



SEMINAR COMMUNIQUE

EASTERN AFRICA CAPACITY BUILDING WORKSHOP ON THE UTILIZATION OF THE SPAT FOR REPORTING ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AFRICAN CHARTER ON THE VALUES AND PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC SERVICE AND ADMINISTRATION

27 -29 October 2021

WHITESANDS HOTEL

DAR ES SALAAM, UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA

INTRODUCTION

1. A joint African Union Commission for Political Affairs, Peace and Security (AUCPAP&S) and African Management Development Institute Network (AMDIN) Capacity Building Seminar on the use of the State Parties Assessment Tool (SPAT) for reporting on the implementation of the African Charter on Values and Principles of Public Service and Administration (the African Charter) was held in Dar Es Salaam on 27 - 29 October 2021. The Seminar is one of the series of Capacity Building initiatives the Conference of State Parties (COSPs) on the Africa Charter has mandated the African Union Commission to facilitate for State Parties to understand and achieve the required competencies in the reporting of the implementation of the Charter.
2. Under Article 24.1 (Chapter VI) of the Charter, State Parties are obligated to provide biennial reports to the AUC on the legislative or other relevant measures taken with a view to giving effect to the principles and commitments of the Charter. The Reporting Guidelines for the implementation of the Charter were adopted at the Third Ordinary Session of the Special Technical Committee No 8 (STC 8) in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, which led to the development of the State Party Assessment Tool (SPAT) that was adopted at the Second Conference of State Parties in April 2021. The Second Conference of State Parties decided that five countries, namely Tanzania, South Africa, Kenya, Namibia and Cameroon should be invited to pilot the operationalization of the SPAT.

OFFICIAL OPENING

3. In her opening remarks, Ms Agnes Meena: Director for Policy Development, President's Office's, Public Service Management and Good Governance, United Republic of Tanzania, welcomed participants to the Country and more specifically, the beautiful City of Dar Es Salaam nicknamed as Haven of Peace. She noted that the seminar is taking place as part of the implementation of the Declaration of the Second Conference of States Parties held on April 29, 2021. The declaration called on the African Union to ensure capacity building seminars at the beginning of the use of the SPAT to enhance the understanding of Member States on key performance areas for effective implementation of the Charter.
4. Ms Meena anticipated that, the seminar will elucidate when and how to conduct State Party assessment as well as to familiarize with SPAT framework for assessing implementation performance and detailed mechanics and technicalities of its administration. She expressed the optimism that participants will find time, away from the busy schedule of the seminar, to enjoy the breath-taking beautiful sceneries of Dar Es Salaam tourist sites. She encouraged participants to find time and visit various attractive places in Dar Es Salaam where they will find nice Tanzanian food, including the famous "*nyama choma*".
5. Mr Issaka Garba Abdou, Head (Ag) Governance and Human Rights division on behalf of his Excellency Amb Bankole Adeoye, Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security rendered his opening remarks. Mr Abdou enlightened that the Charter serves as a roadmap for standard setting for quality public service delivery. Its tenets provide for principles, duties of the public service, code of conduct for public service agents, rights of public service agents, management of human resources, member states' responsibilities toward service delivery as well as mechanisms for implementation of the Charter.
6. Mr Abdou added that like any other binding legal instrument, the effectiveness of the Charter lies in its holistic implementation and translation of its provisions by member States to ensure quality, efficient and corruption-free public service delivery. He explained that the seminar is part of the implementation of the declaration of the COSPs II with the specific objective of bringing together representatives from MDIs and State Parties from the Eastern African region to familiarise with the provisions of the Charter and tools for effective reporting on its implementation. He then wished participants a fruitful learning experience.

OBJECTIVES OF THE SEMINAR

7. The main objective of the capacity building program was to provide participants from State parties with an in-depth appreciation and understanding of the Charter, the Reporting Guidelines for the Charter and the SPAT as a mechanism for effective reporting on the implementation of the Charter. In addition, the Seminar was envisaged to improve the participant's report writing skills through provision of tips and hints on producing meaningful, good quality, concise and coherent reports.
8. Other objectives are to acquaint participants with the provisions of the Charter and tools for effective reporting on its implementation through;
 - a) Demonstrating when and how to conduct a state party assessment and the requirements for ensuring objective and impartial assessments;
 - b) Training participants on the use of the SPAT framework for assessing implementation performance and the detailed mechanics and technicalities of its administration;
 - c) Explaining how to summarize findings and conclusions into a factual, good quality and coherent implementation assessment report that meets the requirements of the AU Commission and;
 - d) Demonstrate the process of report submission, validation of findings and any further actions

PRESENTATIONS AND KEY ISSUES DISCUSSED

9. The opening presentation set the tone of the seminar in elucidating that the African Charter is essentially a compendium of a value system that seeks to inform administrative reforms in Africa. The Charter anticipates to support AU member states as they are committed to embark on initiatives directed at improving state capacity. In addition to providing for the development of guidelines for domestication, the Charter obligates the African Union to mobilise resources to support and establish required mechanisms for the implementation of the Charter. Finally, the Charter would empower the African public service to progressively move toward becoming a people-oriented public service and consequently, play a significant role in inculcating a culture of good governance for better development outcomes.
10. The Guidelines for Reporting on the Implementation of the Charter and the SPAT was presented and explained. The purposes of the reporting guidelines is to afford a framework for State Parties to prepare and submit reports as envisaged under Article 24. The guidelines outline a structure, scope and methodology for preparation, submission, review and follow up on implementation of the Charter at the national level. The guidelines, in the main, ensure relevance, consistency and uniformity of data collected from diverse countries and jurisdictions.

11. In the plenary interventions participants acknowledged that ethics and professionalism are central pillars of a functional public service. It was recognised that even though the Charter has provisions for enhancing service delivery, the reality in most member states was different. It is therefore important for member states to strive to make the vision of the African Charter a reality for the African people.
12. The presentation on the State Party Assessment Tool (SPAT) covered the background, context, rationale, purpose, structure and administration of the SPAT. It was explained that the SPAT was developed following a resolution by State Parties to a capacity building workshop on reporting guidelines held in Dar Es Salaam in May 2019. The SPAT is designed to simplify the reporting process and lead to the production of more useful and results-oriented reports. The SPAT has four components which are the user guide, the spreadsheet, the assessment and the reporting processes. It was further explained that the administration of the SPAT has four main stages which are training and sensitization; initial or independent self-assessment and report; facilitated self-assessment; and the final state party report to the relevant AU organs.
13. The facilitator guided the participants through the structure and content of the SPAT and thereafter invited them to a trial use of the tool in a group exercise. Participants inquired whether the SPAT design could be further strengthened to prevent accidental data entry wherefore it was proposed that further information technology intervention could enhance the SPAT security measures. Participants also expressed the view that the tool seemed to focus on availability of documents and not on implementation. It was clarified that the tool is meant to be administered by a multi-stakeholder platform and hence there would be opportunity to debate and discuss the scoring so that it was accurate and based on empirical data.
14. Participants proposed that ratification of and accountability on the charter is important and need to be looked at during domestication as well there is also a need to appoint champions in each country to ensure that the charter processes are effectively implemented and internalised.
15. It was acknowledged that MDIs have an important role to play in deepening the understanding for better implementation of the Charter. The African Union suggested that a meeting take place with various MDIs to explore ways and approaches to incorporate training on the African Charter in their curriculum.

SEMINAR RECOMMENDATIONS

16. The Seminar recommended that:

- a) State Parties should strive to implement the Charter and deploy the SPAT to report on the implementation.
- b) Indicators should be further streamlined to collapse those that are similar for ease of reporting
- c) State Parties should avoid differentiated enforcement of laws but ensure consequence management is fully implemented
- d) North African countries have made significant progress in the implementation of the charter. This fact should be acknowledged in African Union documents
- e) Political will is critical to the implementation of the Charter and effort should be made to actualize this.
- f) It was recognised that resource allocation in the public service is uneven and given the competing priorities, the Charter implementation process may be impeded by insufficient resource allocation
- g) The African Union should consider introducing a commendation or reward system for member states that have excelled in Charter implementation and reporting.
- h) State Parties should do more to disseminate information and create awareness on the Charter among the citizenry
- i) State Parties should consider introducing modules on Ethic and Professionalism at primary school level
- j) There is need for a strong monitoring and evaluation focus on the Charter implementation.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

17. On his part, the AUC representative Mr Issaka Abdou expressed sincere gratitude to the Government and peoples of the United Republic of Tanzania for accepting to host the Seminar in record time as well as for the hospitality extended to all participants. Mr Abdou also thanked the AMDIN and the European Union for their generosity in providing financial and technical support to facilitate the convening of this seminar.

CLOSING CEREMONY

18. In his closing remarks, Kevin Tchacho, representing the African Union Commission for Political Affairs, Peace and Security, expressed satisfaction at the enthusiastic level of participation. He was pleased to see robust engagement among State Parties present, who displayed a high level of understanding, knowledge and articulation of issues pertaining to the Charter implementation. He challenged participants to continue championing the implementation of the African Charter with a view to actualising the objective of improved service delivery in respective countries. On her part and on behalf of the host, the United Republic of Tanzania, Ms Ellen Maduhu, praised participants for concluding the seminar on a productive note. She invited delegates to explore the beauty of Dar Es Salaam and sample the warmth and hospitality of its people. She then wished participants a safe passage to their respective destinations.

19. Speaking on behalf of delegates, Ms Florence Githinji, from the Kenya School of Government, expressed gratitude to organizers for the opportunity accorded to attend the three-day Seminar. She was of the view that the seminar was remarkably informative on the milestone achieved so far in the implementation of the Charter. She singled out the vibrancy displayed participants during the exchange and sharing of successes achieved and challenges faced in their respective countries

during the implementation of the charter. Participants, she added, were deeply indebted to AMDIN and the African Union for the well-designed training program and for the careful selection of a seasoned facilitator who ably delivered on the training mandate. In addition, participants found the training highly informative, valuable and one that was delivered in a practical manner. The high standard of preparation, she admitted, was evident in the facilitator's slides and clarity of materials. She conceded that public servants bear an immense responsibility to deliver high standards of services, create more awareness on the Charter, and stay the course of championing the Charter implementation in their respective countries. She applauded the conducive environment in which the Seminar took place-away from the distractions of the city's bustle and hustle to a cool, scenic setting.