



APNODE

African Parliamentarians' Network on Development Evaluation
Réseau des Parlementaires africains pour l'évaluation du développement

Annual Report 2020 - 2021

August 2021

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ACRONYMS

AfDB	African Development Bank
AfrEA	African Evaluation Association
AGM	Annual General Meeting
AU	African Union
APNODE	African Parliamentarians' Network on Development Evaluation
CLEAR-AA	Center for Learning on Evaluation and Results-Anglophone Africa
EC	APNODE Executive Committee
GPFE	Global Parliamentarians Forum on Evaluation
IDEV	Independent Development Evaluation
RFE	Réseau Francophone pour l'Evaluation
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Annual Report reviews African Parliamentarians' Network on Development Evaluation (APNODE)'s operational year 2020-2021, from August 2020 through July 2021. Throughout the year, the Network carried out several activities, and this report summarizes the activities undertaken and challenges encountered during the year in review.

For the whole operational year, the COVID-19 pandemic continued across the African continent. Bans on gatherings, travel restrictions and work-from-home orders, combined with weak internet and telecoms connectivity in places, hampered and challenged the work of the Network.

Despite this, the Executive Committee (EC) meetings continued to take place regularly via videoconference, with members addressing several issues and making decisions to improve the Network and its reach. One of the decisions concerned the [6th Annual General Meeting](#) (AGM), which will occur virtually. The AGM will hopefully be organized in person in 2022.

Due to the pandemic, the Network encouraged online activities and events. Some National Chapters, including Cameroon, Zimbabwe, and Côte d'Ivoire were active and organized events that included sensitizing other colleagues on the use of evaluation for decision making. In addition, these National Chapters participated in a webinar series organized by the APNODE Secretariat and assisted with in-person events in their respective countries.

The Secretariat continued to engage and communicate with members, sharing valuable information about online webinars, trainings, and workshops useful for their capacity development. In addition, the Secretariat organized a number of learning events, including two virtual round tables during the gLocal Evaluation Week 2021, and assisted some members in attending virtual events organized by APNODE partners. This ensured that members continued to benefit from knowledge sharing and peer learning, and that African parliamentarians' voices continued to be heard in the international debate.

The resource mobilization efforts continued. While it was difficult to convince members to pay their membership fees due to the pandemic, the Network continued to pursue its resource mobilization efforts even in the absence of a resource mobilization consultant. It had been decided to hire one, but was not possible due to APNODE's financial status.

Overall, the work of the Network evolved during the year in review, as APNODE continued to enhance its relevance on the African continent with the support of its host, the Independent Development Evaluation (IDEV) at the African Development Bank (AfDB), and strategic partners.

I. INTRODUCTION

This APNODE Annual Report highlights the work of the Network and summarizes the activities that were undertaken throughout the year. It is also an opportunity to reflect and review the different milestones achieved by the Network in its efforts to increase the capacity of parliamentarians on evidence-use and the uptake of evaluation in national decision making. The Annual Report covers the period August 2020-July 2021.

Across the continent, the COVID-19 pandemic prevented people from gathering, traveling and moving around due to restrictions and closed borders. A number of parliaments closed their doors, requiring members to work from home. This posed a significant challenge for the Network, but reinforced its online presence and communication with members using online channels (although some were hampered by poor internet connectivity).

The year in review shows the strength of the Network -its ability to survive despite the challenges and its resilience to mark its uniqueness in the evaluation sphere. The engagement of its members and the work of its Secretariat is what sustains the Network and pushes it forward. The work of the Network is moreover important as it supports parliamentarians in their work to reach the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which themselves have been dealt a setback by the pandemic.

Following the introduction, the Report is divided into three sections: key activities, the financial summary, and annexes.

II. KEY ACTIVITIES IN 2020-2021

1. Meetings of the Executive Committee

For the period under review, members of the APNODE Executive Committee held seven (7) virtual meetings. The meetings were opportunities for the EC to discuss specific issues and items and take appropriate decisions regarding the Network's ongoing business and growth.

The meetings were also opportunities for EC members to exchange on COVID-19 updates in their respective countries. The updates were key to monitoring and determining if and/or when to hold the APNODE AGM. Further, EC members could get updates on activities occurring at the national level via the National Chapters. Additionally, it also informed the EC on what strategies Parliaments and parliamentarians were investing in the fight against the Coronavirus.

With the departure of Hon. Felix Mhona, APNODE Treasurer, following his appointment as the Minister of Transport and Structural Development in Zimbabwe in February 2021, the EC discussed and selected Sen. Langton Chikukwa from Zimbabwe as the interim APNODE Treasurer until the next AGM, during which a substantive Treasurer can be elected.

Another major decision during the year was for the 6th AGM, due to take place in August 2020, to be postponed until 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The decision marked the first time that the APNODE AGM had been postponed. The subsequent decision to organize the event in 2021 virtually was also new, requiring that new protocols and procedures be followed. Table 1 below lists the different EC meetings with the key focus areas and topics discussed.

Table 1: APNODE Executive Committee Meetings (August 2020 – July 2021)

DATE	TYPE OF MEETING	KEY FOCUS AREAS
4 August 2020	VC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary and approval of minutes of 23rd EC VC meeting of 29 May 2020 • The decision to postpone the 6th APNODE AGM • Update on current APNODE National Chapters
8 October 2020	VC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary and approval of minutes of 24th EC VC meeting of 4 August 2020 • Picking a date for the 2021 AGM • Update on Webinars by APNODE National Chapters in Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire and Zimbabwe
9 December 2020	VC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary and approval of minutes of 25th EC VC meeting of 8 October 2020 • Update on webinars by APNODE National Chapters in Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire and Zimbabwe • Update on membership dues (APNODE Chairperson's appeal to members to pay their dues)
12 March 2021	VC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary and approval of minutes of 26th EC VC meeting of 9 December 2020 • Discussion/Action on 2020 EC Attendance • Participation of APNODE National Chapters in the 2021 gLOCAL Evaluation Week • Discussion on the departure of Hon. Felix Mhona as APNODE Treasurer and appointing an interim treasurer
14 May 2021	VC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary and approval of minutes of 27th EC VC meeting of 12 March 2021 • Discussion on the AGM – possibility to hold a virtual meeting • Participation of Hon. Paurina Mpariwa at Eval4Action East and Southern regional consultation meeting • Discussion on EC nominations and elections
15 June 2021	VC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary and approval of minutes of 28th EC VC meeting of 14 May 2021 • Discussion on the 6th AGM – date/organization • Update on EC nominations • Update on APNODE's events at 2021 gLOCAL Evaluation Week
14 July 2021	VC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary and approval of minutes of 29th EC VC meeting of 15 June 2021 • Update on EC Nominations • Review of 6th AGM Program & Update on AGM organization • Brief on the USAID-ASSESS Project on 'Strengthening Parliamentary M&E Capacity in Africa'

2. Expanding the Network

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, APNODE's collaboration with existing partners continued to grow. APNODE also established a partnership with Eval4Action and participated in the Eval4Action African Consultations. The purpose of the African consultations was to start a discussion on main topics or themes to deepen the development of an African Action Plan to advocate for Influential Evaluation on the continent to support the implementation of the SDGs and 2063 Agenda of the African Union (AU). Several APNODE EC members, including the Chairperson of APNODE Hon. Evelyn Mpagi-Kaabule and EC member, Hon. Paurina Mpariwa participated in the consultations, leading to a request by the Eval4Action team for APNODE to join the implementation of the Eval4Action Action plan team.

3. Cementing the Network: APNODE National Chapters

During the year in review, APNODE National Chapters continued to work on planned activities in-country and expand their country membership.

- **APNODE Cameroon**, with its membership of 20 MPs, parliamentary staffers, and affiliates, worked hard to meet as a Chapter and roll-out planned activities. While not all 2020 planned activities were completed, the National Chapter jointly organized a webinar on 16 November 2020 themed '[*Tools and methods \(good practices\) of evaluation for effective decision-making by parliamentarians*](#),' with the APNODE Secretariat. The event focused on the lessons and experiences of Cameroonian MPs regarding the use and benefits of evaluation in their daily activities and the associated challenges. The National Chapter also held [*APNODE Cameroon's 1st Biannual General Assembly*](#) in March 2021, at which time it approved its Action plan for 2021. Central to the objective of the Action plan is the desire to train parliamentarians to use evaluation as a tool for their parliamentary work.
- **APNODE Côte-d'Ivoire**, with its 21 members and affiliates, was active in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic throughout 2020 – sensitizing the population about the pandemic and distributing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) kits to constituents. The APNODE-CI Chairperson and APNODE Vice-chairperson, Hon. Abbas Imbassou Ouattara also continued to sensitize parliamentarians on the value proposition of using evaluation for effective decision-making.
- **APNODE Benin**, with its 18 members and affiliates, organized an information seminar for the benefit of parliamentarians on the *Use of Evidence for the Formulation of Public Policies and the Monitoring of Governmental Action*, on 25 – 26 May 2021, with the participation of the government's evaluation office. The seminar kicked-off the National Chapter's activities for 2021 as they explored ways to energize APNODE Benin within the Parliament of Benin.
- **APNODE Zimbabwe**, with its 8 members, teamed up with the APNODE Secretariat to hold a webinar on 11 December 2020 themed '[*Factors promoting and hampering the evaluation of public policies: Experience from Zimbabwe*](#).' The webinar was an opportunity for APNODE Zimbabwe to highlight its experiences with factors that have influenced the uptake of evaluation to shape public policies. The National Chapter continues to work earnestly to strengthen its relevance within parliament with the support of the Speaker of Parliament, Hon. Advocate Jacob Francis Mudenda.

4. Knowledge Sharing & Peer Learning

Knowledge sharing and peer learning were at the heart of this year's work plan. Since it was difficult for members to travel or hold face-to-face events due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the focus centered around virtual knowledge sharing and peer learning events. The purpose was for parliamentarians to learn from each other and dialogue on issues and challenges related to their work to develop solutions. Within countries, situations varied, and in some cases, APNODE members could participate in in-person events.

Below are highlights from the key knowledge sharing and peer learning events that APNODE Members participated in during the year in review:

- On **16 October 2020**, the Vice-Chairperson of APNODE, **Hon. Abbas Imbassou Ouattara** and EC member **Samuel Kouakou** participated in the [validation workshop on the preliminary draft law](#) on the evaluation of public policies in Cote d'Ivoire. Organized by the Ivorian Ministry of Planning and Development, through its General Directorate for Planning and the Fight against Poverty, participants deliberated on the core issues pertaining to institutionalizing the evaluation of public policies in Côte d'Ivoire. In addition, each of the attending stakeholders had an opportunity to provide feedback on the draft document, sharing their insights and expectations of what this development will entail.
- On **13 November 2020**, the Vice-Chairperson of APNODE, **Hon. Abbas Imbassou Ouattara** participated in the [2nd edition of the Ivorian Evaluation Morning](#) hosted by the Réseau Ivoirien de Suivi et d'Evaluation (RISE). Themed '*Partners at the heart of promoting monitoring and evaluation in Côte d'Ivoire: Roles and actions*', the event explored the current evaluation landscape in Côte d'Ivoire and discussed how the evaluation of public policies could be strengthened and put into practice. The event is expected to be held annually to bring together the Ivorian evaluation community to exchange best practices, improve coordination, and collectively discuss how to overcome challenges.
- On **21 December 2020**, **Hon. Evelyn Mpagi-Kaabule**, Chairperson of APNODE, participated in the [Eval4Action Africa Regional Consultation](#). Panelists and participants discussed how the different roles of M&E in Africa are vital to attaining the UNSDGs and developing partnerships to promote influential evaluations for the SDGs. Hon. Mpagi-Kaabule talked about the role parliamentarians can play in building an enabling evaluation environment in Africa while highlighting the work of APNODE.
- On **19 February 2021**, **Mr. Samuel Kouakou**, EC member, participated in an "[Evaluation Lab](#)" training themed '*Evaluation in a crisis situation*.' Organized by the Ivorian Initiative for Evaluation (2IEval) in collaboration with the Ministry of Planning and Development, Côte d'Ivoire, and the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), the training strengthened the capacities of development evaluation actors in Côte D'Ivoire to equip them better to carry out their missions in an environment marked by lockdowns, travel restrictions and working from home.
- On **31 March 2021**, **Hon. Evelyn Mpagi-Kaabule**, Chairperson of APNODE, participated in a webinar themed '[Evidence Use by Parliaments during COVID](#)' organized by Twende Mbele. The event assessed the effects of COVID on the oversight and representation

functions of parliaments, the uptake of evidence, and its use in response to the pandemic. Hon. Mpagi-Kaabule drew on the Ugandan experience to highlight how the pandemic has brought many innovations into parliaments and that the lessons learned should be a motivation to rethink traditional processes.

- On **22 April 2021**, **Hon. Paurina Mpariwa**, APNODE EC member, participated in the [East and Southern Africa Eval4Action Sub-Regional Consultation](#). In her intervention, she used the case of Zimbabwe to highlight the role of MPs in the institutionalization of evaluation in the public service. She talked about the institutionalization of evaluation through legal provisions, and the control MPs carry out on the national budget to ensure adequate allocation to public services.
- On **2 June 2021**, the APNODE Secretariat held a roundtable themed '[African Parliaments, Enhanced Oversight and the Fight against Corruption – Lessons from strengthening compliance programs](#)' as part of the 2021 gLOCAL Evaluation Week. Speakers at the webinar were **Hon. Faustin Boukoubi**, Speaker of the National Assembly of Gabon and **Hon. Brian Dube**, Chairperson of the Public Accounts Committee (representing Hon. Adv. Jacob Francis Mudenda, Speaker of Parliament) of Zimbabwe. The event addressed issues of parliamentary oversight in the fight against corruption and the role of parliamentarians in holding the government accountable.
- On **4 June 2021**, the APNODE Secretariat held a roundtable themed '[The Role of Parliamentarians in Africa's post COVID-19 Recovery](#)', supporting the 2021 gLOCAL Evaluation Week. Panelists for the event were **Sen. Langton Chikukwa**, Senate of Zimbabwe and APNODE EC member, **Sen. Sylvia Kasanga**, Senate of Kenya, **Hon. Rahhal El Makkaoui**, House of Councilors of Morocco and APNODE EC member, and **Mr. Germain Mbav Yav**, Advisor to the Research Department of the Senate of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and APNODE Member. The panelists discussed the invaluable role of parliamentarians in the fight against the COVID-19 and the post-recovery process.

5. Communication

Communication efforts by the Network continued to lend support to other planned activities. During the year, the Secretariat updated EC and APNODE members regularly on different issues using a multi-pronged dissemination approach, including emails, news bulletins, and social media. The main tools used were: *APNODE Weekly What's New Flyer*, *APNODE Quarterly Newsletter*, *APNODE LinkedIn Group page*, and *APNODE Twitter Page*.

- Using emails, vital information regarding the Network's planned activities was shared, encouraging reactions and responses. New developments were also communicated in a timely manner to EC members for onward dissemination to friends, colleagues, and their National Chapters.
- The *APNODE Weekly What's New Flyer* was used to furnish updates to members on upcoming events, trainings, workshops, webinars, publications, and others that were taking place in Africa and beyond. To this end, the Secretariat systematically collected, collated, and disseminate important events targeting evaluation capacity development in Africa and across the globe.

- The *APNODE Quarterly Newsletter* was also leveraged to share more in-depth information on activities undertaken by APNODE and its members in a quarter.
- The APNODE LinkedIn Group and APNODE Twitter account were used to enhance the Network's online presence in the evaluation sphere on the new social media front. Furthermore, both platforms enabled the Network to attract new parliamentarians to join the Network and create a platform via which they can exchange and learn from each other.

6. Capacity Development

Members of the Network continuously request for capacity development support to improve their skills and expand their knowledge. During the period under review, no explicit capacity development trainings were carried out. However, the Secretariat worked with the APNODE National Chapters in Cameroon and Zimbabwe to organize webinar series to further MPs' oversight role through exchanges on the issue.

The Cameroon National Chapter organized a webinar themed '*Tools and methods (good practices) of evaluation for effective decision-making by parliamentarians.*' It attracted members of the Cameroon National Chapter as well as other APNODE members.

The webinar jointly organized with the Zimbabwe National Chapter was on the topic of *Factors promoting and hampering the evaluation of public policies: Experience from Zimbabwe.* Here again, the event attracted MPs from Zimbabwe as well as from other Parliaments across sub-Saharan Africa.

Elsewhere, the APNODE National Chapters in Cote d'Ivoire and Benin organized in-person workshops to advance parliamentary capacity and grasp the use of evaluation.

7. Resource Mobilization

Due to the Network's financial standing, a resource mobilization consultant could not be hired during the year in review as requested by the AGM.

Payment of membership fees has dropped to an all-time low. Members cite the fact that with the 6th AGM originally scheduled for August 2020 postponed to 2021, they could not meet with the Secretariat in-person, resulting in them not paying their membership fees. Repeated calls by the EC and the Secretariat to pay membership fees via bank transfer have gone unheeded.

The Secretariat during the past year engaged in discussions with the United States Department of Agriculture ASSESS project on the upcoming 'Strengthening Parliamentary M&E Capacity' initiative; and, with the African Community of Practice on Managing for Development Results on partnerships to strengthen parliamentarians' M&E and evidence-use capacities in West Africa and in the East African Legislative Assembly, respectively.

III. FINANCIAL SUMMARY

As at **31 December 2020**, the Network's available balance stood at **USD 25,947.26** (Twenty-five thousand, nine hundred and forty-seven United States dollars, and twenty-six cents).

The breakdown of 2020 total disbursement by activities is as follows:

ACTIVITIES	DISBURSEMENT (USD)
1. Structural/Organizational Support	-
2. Network and Advocacy	6,626.46
3. Capacity Development	-
4. Outreach and Resource Mobilization	-
5.	36.36
TOTAL	6,662.82

In-kind Contributions (1st January to 31st December 2020)

Organization	Contribution (USD)
IDEV/AfDB	98,000.00
TOTAL	98,000.00

Further details can be found in the APNODE Annual Financial Report for 2020¹.

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¹ As per the APNODE Constitution, the APNODE financial year is the calendar year, 1 January - 31 December. This annual financial report therefore covers the calendar year.

IV. ANNEXES

ANNEX I: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

APNODE is managed by a thirteen-person [Executive Committee](#) (EC) comprised of eleven network members and three development partners. The Executive Committee is elected at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) for a two-year term, renewable once. The current EC members (see Box 1), were elected at the 5th AGM held in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, in 2019. Thus, at the upcoming 6th Annual General Meeting (AGM) on 26-27 August 2021, elections will again be held to vote in the next Executive Committee for the 2021-2023 period.

Box 1: APNODE Executive Committee Members – 2019-2021.

Chairperson:	Hon. Evelyn Mpagi-Kaabule (Uganda)
Vice-Chairperson:	Hon. Abbas Imbassou Ouattara (Côte d'Ivoire)
Treasurer:	Hon. Felix Mhona (Zimbabwe)
Returning member:	Sen. Richard Moussounda Mikala (Gabon)
Other Committee members:	Hon. Jérémie Adomahou (Benin) Sen. Langton Chikukwa (Zimbabwe) Hon. Rahhal El Makkaoui (Morocco) Hon. Paurina Mpariwa (Zimbabwe) Hon. Elise Pokossy-Doumbé (Cameroon) Hon. Omega Sibanda (Zimbabwe) Hon. Noel Rossan Goakûn Toe (Burkina Faso)
<u>Representatives from partner organizations:</u>	
African Development Bank:	Karen Rot-Münstermann
AfrEA:	Samuel Kouakou
CLEAR-AA:	Tefo Mosienyane

During the August 2019-July 2020 period, the CLEAR-AA representative on the APNODE Executive Committee, Ms. Hermine Engel, had a career change, leading to a temporary replacement by Ms. Boikanyo Moloto, and then substantively by Mr. Tefo Mosienyane.

During this year in review, Hon. Felix Mhona, APNODE EC Member and Treasurer, was appointed Minister of Transport and Infrastructural Development, Zimbabwe, resulting in his departure from the Executive Committee. To fill the void, Sen. Langton Chikukwa from Zimbabwe was nominated and approved by all EC members to assume the role of interim APNODE Treasurer until the next AGM in August 2021.

Elsewhere, Hon. Noel Rossan Goakûn Toe was elected President of the Inter-parliamentary Committee of the West African Economic and Monetary Fund.

Unfortunately, the year also saw two APNODE stalwarts, Hon. Abbas Imbassou Ouattara, Côte d'Ivoire and Sen. Richard Moussounda Mikala, Gabon depart parliament. Their invaluable commitment and contributions to APNODE are very much appreciated, and the Network hopes the change in status will not impact their support for APNODE.

ANNEX II: PARTNERS

APNODE has worked with several partners since its inception. Three of its partners have seats on the APNODE Executive Committee, namely the:

- Independent Development Evaluation (IDEV) at the African Development Bank (AfDB)
- African Evaluation Association (AfrEA)
- Center for Learning on Evaluation and Results-Anglophone Africa (CLEAR-AA)

Other partners who have supported the Network with their different activities are:

- CLEAR-FA
- CLEAR Initiative
- Eval4Action
- EvalPartners
- Global Evaluation Initiative (GEI)
- Global Parliamentarians' Forum on Evaluation (GPFE)
- Réseau Francophone de l'Evaluation (RFE)
- Twende Mbele
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
- United Nations Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF)
- United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women).

Other institutions are working with APNODE to set up diverse collaborations.