



AFRICAN PARLIAMENTARIANS' NETWORK AGAINST CORRUPTION-UGANDA CHAPTER- (APNAC-U)

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APNAC-Uganda has been in operation since 2000. However, the general public knows little about its existence and role. While the organisation has very useful strategic advantages to tackle the problem of corruption in Uganda, , civil society, and other stake holders have not taken advantage of this. APNAC-U is able to take the lead to lobby for the ratification and implementation of the recommendations of national legislations and international Conventions, as an inroad towards building a spirited fight against Corruption in Uganda, and Africa as a whole.

The objectives of the APNAC emphasize cooperation among members of parliament, legislators and other Good governance stakeholders, institutions and organisations, by encouraging them to 'promote and strengthen the development of mechanisms required to prevent, detect, punish and eradicate corruption and related offences in Africa and to ensure the effectiveness of these measures

OVERVIEW OF APNAC-U'S WORK

Since its establishment in August 2000, APNAC-U has been involved in advocacy and networking efforts within parliament and outside parliament. Notable achievements are as follows:

- Participation in the annual Anti-Corruption Week (ACW)
- Organized a series of workshops in support of the Access to Information Bill until it was enacted into a law.

- Participated in the APNAC conference aimed at equipping MPs with skills to deal with corruption
- Participated in the National Conference on corruption and the release of the 2nd National Integrity Survey results, in addition to presenting a paper on how to fight corruption as a parliamentary group.
- APNAC-U has conducted and participated in numerous media programs centered on the fight against corruption.
- Signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Transparency International to jointly implement the pilot project on the AU anti-corruption convention
- Successfully implemented the pilot project on the African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating corruption and other related offences, which was collaboration with transparency International. This involved a series of sensitisation workshops with members of parliament, Civil society, the Media and Development partners, and made recommendations which could be used as a way forward strategy.
- Published a report on the “Legislative and Policy Measures in Uganda vis-à-vis Practical Challenges of Compliance with AU anti-corruption Convention.”
- Over 500 copies of the AU legislation booklets were disseminated to members of the Parliament, civil society, media and the general public. The dissemination was done through workshops, meetings and through mailing the booklets to key stakeholders. The dissemination of the AU Convention booklets has increased people’s understanding about the Convention and engendered debate with regard to its applicability. Interest is also growing among researchers for its use as reference material on the way forward for the anticorruption crusade in Uganda.

CHALLENGES

- **Prioritization of Anti-corruption initiatives.** Anti corruption initiatives are not on top of the Agenda for not only the Ugandan Parliament/government, but on many of the African countries/ parliaments’ Agenda, and this slows down the anti-corruption initiatives.

- **Continuity of APNAC Members.** Elections always come with its dynamics (victors and losers). The AU Project prior to elections had cultivated a firm working relation with some members of Parliament who had even become key contact persons to push forward the anticorruption agenda in Parliament. However after elections, some of these members lost their Parliamentary seats thus the need for new members to come on board. This reduced momentum of APNAC-U, and the new members will have to be oriented first, made to understand the dynamics of civil society and anticorruption, which delays the campaign efforts.
- **Political Programmes colliding with APNAC-U programmes.** Many times, APNAC-U programmes which involve members of parliament end up colliding with random, urgent government programmes, and this affects the turn up of members of parliament to APNAC programmes
- **Limited funds.** APNAC-U faces a challenge of limited funds to establish a full secretariat with permanent staff members, and to implement its work plan effectively.
- **Networking with other chapters.** This hasn't been fully achieved, as desired, and so there has been limited sharing of challenges, lessons learnt and way forward.

WAY FORWARD

Established institution that can effectively strengthen the capacity of APNAC-U, to fight corruption in Uganda

APNAC-U has its Agenda on creating a strong institution in terms of structure; office and personnel to enable it carry out its activities effectively. A weak institution with no equipment and funds to facilitate full time staff currently hinders the activity performance.

Shifting focus of work groups

Attention should be focused at working with strategic committees in parliament, to ensure that the anti-corruption legislation and policy recommendations are incorporated in the domestic legislations and operationalised.

Fundraising strategy

All APNAC chapters should embark on well designed fundraising strategies to acquire funds to facilitate the effective implementation of work plans

Network strategies

APNAC-U and other APNAC chapters need t embark on more effective network strategies, such as more video conferences between various chapters, visits, e-mail contact and publication sharing, to help create a strong link between all APNAC chapters and share recommendations for the good of the Network.

CONCLUSION,

APNAC-U has over the years progressed in its performance in various activities, but has been slowed down by the fact that it does not have office equipment like computers, printer photocopying machine and other equipment and consumables, the organization does not have funds to pay fulltime staff to run the office, in the absence of the members of parliament, who have busy schedules.

However, in its capacity, with some help form development partners, APNAC-U has been able to carry out a series of activities and been able to achieve some desired results, as shown in the progress reports on the APNAC website.

There is hope for a better and more effective APNAC-U, which will continue operating in a multi-party system. APNAC-U will develop an anti-corruption Agenda for the new political system of government, to ensure that anti-corruption is a key Agenda in the multi-party system of Government (Democracy).