”, “not yet functional” or “not yet operational.”** The notion of **“Ombudsmen’s Offices”** which is not applicable in the Cameroon Parliamentary System was either noted as such or scored as strongly disagree.

Finally, the researcher is of the opinion that the respondents had enough time to think through the questions or statements/propositions before making a judicious score. Retaining the Scorecard questionnaire for a reasonable length of time before being interviewed may have altered the instinctive reactions of the respondents. The summary of responses (aggregate) as indicated on each category reflects the objective/subjective reactions of the respondents. The conclusion reflects these reactions in very simple terms without distortion of the scores.

## **MAURITIUS NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

### **SAMPLE**

Deputy Leader of the Opposition & Chair of the Public Accounts Committee (a former Minister of Justice)

The Government Chief Whip

Speaker of the National Assembly (In discussion only)

Clerk of the National Assembly

(1 Editor of a National Newspaper and the Director of a major NGO were also interviewed).

The researcher also sat in the National Assembly sessions to observe proceedings.

Country background information and accounts of meetings with the Chief Whip and the Speaker of the National Assembly are contained in the full country report

### **SNAPSHOT OF RESPONSES**

#### **1. Law-making capacity & Sovereignty of Parliament**

Strongly Agree: 31

Agree: 3

Disagree: 8

Strongly Disagree: 0

Total=42

#### **2. Budget Oversight & Scrutiny Effectiveness**

Strongly Agree: 39

Agree: 17

Disagree: 5

Strongly Disagree: 0

Total= 61

#### **3. Representativeness**

Strongly Agree: 12

Agree: 0

Disagree: 0

Strongly Disagree: 0

Total= 12

#### **4. Parliamentary Performance & Governance**

Strongly Agree: 20

Agree; 6

Disagree: 10

Strongly Disagree: 0

Total= 36

#### **5. Parliamentary Capacity Building**

Strongly Agree: 3

Agree: 10  
Disagree: 14  
Strongly Disagree: 0  
Total=27

## SUMMARY COMMENTS ON FINDINGS

### 1. LAW-MAKING ROLE CAPACITY & SOVEREIGNTY OF PARLIAMENT

A Strongly Agree/Agree score of 34 against 8 indicates high confidence in Parliament's standing in this area. On autonomy of Parliament, the response was unanimously positive.

The 3 aspects of generalised disagreement related to (i) Parliamentary control over delegated legislation (ii) Sunset Clauses being applied when normative Government acts exceed the agreed time, and (iii) the Committee system ensuring public interests are well-developed and operational.

### 2. BUDGET OVERSIGHT & SCRUTINY

With a Strongly Agree/Agree score of 56 against 5, Parliament's performance on budget oversight and scrutiny is perceived quite positively.

The Disagree responses relate to (i) Parliament being involved at every stage of the budget cycle process, and (ii) Parliament's role in the interface between the Government and international financial institutions.

According to the Press Representative in this study, it is envisaged to incorporate into the parliamentary committee, the scrutiny of purchasing policies and the development projects of each Ministry, as is the case in New Zealand, for instance.

### 3. REPRESENTATIVENESS

The respondents were in unanimous agreement on the issue of parliamentary representativeness. Some satisfaction was also expressed by the media. However, from the perspective of the NGO, there was a perceived disconnection between the Parliament and the ordinary citizens.

### 4. PARLIAMENTARY PERFORMANCE & GOVERNANCE

A combined positive score of 26 against 10, again positions Parliament favourably in terms of performance and governance.

The Disagree responses centred on (i) procedures and deliberations of Committee meetings being open to the media and publicly accessible to press briefings (ii) Parliament being viewed as a legitimate forum for deliberations and substantive policy negotiations and formulations (Government Chief Whip), (iii) results-based indicators being used to evaluate, and monitor governance and parliamentary performance (Deputy Leader of the Opposition and Chairman of the PAC), (IV) Parliament taking a lead in conflict resolution (Deputy Leader of the Opposition and Chairman of the PAC), (V) Parliament promoting national integration through the democratic process (the Government Chief Whip), and, (vi) Parliament being managed by a committee or board which all Parties with seats in the Legislature are represented (the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and Chairman of PAC).

### 5. PARLIAMENTARY CAPACITY BUILDING

A Disagree score of 13 is set against the Strongly Agree/Agree score of 14. It is worth noting that the negative score of 13 reflects overwhelmingly the views of the Government Chief Whip and the Deputy

Leader of the Opposition and Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee and out of the positive statements a score of 9 is attributed to the Clerk of the National Assembly. Nevertheless, from the responses of the 2 former prominent members the case for parliamentary strengthening in the identified areas is clear and convincing.

From the Government Chief Whip and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee the 'Agree' responses relate to, (i) facility for sharing experiences with other Parliamentarians, through Study Tours and /or Regional Seminars , and (ii) Relationship-Building between the Executive and the Legislative Body and among political party representatives, with the Budget Committees, and to build networks of coalitions at various societal levels. With the exception of one non-response (Training on how legislation is drafted), the responses were all positive.

#### MEDIA:

In the account of the Press Representative, in the coverage of parliamentary affairs, he felt confident that a balanced view of the debated is achieved. The aim is to be as objective as possible, he stated. This was not the case with all the newspapers, including the national television, adding that unbalanced reporting constituted contempt of the National Assembly, according to the Standing Orders of the House.

According to him there is good access to the debates and proceedings taking place in the National Assembly. However, he pointed out that access to information has become restricted in recent times, making it difficult to report freely and searchingly.

Media access to Public Account Committee meetings where the contentious issues of the day are aired and debated would be welcome and helpful in his view.

The live TV coverage of Parliamentary proceeding is under consideration.

#### NGO( Environmental Protection and Conservation Organisation (EPCO).

PURPOSE: Protection and conservation of the environment

#### AREAS OF INTERVENTION:

- Community Development/Poverty Alleviation
- Education
- Environment

#### CONCERNS OVER THE ENVIRONMENT:

- Flooding, with insufficient warnings and lack of contingency planning. In his view, the Ministry is not well-resourced.
- Problem of stray dogs and complaints from tourists in this regard
- Rubbish in the streets that are unsightly .Street cleanliness and solid waste management in places are unsatisfactory.
- Drought remains a challenge, affecting mostly poor people's access to household water. A free water storage tank was suggested and a consultative meeting, via MACOS (Mauritius Council of Social Service) was sought. A positive outcome was the granting of financial assistance for the purpose of the water storage tank.
- Poverty is still a concern
- There is a disconnection between the government and the ordinary citizens. A private radio airs aggrieved citizens' concerns.

In the Director's view, there is a pressing need for ongoing environmental impact assessments, particularly on account of climate changes, making flooding and drought more likely.

#### SCOPE FOR STRENGTHENING

- Improvements in the structure and functioning of the Public Account Committee.
- Further development of the Parliamentary Committee systems.
- Greater Regional Parliamentary Networking.
- Training in : Techniques of oversight; analysis and sound grasp of the budget and the budgetary process; Relations-building; Leadership; Research Skills ;Legislative Drafting; Public Administration Skills ; Parliamentarians' Roles ,Rights & Responsibilities within the Parliamentary Process.
- Press/Media access to Public Accounts Committee Proceedings
- Greater responsiveness to NGO concerns over the environment and poverty alleviation.
- Setting up of a UK style SCRUTINY UNIT.

## **NAMIBIA PARLIAMENT STUDY**

### **INTRODUCTION**

A field-testing exercise on parliamentary performance indicators was carried out at the Parliament of the Republic of Namibia during April and May 2011. The response was somewhat weak as only 5 (five) out of 10 (ten) Members of Parliament (MPs) who received the questionnaires actually completed them. In addition, the following three persons were interviewed: the Speaker of the National Assembly, The Chief Whip of the Ruling Party; and a former Leader of the Official Opposition. The Study results are summarized below. Complete analysis of the questionnaires in percentage (%) is also attached.

### **SNAPSHOT ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS**

#### **(I) LAW-MAKING ROLE & AUTONOMY OF PARLIAMENT**

STRONGLY AGREE	12
AGREE	42
DISAGREE	22
STRONGLY DISAGREE	4
Total=80	

#### **(II) BUDGET OVERSIGHT & SCRUITINY**

STRONGLY AGREE	14
AGREE	54
DISAGREE	28
STRONGLY DISAGREE	4
Total=90	

#### **(III) REPRESENTATIVENESS**

STRONGLY AGREE	0
AGREE	14
DISAGREE	5
STRONGLY DISAGREE	1
Total: 20	

#### **(IV) PARLIAMENTARY PERFORMANCE & GOVERNANCE**

STRONGLY AGREE	15
AGREE	45
DISAGREE	10
STRONGLY DISAGREE	5
Total=75	

#### **(V) PARLIAMENTARY CAPACITY BUILDING**

STRONGLY AGREE	7
AGREE	25
DISAGREE	8
STRONGLY DISAGREE	10
Total=50	

## 1. LAW-MAKING ROLE OF PARLIAMENT

Whilst the law-making role of the Namibian Parliament is highly acknowledged by all participants, both the ruling party and opposition members, with the exception of one ruling party member, disagree that Parliament currently enjoys autonomy.. It has been pointed out, however, that a document entitled “Agenda for Change”, which was initiated by the first Speaker of the National Assembly, whose aim was “...to strengthen and empower Parliament as the representative institution of the citizens of Namibia”, has now been put back on the table, with the purpose of implementing recommendations thereof. Besides, Parliament is able to exercise *control over delegated legislation* through its various committees that can summon any one including Cabinet Ministers and senior public servants, to appear before any Committee – a practice that some of the Executives are said to be unhappy with. With regard to *monitoring effectiveness*, the study shows that the majority disagrees. Interviews suggest that while opposition members can pose questions to Cabinet members, that alone is not enough. The oversight capacity is currently weak and that there is a need for oversight mechanisms to check the expected effectiveness, it is argued [Evidence]. Committees could play a major role but, with the exception of the Public Accounts Committee which has been vibrant and effective, there is currently “... no robust committee system”. Their effectiveness is further hampered by lack of resources including understaffing. The majority of participants strongly agree that *broad multi-partisan political support* exists, which is encouraging. Furthermore, most agree to the presence of issue-based approaches to legislation, with the only female MP disagreeing. Whilst most participants agree to the *two chambers* being well *co-ordinated* and that they complement each other, interviewees indicate that communication needs improvement and that the work of the respective chambers’ committees could be co-ordinated better. As an example, instead of two committees visiting regions separately on similar issues, the two committees could combine their visits.

## 2. BUDGET OVERSIGHT & SCRUTINY

The majority of participants agree to the existence of *independent auditing systems* in Namibia, with interviewees pointing to the Public Accounts Committee as being one of the best performing Parliamentary Committee that has been, in addition, chaired by an opposition MP. At the same time, few support the idea that the audit office is vested with all the necessary powers. All participants agree though, that the audit office is separate from the civil service. With regard to *budget debates* most agree that they are not only vibrant but also unrestricted. One hurdle that the Namibian Parliament is faced with is the non-participation of Parliament in drawing up the budget, as the MPs only see the budget when it is tabled in Parliament. In fact the majority of participants disagree that Parliament is involved at every stage of the budget cycle process. To deal with the situation, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Economic Affairs “... is from now on expected to participate” and that the Speaker of the National Assembly and the Chairman of the National Council “will from now on be consulted” during the budget drafting process. Likewise, most participants disagree with the point that Parliament has *access to independent, impartial and timely information* and expert opinion on policy and technical matters. Their views are not surprising, as the interviews suggest that Parliament lacks technical support in terms of appropriately qualified staff to provide expert opinion. MPs do not have access to research assistants; and the library which could serve as the main source of information is very limited, they pointed out. The majority of participants agree that abuses and *corruption* at government level are dealt with “... through legislative measures”. Most also agree that measures to enhance *transparency and accountability* do exist, in terms of determining resource allocation and spending priorities. By the same token, the majority agree that effective *measures to monitor* and follow up *government expenditures* are in place. However, interviews point to weak mechanisms for monitoring budget implementation. Interviews also suggest that regular review of mechanisms and parliamentary oversight were only instituted for the first time in 2011. A *Scrutiny Unit* to provide specialized support does not exist in Namibia and interviews suggest that there is an urgent need for technical and other form of support to establish one. This is an area where ACBF support can make a difference.

### 3. REPRESENTATIVENESS

While the sixty percent of participants agree that there are *mechanisms to ensure* that public and private sectors are properly represented, it is interesting to note that the remaining forty percent totalling all Opposition MPs that participated in the study disagree. Opposition MPs also disagree that MPs are able to determine whether debates and decisions are reached *impartially and independently*, and that they have the capacity to ensure collective measures. Regarding this, two Ruling Party MPs while acknowledging that such mechanisms do not exist, were quick to point out that the Rules & Order Committee is meant to check on that but do not seem to do so currently. MPs from both sides of the aisle are divided on the question of whether *issues-based approaches* are common features. One opposition MP strongly disagrees, another from the Ruling Party disagrees, while the remaining 6 participants agree.

### 4. PARLIAMENTARY PERFORMANCE AND GOVERNANCE

All participating MPs agree, some strongly so, that *good governance* is enhanced by relevant enabling legislature. One opposition MP even strongly agrees. Likewise, all agree that *Parliament is influential* in enhancing State capability to improve the welfare of the people. Interestingly, however, all opposition MPs disagree to the question of whether *Committees' proceedings & deliberations* are open and accessible to the media and so forth; disagrees that *information is readily available on MPs' working days* and hours worked; disagrees that there are *strategies to strengthen the electoral process* to promote free and fair elections; and also disagrees that *result-based indicators are used* to evaluate and monitor governance and parliamentary performance. Regarding the latter issue, the majority of the Ruling Party MPs also disagree. All but one opposition MP agrees that the *staffs of Parliament* are hired on a non-partisan basis.

### 5. PARLIAMENTARY CAPACITY BUILDING

One key question asked is whether training is provided in: oversight techniques; how to analyse and understand the Budget and the budget process; and how legislation is drafted. While no one strongly agreed to these, the majority do agree that training is provided in all three aspects, with one opposition MP strongly disagreeing to all ten questions on capacity building; and one Ruling Party MP disagreeing to the last five questions on training for permanent staff. Two Ruling Party MPs disagree to 5.4 on relationship building between the Executive and Legislature. In fact only 40% agree to this point. One interviewee pointed out that Parliament is aware of the capacity building needs, but has so far been unable to address the problem. One can therefore conclude that capacity building mechanisms for both MPs & staff are somewhat weak and need to be taken care off; and since this falls under ACBF main mandate, ACBF should consider assisting in this are

## **ZAMBIA PARLIAMENT**

### **SNAPSHOT ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS**

#### **1. Study Group**

- Chief Whips(W=4)
- Clerk(C=1)
- Head of Research(R=1)
- Former Committee Clerk(R=1)
- CSO(R=1)

#### **2. Rating Scale**

- Strongly Agree(SA= +2))
- Agree(A = +1)
- Disagree(D= -1)
- Strongly Disagree(SD= -2)

NB. In the weighting of responses it should be noted that the Chief Whips comprise 4 in number as against 1 in the case of other respondents.

#### **(1)LAW-MAKING ROLE & INDEPENDENCE OF PARLIAMENT**

**Strongly Agree:** 42

(Chief Whips: 28

Clerk: 5

Head of Research: 5

Former Committee Clerk: 4

CSO: 0)

**Agree:** 51

(Chief Whips: 21

Clerk: 8

Head of Research: 7

Former Committee Clerk: 7

CSO: 8)

**Disagree:** 16

(Chief Whips: 6

Clerk: 2

Head of Research: 2

Former Committee Clerk: 0

CSO: 6)

**Strongly Disagree:** 3

(Chief Whips: 3

Clerk: 0

Head of Research: 0

Former Committee Clerk: 0

CSO: 0)

Total=112

#### **(2)BUDGET OVERSIGHT & SCRUTINY**

**Strongly Agree:** 51

(Chief Whips: 33  
Clerk: 7  
Head of Research: 9  
Former Committee Clerk: 2  
CSO:0 )

**Agree: 61**  
(Chief Whips: 29  
Clerk: 7  
Head of Research: 8  
Former Committee Clerk: 8  
CSO: 9 )

**Disagree: 35**  
(Chief Whips: 13  
Clerk: 5  
Head of Research: 2  
Former Committee Clerk: 4  
CSO:11 )

**Strongly Disagree: 4**  
(Chief Whips: 2  
Clerk: 1  
Head of Research: 1  
Former Committee Clerk: 0  
CSO:0)

(3) Representativeness

**Strongly Agree: 8**  
(Chief Whips: 5  
Clerk: 2  
Head of Research: 1  
Former Committee Clerk: 0  
CSO: 0)

**Agree: 19**  
(Chief Whips: 9  
Clerk: 2  
Head of Research: 3  
Former Committee Clerk: 3  
CSO: 2)

**Disagree: 4**  
(Chief Whips: 2  
Clerk: 0  
Head of Research: 0  
Former Committee Clerk: 0  
CSO: 2)

Total=182

(4) PARLIAMENTARY PERFORMANCE & GOVERNANCE

**Strongly Agree:** 39

(Chief Whips: 31

Clerk: 3

Head of Research: 3

Former Committee Clerk: 2

CSO: 0)

**Agree:** 46

(Chief Whips: 19

Clerk: 2

Head of Research: 7

Former Committee Clerk: 10

CSO: 8)

**Disagree:** 21

(Chief Whips: 7

Clerk: 2

Head of Research: 4

Former Committee Clerk: 1

CSO: 7 )

**Strongly Disagree:** 4

(Chief Whips: 3

Clerk: 0

Head of Research: 1

Former Committee Clerk: 0

CSO: 0)

Total=110

(5) PARLIAMENTARY CAPACITY BUILDING

**Strongly Agree:** 16

(Chief Whips: 16

Clerk: 0

Head of Research: 0

Former Committee Clerk: 0

CSO: 0)

**Agree:** 47

(Chief Whips: 20

Clerk: 0

Head of Research: 9

Former Committee Clerk: 9

CSO: 9)

**Disagree:** 6

(Chief Whips: 4

Clerk: 0

Head of Research: 1

Former Committee Clerk: 0

CSO: 1)

**Strongly Disagree:** 0

Total=69

## **SUMMARY COMMENTS ON FINDINGS BASED ON FURTHER DATA ANALYSIS**

### **1. LAW-MAKING ROLE & SOVERIEGNTY OF PARLIAMNET**

A total positive score of 93 against 19 indicates a high degree of confidence in the Zambian Parliament's role in law-making and sovereignty.

The negative responses relate to:

- (i) Parliament's autonomy vis-a-vis the Executive(CSO)
- (ii) Effective and systematic monitoring of the implementation process(Clerk)
- (iii) Proper preparation of bill before being tabled(CSO)
- (iv) Sunset Clauses being applied(Clerk,3 Chief Whips, SO)
- (v) Multi-partisan political support (3 Chief Whips, SO)
- (vi) Issue-based approaches to legislation (3 Chief Whips, SO).
- (vii)Public Consultation and Outreach Exercises(CSO)
- (viii)On-Line facilities for Parliamentarians, including the Digital Chamber (CSO)

### **2. BUDGET OVERSIGHT & SCRUTINY**

A positive score of 112 against 39 reflects very well on the budget oversight and scrutiny capacity of Parliament. The 'Strongly Agree' score of 51 is salutary.

The negative scores relate to:

- (i) There being independent auditing systems (CSO)
- (ii) The Audit Office being separate from the Civil Service and free from political influence(Head of Research)
- (iii) Parliament being involved at every stage of the budget cycle( 4 Chief Whips, Head of Research, former Clerk of Committee)
- (iv) Parliament having a role in the interface between government and international financial institutions(2 Chief Whips,Clerk,Head of Research,CSO,former Clerk of Committee)
- (v) Key economic and financial issues being given public airing(former Clerk of Committee, SO)
- (vi) Parliament ensuring representation of public and other interest groups during the budgetary process( Chief Whip, C SO)
- (vii)Tackling of abuses and corruption at governmental level(3 Chief Whips, Clerk, CSO)
- (viii) Budget and Public Committees being capable of tackling key institutional obstacles to oversight (3 Chief Whips, Clerk, SO)
- (ix) Cross-Party collaboration and involvement with the Executive on the budget process ,as a lever to exert its influence on contentious substantive policy issues(3 Chief Whips, Clerk, CSO)
- (x) Measures to enhance transparency and accountability in determining resource allocation and spending priorities(3 Chef Whips)
- (xi) Measures for monitoring and follow up of government expenditure(CSO)
- (xii)Routine monitoring of budget allocation(Chief Whip, Clerk, former clerk of Committee, SO)
- (xiii) Support for a UK type Scrutiny Unit (Chief Whip).

### **3. REPRESENTATIVENESS**

A positive score of 27 against 4 is very favourable.

The negative scores relate to:

- (i) Parliament actively empowering citizens and engaging them in the political process (CSO)
- (ii) Parliament ensuring impartiality and independence in debates and decisions (Chief Whip)
- (iii) Pursuit of issues-based approaches, thereby promoting public consultation and grass-roots participation (Chief Whip, CSO).

#### 4. PARLIAMENTARY PERFORMANCE & GOVERNANCE

A positive score of 85 against 25 is reassuring.

The negative responses relate to:

- (I) Parliament being influential in enhancing state capability in improving the welfare of people (Head of Research, CSO)
- (II) Information on the number of Standing Committee meetings held/not held (CSO)
- (III) Information on major problems discussed and debated during the week at various levels (Head of Research, SO)
- (IV) Information on MPs' working hours and days (Chief Whip, CSO)
- (V) Parliament playing a role in the creation and support of Ombudsmen's offices and independent audit institutions (3 Chief Whips, Clerk)
- (VI) Results-based Indicators being used to evaluate and monitor governance and parliamentary performance (Clerk, former Clerk of Committee, SO)
- (VII) Parliament taking a lead in conflict resolution (3 Chief Whips, Head of Research, SO)
- (VIII) Parliament promoting national integration through the democratic process (Head of Research)
- (IX) Parliament being managed by a Committee or Board in which all parties with seats in the legislature are represented (3 Chief Whips, Head of Research. *All strongly disagreed.*)

#### 5. PARLIAMENTARY CAPACITY BUILDING

The positive score of 63 against 6 is creditable.

The negative scores relate to the provision of training in :

- (i) Drafting of Legislation (Chief Whip)
- (ii) Relationship Building (Head of Research)
- (iii) Research (3 Chief Whips)
- (iv) Public Administration (former Clerk of Committee)

#### Researcher's Summary Comments

In the case of Zambia, the MPs, the staff and the two CSOs and the major newspaper were contacted; the information reported here is from those who were interviewed and who responded (one additional CSO was interviewed but never returned the questionnaire). No claim is made that this group is adequately representative of Zambia as a whole - nor do these results claim to be a full measure of the Parliament of Zambia. But this group is equipped to and capable of using the scorecard and of judging its efficacy.

Once the system is refined and fully developed, the revised scorecard can be given to a larger and fully representative group in Zambia for a better reading of how the Parliament in Zambia is perceived. The data in this particular study should be taken as a test of the scorecard and its methodology and as a report on the opinions of a VERY small group of people - not as representative sample of Zambian opinion.

As expected, the views of the staff are somewhat less positive than those of the MPS – with the CSO observer having the most negative views – second only to a retired staffer, who has become more negative with time and distance. This staffer felt no political pressure to keep his views quiet-rather he felt he owed a loyalty to his employer and tried to speak positively while he worked there. He did share his views with his boss when asked, but not with ‘outsiders’. Secondly, he needed to speak positively about his workplace, while he worked there- that is a normal emotional need, so he suppressed his real views while he worked there.

Civil society is always the most negative; that is typical of all surveys about parliament. It is also true that CSOs are generally more critical than the general public and there is no reason to think that would not be the case in Zambia.

In addition, the numbers are a little misleading. The CSO interviewed in Zambia is an advocacy CSO – with an interest in politics and good governance. One other CSO was interviewed but did not send back the data. The major newspaper editor was also invited to participate but in the end was unable to do so. Had the scores been collected, the average CSO score would have been higher. Again, if we were trying to fully measure the Zambian Parliament, the sample would have to be more rigorously selected and interviewed. The most one can say at this point, is that this is not an accurate reflection of the CSOs in Zambia. But the civil society is usually more negative and these numbers are in the direction as expected from civil society. Why are civil society NGOs more negative? Because their clients are usually less powerful than other civil society institutions- and they often see politicians and political institutions at their worst. Secondly, CSO personnel are among the most utopian in society- they have to be to do the work they do. They expect more from them themselves and from their leaders, and from government institutions than the ordinary person- who is somewhat more accepting of underperformance as ‘normal behavior. Because they expect more, they are more critical.

Compared to other surveys, it was striking that ALL the Whips were generally positive – usually the opposition whips can be expected to be quite negative. This would suggest that the Reforms have made some progress in equalizing the playing field in Zambia.

Finally, there were very few comments on the card itself. What did seem clear was that some of the questions were answered as theoretical questions rather than as how they applied to Zambia. And the interviewees were unanimous that the list is too long.

## **FIELD-TEST OF PARLIAMENTARY SCORECARD INDICATORS – COMPARATIVE FINDINGS**

### **1. LAW-MAKING & THE AUTONOMY OF PARLIAMENT**

#### **1.1 AUTONOMY RELATIVE TO THE EXECUTIVE**

In Cameroon, 70% of the respondents considered Parliament to be an autonomous institution. In Mauritius the positive response was unanimous. In Botswana, Namibia and Zambia only 1 negative response was noted in each instance.

#### **1.2 CONTROL OVER DELEGATED LEGISLATION**

Zambia scored the highest positives in this context (unanimously). In Botswana the Acting VP and the Leader of the Opposition responded negatively here, with the Clerk being positive. In Namibia 60% were in agreement; in Cameroon it was a 50/50 split. In Mauritius the responses were all negative.

### **1.3 EFFECTIVE AND SYSTEMATIC MONITORING OF THE IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS.**

A unanimously positive response was obtained on this indicator in Mauritius. Zambia performed well, with one responding negatively. In Botswana the negative response was more pronounced, with Namibia indicating a 60% negative score. Cameroon's negative score was 80%.

### **1.4 ENOUGH TIME BEING GIVEN TO DISCUSSING KEY ISSUES**

Parliaments in Botswana, Mauritius and Zambia scored unanimously positively on this issue. In Namibia the positive response was 80%, whereas in Cameroon it was a 50/50 split.

### **1.5 ADEQUATE TIME BEING ALLOCATED TO AVOID GUILLOTINE OF DISCUSSIONS IN PARLIAMENT.**

Botswana, Mauritius and Zambia were 100% positive .In the case of Namibia, the positive response was 80%.For Cameroon the positive response was 40%.

### **1.6 BILLS BEING PROPERLY PREPARED PRIOR TO TABLING IN PARLIAMENT.**

Botswana and Mauritius scored 100% positively. In Zambia the positive score was also high, with only one negative. In Namibia the positive score was 60% and in Cameroon it was a 50/50 split.

### **1.7 THOROUGH SCRUTINY OF BILLS AND EXPOSURE TO A BROAD RANGE OF OPINIONS TO ENSURE NECESSARY MODIFICATIONS AND COMPROMISES.**

A unanimous positive score was obtained in Mauritius. In Botswana it was also positive overall with 1 negative response. In Zambia the positive score was high, with 1 negative .In Namibia 80% responded positively. In Cameroon, there was a 40% positive response.

### **1.8 SUNSET CLAUSES BEING APPLIED**

In Mauritius this categorically did not apply. In Botswana only the Clerk stated this was the case .In Cameroon only 30% agreed with the statement; in Namibia the figure was 20%, agreeing .In Zambia only 1 believed this was the case.

### **1.9 THERE BEING BROAD MULTI-PARTISAN POLITICAL SUPPORT.**

In Botswana, excepting 1 negative score (the Leader of the Opposition disagreeing strongly), the overall score was on the more positive side. In Mauritius (the Chief Whip not responding), the more positive score applied. A high positive score of 80% was obtained in Namibia. In Zambia there were more negative responses (4 against 2).In Cameroon 40% were positive.

### **1.10. ADOPTION OF ISSUES-BASED APPROACHES TO LEGISLATION (e.g. Gender-responsive policies, or PRSP)**

The positive score for this indicator was 100% for Mauritius. In Botswana, there was only one positive response. In Cameroon 60% believed this to be the case. The positive score for Namibia was 80%.In Zambia the overall score was more negative than positive.

### **1.11 PUBLIC CONSULTATION & OUTREACH EXERCISE TAKE PLACE**

The positive response in this case for Mauritius was 100%.In Botswana, it was positive overall(with 1 negative score).Namibia fared well 80% positives, as did Zambia with only 1 negative score. For Cameroon the positive score was only 10%.

## **1.2 THE QUALITY OF LEGISLATIVE TEXTS BEING GOOD.**

Mauritius, Namibia and Zambia scored 100% positively on this indicator. Botswana also fared well with 1 negative score. Cameroon's positive score was 60%.

## **1.13 ON-LINE FACILITIES AND THE DIGITAL PARLIAMENT**

Mauritius scored unanimously positively in this regard, with the Digital Chamber in operation. In Botswana, 1 negative response was obtained, so overall it was a positive response. This positive response also applied to Zambia. Namibia's positive response was 60%. Cameroon scored a 20% positive response here.

## **1.14 WHERE THERE IS A BICAMERAL SYSTEM, THE 2 CHAMBERS WERE PROPERLY CO-ORDINATED**

Namibia scored 100% positives in this regard. In Cameroon the positive response was 99%. The issue did not apply to Botswana and Mauritius.

## **1.14. THE COMMITTEE SYSTEM BEING WELL-DEVELOPED.**

In Zambia, the highest positive score was 100%; Cameroon's being 97% positive. Namibia's was 80% positive. In Mauritius there was only one positive response. In Botswana there was an entirely negative response.

## **2. BUDGET OVERSIGHT & SCRUTINY**

### **2.1 THERE BEING INDEPENDENT AUDIT SYSTEMS IN PLACE.**

Botswana, Mauritius and Namibia scored unanimously highly here. Zambia performed well, with only one negative score. In Cameroon 70% were negative in their response.

### **2.2 EFFECTIVE COVERAGE OF AUDIT MATTERS**

Excepting 1 negative score the score in Botswana has been positive. Mauritius and Zambia received unanimous positive ratings. Namibia had an 80% positive rating. In Cameroon a 100% negative score stands out.

### **2.3. THE AUDIT OFFICE BEING VESTED WITH POWERS TO OBTAIN ALL THE RELEVANT INFORMATION.**

The responses for Mauritius, Namibia and Zambia were unanimously positive. Botswana fared well, with one negative response. In Cameroon the score was 60% positive.

### **2.4 THE AUDIT OFFICE BEING FREE FROM THE CIVIL SERVICE AND FROM POLITICAL INTERFERENCE.**

Mauritius, Namibia and Zambia were exemplary with a 100% score. Botswana fared well too, with one negative score. For Cameroon the negative rating was 100%.

### **2.5. MEETINGS OF THE PUBLIC ACCOUNT COMMITTEE BEING HELD REGULARLY.**

There were 100% positive scores for Mauritius, Namibia and Zambia. In Botswana there was only one negative response. Cameroon's was 100% negative.

### **2.6 BUDGET DEBATES BEING VIBRANT AND CANDID**

The positive score for Cameroon was 99%. All the other countries' positive scores were 100%.

#### **2.7 PARLIAMENT BEING INVOLVED AT EVERY STAGE OF THE BUDGET CYCLE.**

In the case of Botswana, the response was overwhelmingly negative in this regard, one being ambivalent. In Mauritius only one positive score was obtained. Namibia had only 40% positive scoring. For Zambia the negative score outweighed the positive score (4 against 3). Cameroon yielded a 100% negative score.

#### **2.8 KEY ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL INDICATORS BEING PROPERLY AIRD.**

Botswana and Mauritius scored unanimously positively. Namibia's positive score was 80%. Zambia performed well with 6 positives against 2 negatives. Cameroon's positive rating was 70%.

#### **2.9 PARLIAMENT PLAYING A KEY ROLE IN THE INTERFACE BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS.**

In Botswana the response was overwhelmingly negative. The same applied to Mauritius and Zambia. Namibia had a better positive score of 60%. Cameroon's negative score was 80%.

#### **2.10 PARLIAMENT ENSURING THE REPRESENTATION OF THE PUBLIC AND OTHER INTERESTS IN THE BUDGET PROCESS IN CRUCIAL AREAS.**

Mauritius scored unanimously positively. Botswana also scored positively, with only 1 negative response. Zambia's performance is also salutary with 5 positives against 2 negatives. Namibia indicated an 80% negative score, while for Cameroon it was a 50/50 split.

#### **2.11 PARLIAMENT HAVING ACCESS TO INDEPENDENT IMPARTIAL AND TIMELY INFORMATION AND EXPERT OPINION ON POLICY AND TECHNICAL MATTERS.**

Mauritius and Zambia topped the positive scores at 100%. Botswana's score was overwhelmingly negative, with a 50/50 response from the Clerk. Namibia scored 20% positives. Cameroon's responses were 100% negative.

#### **2.12. ABUSES AND CORRUPTION AT GOVERNMENT LEVEL ARE READILY DEALT WITH.**

Mauritius scored 100% positively. Botswana did well, with only one negative score. Namibia score 60% positively. Zambia scored more negatively (5 against 2 positives). For Cameroon it was a 90% negative response.

#### **2.13 BUDGET AND PUBLIC COMMITTEES HAVING THE CAPACITY TO TACKLE KEY INSTITUTIONAL AND POLITICAL OBSTACLES TO OVERSIGHT.**

In Mauritius the response was 100% positive. Botswana (2 positive against 1 negative), Namibia (80% positive) and Zambia (6 positives against 1 negative), also acquitted themselves well in on this indicator. Cameroon's positive response was 40%.

#### **2.14. THERE BEING ACTIVE PARTY COLLABORATION AND INVOLVEMENT WITH THE EXECUTIVE IN THE BUDGET PROCESS AS A LEVER FOR PARLIAMENT TO EXERT ITS INFLUENCE ON CONTENTIOUS POLICY AND SUBSTANTIVE MATTERS.**

Mauritius registered a 100% positive response. For Botswana the result was mainly positive, with 1 negative. Cameroon and Namibia scored a 60% negative response. Zambia had only 2 positives against 5 negatives in this context.

#### **215. MEASURES BEING IN PLACE TO ENHANCE TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN DETERMINING RESOURCE ALLOCATION AND SPENDING PRIORITIES.**

Mauritius registered a 100% positive rating in this regard. In Botswana it was more positive than negative. Namibia obtained an 80% positive score; Zambia also fared well (5 positives against 3 negatives). Cameroon rated negatively at 90%.

#### **2.16. THERE BEING EFFECTIVE MEASURES IN PLACE TO MONITOR AND FOLLOW UP GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURES.**

For Mauritius the score was 100% positive. Botswana's rating was positive overall. In Namibia the positive score was 60%. In Zambia it was a high positive response (7 positives against 1 negative). Cameroon fared worse with 100% negative response.

#### **2.17. THE IMPLEMENTATION OF BUDGET ALLOCATION BEING MONITORED IN EVERY INSTANCE.**

Mauritius' positive rating was the strongest (all strongly agreeing). In Zambia the positive score was at 60%. Zambia was split 50/50. Namibia measured 60% positive. Cameroon's score was 100% negative.

#### **2.18. MINISTERS BEING ROUTINELY CALLED TO EXPLAIN AND JUSTIFY THEIR POLICIES IN PARLIAMENT.**

Both Mauritius and Namibia measured 100% positive scores. Zambia too was creditable with 6 positives against 1 negative. In Botswana there were 2 clear positives, with 1 being both positive and negative (the Clerk's response stating 'Not all committees are active due to capacity constraints'). Cameroon registered a 70% positive score in this regard.

#### **2.19. MECHANISMS AND CAPACITY FOR PARLIAMENTARY OVERSIGHT REVIEWED REGULARLY.**

The positive rating for Mauritius was 100%, for Namibia 60%, Zambia's positive score was 7 against 1, and Cameroon's score was 60% positive. Botswana scored negatively in the main, with only one positive score.

#### **2.20. SUPPORT FOR A UK SYSTEM OF SCRUTINY UNIT TO ASSIST COMMITTEES.**

This was favoured in the majority by Botswana, with 1 not agreeing. In Mauritius there was a 100% endorsement. In Namibia it was 80% in favour. Zambia was overwhelmingly in agreement (6 against 1) and in the case of Cameroon 99% agreed.

### **3. REPRESENTATIVENESS**

#### **3.1. MECHANISMS BEING IN PLACE TO ENSURE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE INTERESTS ARE PROPERLY REPRESENTED.**

Both Botswana and Mauritius scored 100% positively. The Clerk of Botswana Parliament expressed that there was still scope for improvement in this context. A 100% positive score also applied to Zambia (3 very strongly). In the case of Namibia the positive score was 60%. Cameroon measured 100% negatively.

### **3.2 PARLIAMENTARIANS ACTIVELY EMPOWERING, ENGAGING AND ENCOURAGING PUBLIC INPUT INTO THE LEGISLATIVE & OVERSIGHT FUNCTIONS.**

Mauritius scored unanimously positively (very strongly agreeing) on this issue. Botswana also measured positively, with 1 negative score. Zambia obtained a very high positive rating (7 positives, 2 very strongly). For Namibia the positive score was 60%. Cameroon's was 90% negative.

### **3.3 PARLIAMENTS BEING ABLE TO ENSURE THEIR DEBATES ARE CONDUCTED AND THEIR DECISIONS ARE REACHED IMPARTIALLY AND INDEPENDENTLY.**

Botswana measured a mainly positive score (with 1 strongly agreeing) and 1 response being negative. Mauritius scored a 100% positive result. Namibia's was 80% positive and Zambia's measuring 8 positives (2 very strongly) and 1 negative. For Cameroon the positive score was 60%.

### **3.4. THERE PERTAINING ISSUES-BASED APPROACHES, SUCH AS GENDER-RESPONSIVE BUDGETS AND THE PARTICIPATION OF GRASS-ROOTS ORGANISATIONS.**

The highest positive 100% was reflected in the scoring in Mauritius. Botswana did well, with 1 disagreeing. Namibia scored 80% positively. Zambia too measured well with 5 positives against 2 negatives. For Cameroon the negative score was 100%.

## **4. PARLIAMENTARY PERFORMANCE & GOVERNANCE**

### **4.1 GOOD GOVERNANCE BEING ENHANCED BY RELEVANT LEGISLATION**

Namibia measured 100% positively, as did Zambia. Botswana also fared well, with 1 negative score. Cameroon was 80% positive. Mauritius did not respond in this case.

### **4.2 PARLIAMENT BEING INFLUENTIAL IN ENHANCING STATE CAPABILITY IN IMPROVING THE WELFARE OF PEOPLE**

Mauritius scored 100%. Botswana's rating was positive, with only one negative. The Clerk added 'there is a need for more active involvement of civil society and pressure groups'. Zambia scored highly positively (6 against 1); Cameroon did very well too with a 70% positive score. Namibia was 60% positive in this regard (with 20% strongly so).

### **4.3 THE PROCEEDINGS AND DELIBERATIONS OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS BEING OPEN TO THE MEDIA AND BEING PUBLICLY ACCESSIBLE TO PRESS BRIEFINGS.**

In the case of Mauritius the positive was 100%. Excepting 1 negative score, Botswana was overall positive. Zambia scored a high positive response (6 with 5 very strongly). Namibia registered 60% positively (with 40% very strongly). For Cameroon the positive score was 40%.

### **4.4 ACCOUNT BEING GIVEN AS TO HOW MANY COMMITTEE MEETINGS ARE HELD, HOW MANY CANCELLED, WHICH, WITH REASONS GIVEN.**

Namibia's score was the highest at 100% (29% strongly). Botswana also measured positively, the Clerk adding that 'our Committees need more focus and attention, and improved facilitation'. Zambia scored highly positively (6 against 1); 4 very strongly positive. For Cameroon a positive score of 60% was obtained. Mauritius did not respond to this issue.

#### **4.5 INFORMATION BEING AVAILABLE ON MAJOR PROBLEMS DISCUSSED DURING THE WEEK AND MONTH AT VARIOUS LEVELS.**

The positive score for Mauritius was 100%, for Namibia 80%. Zambia scored highly positively (6 against 2; 2 strongly positive). For Cameroon the positive response was 60%. In Botswana, the score was positive in 1 case (from the Clerk, who added: 'but not in an organised and regular manner').

#### **4.6 INFORMATION BEING READILY AVAILABLE ON MPs WORKING DAYS AND HOURS.**

Mauritius measured 100 % (strongly). Zambia scored highly (6 very strongly agreeing). In Namibia too the positive score was high at 80%. For Cameroon the positive score was 60%. In Botswana only 1 agreed.

#### **4.7 INFORMATION BEING AVAILABLE ON THE NUMBER OF QUESTIONS RAISED, BY WHICH PARTY AND THE REPLIES TO THEM.**

For Botswana, Mauritius and Namibia the positive scores were 100%; all strongly agreeing for Botswana and Mauritius; for Namibia 20% strongly agreeing. Zambia registered a unanimous positive score (6, strongly agreeing). Cameroon measured 70% positively.

#### **4.8 STRATEGIES BEING IN PLACE TO STRENGTHEN THE ELECTORAL PROCESSES AND PROMOTE FREE AND FAIR ELECTIONS.**

Mauritius scored 100% positively; Cameroon 70 % positively and Namibia 60% positively. Zambia scored a high positive rating (5 against 1). In Botswana only the Clerk scored positively.

#### **4.9 PARLIAMENT PLAYING A KEY ROLE IN CREATING AND SUPPORTING OMBUDSMEN'S OFFICES AND AUDIT INSTITUTIONS.**

Mauritius and Namibia obtained a 100% score (in Namibia's case 20 % scored very strongly). Botswana's positive scores were from the Deputy Leader of the House /Acting VP and the Clerk (the latter commenting: 'more support needed'). For Cameroon the positive score was 30%. The score for Zambia was evenly split.

#### **4.10 PARLIAMENT BEING WIDELY VIEWED AS THE LEGITIMATE FORUM FOR DELIBERATIONS AND SUBSTANTIVE POLICY NEGOTIATIONS.**

Botswana and Namibia measured 100% on this indicator (in latter's case 60% very strongly agreeing). Zambia also scored highly positively (7). Cameroon's positive score was 70%. In Mauritius there was 1 non-response, 1 strongly positive score and 1 negative.

#### **4.11 RESULTS-BASED INDICATORS BEING USED, UTILISING BOTH QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE DATA, TO EVALUATE AND MONITOR PARLIAMENTARY PERFORMANCE.**

Namibia (80% positive) and Zambia (5 positives against 3 negatives) fared well. So did Mauritius, with only 1 negative rating. As for Botswana only the Clerk rated positively, stating 'very important for Parliament'. Cameroon's positive score was 40%.

#### **4.12 PARLIAMENT TAKING A LEAD ROLE IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

Here Namibia scored the highest positive rating at 80 % (20% strongly agreeing). In Botswana there was a clear positive score. In Mauritius there was 1 non-response and 2 negative responses. For Zambia it was a mainly negative score (5). In Cameroon a 30% positive score was obtained.

#### **4.13 PARLIAMENT BEING GENERALLY PERCEIVED AS PROMOTING NATIONAL INTEGRATION THROUGH THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS.**

Namibia here scored the highest positive score (100%), 40 % agreeing very strongly. Cameroon's positive score was 99% .Zambia also scored highly positively (6). In Mauritius the result was mainly positive. For Botswana there was ambivalent rating from the Clerk. The other scores were negative.

#### **4.14 PARLIAMENT BEING MANAGED BY A COMMITTEE OR BOARD ON WHICH ALL PARTIES WITH SEATS IN THE LEGISLATURE ARE REPRESENTED.**

Cameroon evidenced the highest positive response at 98%, Namibia's positive score being 60%. In Mauritius, aside from 1 very strong positive score, the rest were negative. Zambia's 3 positives were outweighed by 4 negatives. In Botswana also it was a mainly negative score. The Clerk's response was ambivalent. She stated: 'there is a Staff Committee which needs to be improved to make it effective'.

#### **4.15 PARLIAMENTARY STAFF BEING HIRED AND PROMOTED ON A NON-PARTISAN MERIT-BASED SYSTEM.**

Cameroon obtained a 96% positive score. For Namibia this was 80%.Zambia too obtained a high positive score (6).Botswana had only 1 negative score, so it was a mainly positive outcome. Mauritius also had a positive overall score.

### **5. PARLIAMENTARY CAPACITY BUILDING TRAINING BEING PROVIDED IN:**

#### **5.1 TECHNIQUES OF OVERSIGHT**

On this indicator Zambia obtained the highest positive score (7 out of 8 Respondents;3 very strongly agreeing).Namibia's positive score was 60%;out of the negatives,20% were markedly so. For Botswana only 1 positive score emerged, also the situation in Mauritius. Cameroon's positive score in this case amounted to 30%.

#### **5.2 ANALYSING AND UNDERSTANDING THE BUDGET AND THE BUDGETARY PROCESS.**

For Namibia the positive score measured 80 % ( 20% being markedly negative).Zambia scored a high positive (7). In Botswana and Mauritius only 1 positive score was obtained. Cameroon's positive score was 40%.

#### **5.3 DRAFTING LEGISLATION**

Namibia measured 80%, positively, Zambia's score (5) being also a high positive. Botswana only scored 1 positive .For Cameroon 10% responded positively. Mauritius did not respond here.

#### **5.4. RELATIONSHIP-BUILDING TO EASE TENSIONS AND ATTAIN BETTER WORKING RELATIONS.**

Mauritius (100% positive) and Zambia (6 positives) presented highly on this indicator. For Namibia the positive score was 40 %.( 20% of negatives being markedly so).Cameroon's positive score was 40%.

In the case of Botswana it was an entirely negative score. The Clerk commented 'could do with this one, especially between Parliament and the Executive and the media and everybody else; how is it done elsewhere; desperately need it.'

## **5.5 FACILITATING THE SHARING OF EXPERIENCES WITH OTHER PARLIAMENTARY INSTITUTIONS**

Botswana and Mauritius scored 100% positively. For Zambia the positive score was also high ( 7 out of 8 respondents).Namibia scored 80% positively (40% strongly ). The positive score for Cameroon was 70%.

## **5.6 LEADERSHIP SKILLS**

Zambia obtained a high positive score(7 out of 8).Cameroon measured 70% positively In Namibia it was 60% positive ( 40% very positive).For Mauritius only 1 positive score emerged, the same applying to Botswana. Cameroon also scored favourably with a 70% positing score.

## **5.7 RESEARCH SKILLS**

Cameroon scored 60% positive, in this respect Namibia's being 60% also (40 % very positive).In Zambia there was a positive rating of 4 against 3 negatives. In Mauritius only the Clerk responded positively. In Botswana the rating was mainly negative; the Clerk being ambivalent in her response, stating 'to some extent).

## **5.8 LEGISLATIVE DRAFTING SKILLS**

On this indicator the positive score for Namibia was 60% (20% very strongly).In Zambia out of 8 respondents 5 rated positively (2 very strongly).In Mauritius only 1 positive score was obtained. In Botswana no positive scores emerged; the Clerk commenting 'desperately need it'. Cameroon's positive score was 40%.

## **5.9 PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION SKILLS**

In Zambia's case out of 8 respondents 7 scored positively (2 very positively).Namibia's positive score was 60 % (20% very positive). Cameroon measured 60% positively. In Mauritius only 1 positive response was obtained (from the Clerk).This was the case for Botswana (the Clerk adding 'we need it' ).

## **5.10 ON ROLES, RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES WITHIN THE PARLIAMENTARY PROCESS.**

Zambia scored highly positively here (7; 2 very highly).Namibia's positive score was 60% ; for Cameroon this was 40%. In Botswana the scores were mainly negative. There was 1 ambivalent response (from the Clerk who stated 'only at the time of orientation'). In the case of Mauritius only the Clerk scored positively.

## **DISCUSSION**

The caveats that are invoked in this study concern both the variability in the samples, as noted earlier, and the ratings obtained.

The Scorecard Indicator Schedule was designed to be tested on the parliamentary team. Where other non-parliamentary participants were enlisted in the completion of the same questionnaires in some cases, the responses of the distinct target groups would have been conflated. Also, where ex-parliamentarians or other parliamentary staff have been approached for their views, being freer to be critical, perhaps, they may have had more adverse things to say, but not necessarily reflecting accurately the true situation. On the other hand, whereas those who are still in active service, may, as has been highlighted in the study, have felt more constrained in being completely forthcoming with more negative, albeit justified comments, either out of a sense of unswervingly loyalty or out of fear. In effect, it is these very individuals who can be instrumental in providing constructive feedback from

an 'organisational climate' assessment perspective and on the actual role performances and the detailed workings of the parliament and government and help improve the situation.

Jogerst (Ibid, 1993), notes: 'Parliament's subservient position vis-a-vis the executive appears inconsistent with the formal constitutional theory of a supreme and sovereign parliament'.

From Jogerst's analysis and other observations, there is a clear disparity between the degree of autonomy and sovereignty that a parliament in a vibrant democracy should enjoy and what is the case in practice, given the routine compromises and accommodations that constitute *realpolitik*. Parliament's relationship with the executive in this sense is typified as symbiotic.

Considering the perceived fairly positive degree of autonomy of parliament in the sample some very variable and paradoxical readings emerge in the various indicators in the legislative and other functions of the parliaments.

Based on the limited sample in this study, it would be unwarranted to make meaningful comparisons across the parliaments in the sample at this juncture. But in relative terms, some reservations that are noted are not dissimilar from the scepticism over parliamentary independence in the more developed world.

#### **CAPACITY STRENGTHENING NEEDS/AREAS OF INTERVENTION IN IDENTIFIED PARLIAMENTS (IN TERMS OF PRIORITIES OF ISSUES RAISED)- An Overview based on the findings of this study.**

##### **1. LAW –MAKING AND AUTONOMY OF PARLIAMENT**

- Autonomy of Parliament(Botswana, Namibia)
- Parliamentary Committees(Mauritius, Namibia)
- Effective & systematic monitoring of the implementation process(Botswana)
- Broad multi-partisan political support (Zambia)
- Issues-based approaches to legislation( Zambia)
- Public consultation & outreach exercises for the purpose legislative review and examination of linkages between laws and their implementation(Cameroon)

##### **2. BUDGET OVERSIGHT& SCRUTINY**

- Independence of auditing systems (Cameroon)
- Effective coverage of audit matters(Cameroon)
- Audit Office being separate from the civil service(Cameroon)
- Meetings of Public Committees being a regular feature( Cameroon)
- Parliament being involved at every stage of the budget cycle(Botswana)  
Cameroon, Mauritius, Namibia, Zambia)
- Parliament having a role in the interface between government and international financial institutions(Botswana, Cameroon, Mauritius, Zambia)
- Representation of public and other interest groups in the budgetary process in the crucial areas of PRSP, equality issues and environmental impact( Cameroon, Namibia)
- Access to independent impartial and timely information and expert opinion on policy and technical matters(Botswana, Namibia)
- Abuses and corruptions being dealt with readily at governmental level( Cameroon, Zambia)
- Budget and Public Account Committees having the capacity to tackle key institutional and political obstacles to oversight( (Cameroon, Zambia)

- Cross-party collaboration and involvement with the Executive on the budget process as a lever for Parliament to exert its influence on contentious substantive and policy matters( Cameroon, Zambia)
- Measures to enhance transparency and accountability in determining resource allocation and spending priorities( Cameroon)
- Effective measures being in place to monitor and follow up government expenditure( Cameroon)
- Monitoring budget allocation in every instance(Cameroon)
- Mechanisms to review the capacity for parliamentary oversight.(Botswana, Cameroon)

### 3. REPRESENTATIVENESS

- Mechanisms to ensure public and private interests are properly represented( Cameroon)
- Parliament actively empowering and engaging citizens and encouraging public inputs into the legislative process(Cameroon)
- Parliamentarians being able to determine if debates and decisions are reached impartially and independently(Botswana)
- Issues-based approaches to and gender-responsive budgeting to promote public consultation and grass-roots participation( Botswana, Cameroon)

### 4. PARLIAMENTARY PERFORMANCE & GOVERNANCE

- Accounting for how many Standing Committee meetings are held ,and how many are cancelled, and identifying these and ,stating reasons( Botswana, Cameroon)
- Information being widely available on the number of questions raised and by which party and the replies to them( Botswana)
- Parliament being widely viewed as the legitimate forum for deliberations and substantive policy negotiations( Botswana,Cameroon,Zambia)
- Results-based Indicators being used to monitor governance and parliamentary performance(Botswana,Mauritius,Namibia)
- Parliament taking the lead in conflict resolution( Cameroon,Mauritius,Zambia)
- Parliament being generally perceived as promoting national integration (Cameroon. Mauritius)
- Parliament being managed by a Committee or Board on which all the parties with seats are promoted on a non-partisan basis (Botswana).

### 5. PARLIAMENTARY CAPACITY BUILDING

#### TRAINING IN:

- Techniques of oversight(Botswana,Cameroon,Mauritius)
- Analysis and understanding of the budget and the budget process( Botswana,Cameroon,Mauritius)
- Drafting of Legislation(Botswana, Cameroon)
- Relationship-building to ease tensions and attain better working relationships between the Executive and the Legislative body and among political party representatives within the budget committees ,to build networks and coalitions at various societal levels( Botswana,Cameroon,Namibia)
- Leadership skills( Botswana, Cameroon)
- Research skills( Botswana,Mauritius,Namibia)
- Legislative drafting skills( Botswana Cameroon, Mauritius)

- Public Administration in the parliamentary context( [Botswana, Mauritius](#))
- On roles, responsibilities within the parliamentary process ([Botswana, Cameroon. Mauritius](#))

## CONCLUSIONS & RECOMENDATIONS

### SOME REFLECTIONS

Amid the exhortations about parliamentary capacity building it is important to have a realistic understanding of what will work and what will not work.

In the empirical studies on the impact of training on actual work performance, invariably the evidence suggests that while technical or practical skills are more readily acquired and assimilated, desired changes in behaviours and attitudes prove more intractable. Parliamentary strengthening interventions need to be directed at both the institutional and individual levels. Focussing on skills and knowledge alone is not enough .A deeper change in attitudes and behaviours are equally paramount to sustain improvements.

Parliamentarians cannot be expected to be superhuman, but they can be supremely human in flexing their moral fibres to the fullest limit, to be a power of the good for the community and society in which they serve.

A study of the attractiveness factors influencing the choice of a parliamentary career would be a fascinating subject .The seriousness and high salience of the parliamentary office bear ,at the minimum, all the hallmarks of the oldest and most revered professions in society , chief of which would be the ethic of disinterested service to others

.The oldest professions ,like medicine and law are believed to be rigorously governed by their regulatory and disciplinary bodies, although it has become debatable as to what extent the professions, medicine at any rate , can be effectively self-policing .Even at present in the UK, in the wake of the disturbing spate of hacking incidents, questions are being asked if the Press Council can be effective on its own in regulating the press.

The motivation to enter the top professions may be more pragmatically explained by the extrinsic benefits of high salaries and an elevated social status ,though that need not necessarily vitiate the noble objectives . Nevertheless, it would not be unreasonable to be alarmed about an unconscionable and undue preoccupation with the perks and privileges of high office. Even in the highly disciplined and transparent culture of Whitehall the occasional miscreants try their luck in milking the system, but are eventually caught out and brought to book. And it would be highly reprehensible, of course, for parliamentarians to be indulging in personal empire building and self-gratifying and self-aggrandising behaviour while at the same time claiming moral high ground on matters of national interests and being avowed apologists for good governance. An all-consuming preoccupation with rewards can be deeply corroding and morally compromising.

And as is often the case, the more deep- rooted subterranean impulses and predilections are the forces that predispose individuals to and act the way they do. Hence, in the learning process, we are commonly enjoined to self-reflect in order to recognise how and to what extent our perceptions and understandings have been influenced positively by new knowledge and what developmental blind spots have remained untouched Acquiring just a mastery of techniques and procedures is inadequate. Parliamentarians and their team would do better still, being principled and impassioned as well as being doyens of their domain and masters of their craft.

Developing cutting-edge people and general management know-how and expertise, particularly leadership skills of parliamentarian and parliamentary staff would have a transformational effect on their roles. The emphasis should be on harnessing and honing talents of the team to attain and maintain peak performance across the entire spectrum of parliamentary activities and functions. Sir Terry Leahy, the highly acclaimed business leader (former long-serving chief executive of the Tesco company) recently shared some of his wisdom by stating, 'The first duty of a leader is to find out the truth about their organizations, so they can set the right goals and inspire people'(Personnel Management Newsdesk ,8 November 2011).

Excellence should become standard. Needless to say, the right incentives and rewards, both tangible and intangible, are necessary to attract and retain the best human assets and motivate the high performers and raise others to star status.

There has to be a cumulative build up of a virtuous circle of good parliamentary practices. The parliamentary office bearers must embody the appropriate blend of skills and competencies, and be imbued with a deep sense of purpose and embrace their calling with high seriousness. We need outstanding parliamentary doyens as role models to guide and inspire neophytes and underperforming or struggling incumbents.

It is in the hands of trusted parliamentarians that the hope of a sustained workable democracy lies. The alchemy of qualities of exemplary African parliamentarians need to be distilled, extolled and showcased.

To this end, it is suggested that the ACBF could commission a 'Profiling Study of Eminent Parliamentarians in Africa' as a benchmarking exercise for the development of parliamentarians, the gatekeepers of democracy, the upholders of good governance ,of constitutional and legislative standards and the praetors of procedural proprieties. It will serve a sapiential pool to draw inspiration from.

## **THE WAY FORWARD**

It is recommended that capacity strengthening of the Parliaments, in the key areas indicated in this report, be undertaken in earnest

There has been unanimous support for a UK type SCRUTINY UNIT to be set up to assist, African Parliamentarians in the critical exercise of their oversight functions.

The model in operation in the UK needs to be considered for adaptation and adoption. The case for developing effective Parliamentary Committees, including Liaison Committees, to render governments more responsive and accountable has been made in the study.

A strong network of parliamentarians to share inspirational and innovative insights in key areas of policy and practice is critical for advancement. The key to this end is a well-equipped and up to date information and resource in the form of a dedicated parliamentary library, a well-staffed and a well-resourced Research division .

The digitalisation of parliament is vital to ensure a well- connected network serving the timely information needs of parliamentarians and parliamentary staff. This is particularly imperative in linking the citizens with governments.

One defining aim of this study has been the involvement of the wider stakeholders, from the media, to the NGO's and Civil Society representations. This study has revealed gaps in the accounting for MPs' level of attendance and involvement in both parliamentary sittings and committees. How well the citizens' views are represented and concerns addressed depends on the full and active participation of their MPs in the chamber and other policy and legislative fora.

There is a great deal scope for improvement in the gender-sensitive policies, in the promotion of equality and human rights. Parliaments are in a unique position to take up the cudgel, and take effective action in ensuring equitable development and social justice in line with the Millennium Development Goals, while being sensitive to and accommodative of the overarching economic realities and challenges.

How fully effectively parliaments can fulfil their roles without let or hindrance is a function of the relative degree of their autonomy from the Executive and more importantly how this autonomy is exercised. In practice, as parliament is made of both the ruling party MPs and Opposition MPs, the tendency for an imbalance of influence in favour of the former is an obstinate reality. And in the case of political systems where the same political party has formed government for much of its history, the more antagonist or resigned stance of their Opposition MPs cannot be helpful. But where parliamentary autonomy is lacking or compromised, the capacity of parliament will undoubtedly be hampered in the full and effective exercise of all its primary functions.

#### **KEY AREAS FOR PARLIAMENTARY INTERVENTIONS & CAPACITY BUILDING**

(Inter alia)

- Relationship-building to ease tensions and attain better working relations between the Executive and the Legislative body and among and between political parties.
- Leadership development
- Research skills
- Legislative Drafting
- Public administration in the parliamentary context.
- The strengthening of Select Committee systems as a matter of priority

#### **FURTHER STUDIES & ACTIVITIES**

The field-testing of a comprehensive parliamentary scorecard study with an exploratory and evaluative component, has revealed both strengths and weaknesses in the parliaments studies. Specific parliamentary strengthening needs have been highlighted and appropriate technical and policy interventions are indicated.

From the original study sample, the Parliament of Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal and the East African Legislative Assembly were not undertaken. It would be desirable to reformulate work plans to study these parliaments. From the exercise already undertaken, as anticipated, certain modifications of the Scorecard Indicators have been suggested by the respondents and these will be heeded so as to refine the research instrument.

It may be more realistic for an in-depth and more systematically scientific study to focus on one particular dimension of parliament's function.

There have been some helpful feedback comments on the scorecard indicators questionnaire during this field-testing project, from both Cameroon( some of the indicators being too "loaded" ie containing too many variables ,and some not being relevant) and Zambia(the list being too long). No other specific comments and suggestions were received in other cases.Hon.John Bosley has proposed a revised scorecard schedule. The necessary modifications can be undertaken by the team.

On a side note: with the study team members being situated at disparate locations, co-coordinating efforts only by email has had its limitations. For a longer-term research the opportunity for the core team to meet up half-way through the study would prove invaluable.



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APPENDIX A

<b>PARLIAMENTARY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS</b>				
<b>1. LAW-MAKING ROLE OF PARLIAMENT</b>				
<b>“The strength of the national legislature may be a – or even the- constitutional key to democratisation” M. Stephen Fish</b>	<b>Strongly agree (2)</b>	<b>Agree (1)</b>	<b>Disagree (-1)</b>	<b>Strongly disagree (-2)</b>
<b>Parliament is sovereign and supreme in its law making role</b>				
<b>1.1. Parliament enjoys autonomy relative to the Executive; e.g. Parliament is responsible for its staffing, self-management and control over the budget and has an independent secretariat with its own organisation and career structure.</b>				
<b>1.2. Parliament is able to exercise control over delegated legislation through parliamentary committees to ensure compatibility with the parent act.</b>				
<b>1.3. There is an effective and systematic monitoring of the implementation process</b>				
<b>1.4. There is enough time for discussions of key issues</b>				
<b>1.5. There is an agreed time for different clauses to avoid the guillotine of discussions</b>				
<b>1.6. All parts of the Bill are properly prepared and considered</b>				
<b>1.7. There is a thorough scrutiny of Bills to expose them to a broad range of opinions, enabling necessary modifications and compromises.</b>				
<b>1.8. ‘Sunset Clauses’ are applied when normative Government acts exceed the agreed time.</b>				
<b>1.9. There is broad multi-partisan political support</b>				
<b>1.10. Issues-based approaches to legislation apply (e.g. gender-responsive policies or PRSP)</b>				
<b>1.11. Public consultation and outreach exercises take place for the purpose of legislative review and examining the linkages between laws and their implementation</b>				
<b>1.12. The quality of the legislative texts is good</b>				
<b>1.13. The on-line facilities for parliamentarians and the digital chamber are well advanced</b>				
<b>1.14. Where there is a bicameral system two chambers are properly co-ordinated.</b>				
<b>1.15. The Committee system to ensure public interests and needs is well developed and operational.</b>				
<b>2.</b>	<b>BUDGET OVERSIGHT&amp; SCRUTINY</b>			

<b>“Oversight capacity is Parliament’s bulwark against Executive tyranny” JS Ramlugun</b>	<b>Strongly agree (2)</b>	<b>Agree (1)</b>	<b>Disagree (-1)</b>	<b>Strongly disagree (-2)</b>
2.1. There are independent auditing systems				
2.2. There is an effective coverage of audit matters before the House				
2.3. The audit office is vested with power such as obtaining all relevant information.				
2.4. The audit office is separate from the civil service.				
2.5. Meetings of public accounts committees are a regular feature.				
2.6. Budget debates in parliament are vibrant and unrestricted, with candid questionings of Government ministers and officials.				
2.7. Parliament is involved at every stage of the budget cycle process.				
2.8. Key economic and financial issues are publicly aired by Parliament.				
2.9. Parliament has a role in the interface between government and international financial institutions.				
2.10. Parliament ensures the representation of the public and other interest groups in the budgetary process in crucial areas such as poverty reduction, equality issues and environmental impact.				
2.11. Parliament has access to independent impartial and timely information and expert opinion on policy and technical matters.				
2.12. Abuses and corruption at government level are readily dealt with.				
2.13. Budget and Public Committees have the capacity to tackle key institutional and political obstacles to oversight.				
2.14. There exists active party collaboration and involvement with the executive on the budget process as a lever for parliament to exert its influence on contentious substantive and policy matters.				
2.15. Measures are in place to enhance transparency and accountability in determining resource allocation and spending priorities.				
2.16. There are effective measures in place to monitor and follow up government expenditures.				
2.17. The implementation of budget allocation is monitored in every instance.				
2.18. Ministers are routinely called to explain and justify their policies in parliament.				
2.19. Mechanisms and capacity for parliamentary				

oversight are regularly reviewed.				
2.20. A Scrutiny Unit, such as that established by the UK House of Commons is desirable in order to provide specialist support to committees to ease their overload.				

3.	<b>REPRESENTATIVENESS</b> (collecting, aggregating and articulating the opinions and concerns and preferences of citizens and the electorate)			
“Parliamentary representation is the kernel of public accountability,” JS Ramlugun	Strongly agree (2)	Agree (1)	Disagree (-1)	Strongly disagree (-2)
3.1. Mechanisms exist to ensure that the public and private interests are properly represented.				
3.2. Parliamentarians actively empower and engage citizens and encourage public inputs into the legislative and oversight functions of parliament.				
3.3. Parliamentarians are able to determine if debates and decisions are reached impartially and independently.				
3.4. Issues-based approaches, such as gender-responsive budgeting promote public consultation and hearing campaigns and the participation of grass roots organisations				
<b>4 PARLIAMENTARY PERFORMANCE AND GOVERNANCE</b>				

“Good governance needs to be encrypted and hardwired into the DNA of every parliament” JS Ramlugun	Strongly agree (2)	Agree (1)	Disagree (-1)	Strongly disagree (-2)
Good Governance is enhanced by relevant enabling legislation				
4.1 Parliament is influential in enhancing state capability in improving the welfare of people, such as in the formulation and implementation of poverty reduction programmes				
4.2 The proceedings and deliberations of committee meetings are open to the media and publicly accessible through press briefings				
4.3 Account can be given as to how many Standing Committee meetings are held and how many are cancelled and these can be identified and the reasons stated.				
4.4 Information is made available on the major problems discussed and debated during the week				

and month at various levels (global, national, Provincial, local and personal)				
4.5 Information is readily available on MP's working days and hours worked				
4.6 Information is widely available on the number of questions raised and by which party and the replies to them.				
4.7 Strategies exist to strengthen the electoral processes to promote free and fair elections				
4.8 Parliament plays a key role in the creation and support of Ombudsmen's offices and independent audit institutions				
4.9 Parliaments are widely viewed as the legitimate fora for deliberations and substantive policy negotiations and formulations				
4.10 Results-based indicators (utilising both qualitative and quantitative data) are used to evaluate and monitor governance and parliamentary performance.				
4.11 Parliament takes the lead in conflict resolution				
4.12 Parliament is generally perceived as promoting national integration through the democratic process				
4.13 Parliament is managed by a Committee or Board on which all the Parties with seats in the legislature are represented				
4.14 The staff of Parliament are hired and promoted on a non-partisan merit-based system.				

5	<b>PARLIAMENTARY CAPACITY BUILDING</b>			
<b>"Capacity building is the locomotive of development and progress"</b> JS Ramlugun	Strongly agree (2)	Agree (1)	Disagree (-1)	Strongly disagree (-2)
Training is provided for the MPs in				
5.1 Techniques of oversight				
5.2 How to analyse and understand the Budget and the Budget process				
5.3 How legislation is drafted				
5.4 Relationship building – to ease tensions and attain better working relationships between the Executive and the Legislative body and among political party representatives within the budget committees; to build networks and coalitions at				

various societal levels.				
5.5 To enable the sharing of experiences from other parliamentary (through Study Tours and/or Regional Seminars)				
Training is provided to the permanent staff in				
5.6 Leadership				
5.7 Research skills (including report-writing in the parliamentary context)				
5.8 Legislative drafting				
5.9 Public administration (in the parliamentary context)				
Training is provided to the Parliamentary Groups re:				
5.10 Their roles, rights and responsibilities within the parliamentary process				

#### PARLIAMENTARY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

##### 4. LAW-MAKING ROLE OF PARLIAMENT

“The strength of the national legislature may be a – or even the- constitutional key to democratisation” M. Stephen Fish	Strongly agree (2)	Agree (1)	Disagree (-1)	Strongly disagree (-2)
Parliament is sovereign and supreme in its law making role				
4.1. Parliament enjoys autonomy relative to the Executive; e.g. Parliament is responsible for its staffing, self-management and control over the budget and has an independent secretariat with its own organisation and career structure.				
4.2. Parliament is able to exercise control over delegated legislation through parliamentary committees to ensure compatibility with the parent act.				
4.3. There is an effective and systematic monitoring of the implementation process				
4.4. There is enough time for discussions of key issues				
4.5. There is an agreed time for different clauses to avoid the guillotine of discussions				
4.6. All parts of the Bill are properly prepared and considered				
4.7. There is a thorough scrutiny of Bills to expose them to a broad range of opinions, enabling necessary modifications and compromises.				
4.8. ‘Sunset Clauses’ are applied when normative Government acts exceed the agreed time.				
4.9. There is broad multi-partisan political support				
4.10. Issues-based approaches to legislation apply (e.g.				

gender-responsive policies or PRSP)				
4.11. Public consultation and outreach exercises take place for the purpose of legislative review and examining the linkages between laws and their implementation				
4.12. The quality of the legislative texts is good				
4.13. The on-line facilities for parliamentarians and the digital chamber are well advanced				
4.14. Where there is a bicameral system two chambers are properly co-ordinated.				
4.15. The Committee system to ensure public interests and needs is well developed and operational.				

5.	BUDGET OVERSIGHT& SCRUTINY			
“Oversight capacity is Parliament’s bulwark against Executive tyranny” JS Ramlugun	Strongly agree (2)	Agree (1)	Disagree (-1)	Strongly disagree (-2)
5.1. There are independent auditing systems				
5.2. There is an effective coverage of audit matters before the House				
5.3. The audit office is vested with power such as obtaining all relevant information.				
5.4. The audit office is separate from the civil service.				
5.5. Meetings of public accounts committees are a regular feature.				
5.6. Budget debates in parliament are vibrant and unrestricted, with candid questionings of Government ministers and officials.				
5.7. Parliament is involved at every stage of the budget cycle process.				
5.8. Key economic and financial issues are publicly aired by Parliament.				
5.9. Parliament has a role in the interface between government and international financial institutions.				
5.10. Parliament ensures the representation of the public and other interest groups in the budgetary process in crucial areas such as poverty reduction, equality issues and environmental impact.				
5.11. Parliament has access to independent impartial and timely information and expert opinion on policy and technical matters.				
5.12. Abuses and corruption at government level are readily dealt with.				
5.13. Budget and Public Committees have the capacity to tackle key institutional and political obstacles to oversight.				

5.14. There exists active party collaboration and involvement with the executive on the budget process as a lever for parliament to exert its influence on contentious substantive and policy matters.				
5.15. Measures are in place to enhance transparency and accountability in determining resource allocation and spending priorities.				
5.16. There are effective measures in place to monitor and follow up government expenditures.				
5.17. The implementation of budget allocation is monitored in every instance.				
5.18. Ministers are routinely called to explain and justify their policies in parliament.				
5.19. Mechanisms and capacity for parliamentary oversight are regularly reviewed.				
5.20. A Scrutiny Unit, such as that established by the UK House of Commons is desirable in order to provide specialist support to committees to ease their overload.				

6.	<b>REPRESENTATIVENESS</b> (collecting, aggregating and articulating the opinions and concerns and preferences of citizens and the electorate)			
<b>“Parliamentary representation is the kernel of public accountability,”</b> JS Ramlugun	Strongly agree (2)	Agree (1)	Disagree (-1)	Strongly disagree (-2)
6.1. Mechanisms exist to ensure that the public and private interests are properly represented.				
6.2. Parliamentarians actively empower and engage citizens and encourage public inputs into the legislative and oversight functions of parliament.				
6.3. Parliamentarians are able to determine if debates and decisions are reached impartially and independently.				
6.4. Issues-based approaches, such as gender-responsive budgeting promote public consultation and hearing campaigns and the participation of grass roots organisations				
<b>4 PARLIAMENTARY PERFORMANCE AND GOVERNANCE</b>				

<b>“Good governance needs to be encrypted and hardwired into the DNA of every parliament”</b> JS Ramlugun	Strongly agree (2)	Agree (1)	Disagree (-1)	Strongly disagree (-2)

Good Governance is enhanced by relevant enabling legislation				
5.11 Parliament is influential in enhancing state capability in improving the welfare of people, such as in the formulation and implementation of poverty reduction programmes				
5.12 The proceedings and deliberations of committee meetings are open to the media and publicly accessible through press briefings				
5.13 Account can be given as to how many Standing Committee meetings are held and how many are cancelled and these can be identified and the reasons stated.				
5.14 Information is made available on the major problems discussed and debated during the week and month at various levels (global, national, Provincial, local and personal)				
5.15 Information is readily available on MP's working days and hours worked				
5.16 Information is widely available on the number of questions raised and by which party and the replies to them.				
5.17 Strategies exist to strengthen the electoral processes to promote free and fair elections				
5.18 Parliament plays a key role in the creation and support of Ombudsmen's offices and independent audit institutions				
5.19 Parliaments are widely viewed as the legitimate fora for deliberations and substantive policy negotiations and formulations				
5.20 Results-based indicators (utilising both qualitative and quantitative data) are used to evaluate and monitor governance and parliamentary performance.				
5.21 Parliament takes the lead in conflict resolution				
5.22 Parliament is generally perceived as promoting national integration through the democratic process				
5.23 Parliament is managed by a Committee or Board on which all the Parties with seats in the legislature are represented				
5.24 The staff of Parliament are hired and promoted on				

a non-partisan merit-based system.				
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6	PARLIAMENTARY CAPACITY BUILDING			
“Capacity building is the locomotive of development and progress” JS Ramlugun	Strongly agree (2)	Agree (1)	Disagree (-1)	Strongly disagree (-2)
Training is provided for the MPs in				
6.1 Techniques of oversight				
6.2 How to analyse and understand the Budget and the Budget process				
6.3 How legislation is drafted				
6.4 Relationship building – to ease tensions and attain better working relationships between the Executive and the Legislative body and among political party representatives within the budget committees; to build networks and coalitions at various societal levels.				
6.5 To enable the sharing of experiences from other parliamentary (through Study Tours and/or Regional Seminars)				
Training is provided to the permanent staff in				
6.6 Leadership				
6.7 Research skills (including report-writing in the parliamentary context)				
6.8 Legislative drafting				
6.9 Public administration (in the parliamentary context)				
Training is provided to the Parliamentary Groups re:				
6.10 Their roles, rights and responsibilities within the parliamentary process				