



مركز بحوث الرقابيين الأفارقة

African Ombudsman Research Centre

Centre de Recherche des Ombudsman Africains

Centro de Investigação da Provedoria de Justiça Africana

REPORT ON AORC ACTIVITIES FROM 1 APRIL 2013 – JULY 2014

Context

The following report serves to summarize the AORC's activities from 1 April 2013 to date, as well as its current projects, against the backdrop of the Centre's 5 Strategic Outcomes, which are as follows:

1. To become a capable and sustainable organisation;
2. Improve the capacity of AOMA, the ombudsman and ombudsman offices;
3. Conduct relevant research to support the agenda of the AOMA;
4. Enhance the Positioning of AOMA and the Ombudsman institution; and
5. Coordinate the operationalization of the MOU between the AUC and AOMA

STRATEGIC OUTCOME 1 – To become a capable and sustainable organization

With regards to the Strategic Objective of development and improvement of governance arrangements and systems, positions to sit on an AORC Advisory Board were advertised and applications received. The applications were submitted to the AORC Board during the 8th AORC Board meeting, held in Johannesburg on 24 February 2014.

In terms of the Strategic Objective relating to the attraction, development and retention of staff, 2 interns were appointed on 1 April 2013 for a period of 1 year. Their internships have been extended to 30 September 2014. A UKZN employee was seconded to serve as Acting Director of the Centre as of 1 July 2014 for a period of 6 months, following the expiration of the previous Acting Director's contract on 31 May 2014. Recruitment is underway to appoint an Executive Director, a Deputy Director, an Administration and Communication Officer and an Administrative Assistant.

Another Strategic Objective of developing the language capability of the AORC has been fulfilled in that the aforementioned interns are both conversant in French and, as such, numerous AORC documents have been translated into French and the French-speaking AORC Board members and students receive all communication in French. In addition, the Pilot Ombudsman training material has been translated into Portuguese and quotations have been received for the translation of the same material into Arabic. The French version of the AOMA History Book has also been printed and disseminated.

STRATEGIC OUTCOME 2 - Improve the capacity of AOMA, the ombudsman and ombudsman offices

With regards to the Strategic Objective of periodic reviews of the needs of AOMA, its members and other organisations, the AORC has liaised with the Investigator General of Zambia, who is aiming to

enlist the help of the IOI to conduct a review of the AOMA Needs Assessment. To date, the Terms of Reference have been submitted to the IOI.

Concerning the Strategic Objective dealing with designing responsive capacity building programmes, which will include training and development initiatives, the following 4 training programmes have been conducted in the period from 1 April 2013 to date:

1. Pilot Ombudsman Training, carried out in French for the first time, in Lusaka, Zambia in November 2013, which trained officials from Benin, Burundi, Burkina Faso, Chad, Djibouti, Cote D'Ivoire, Niger and Tunisia.
2. Sharpening Your Teeth, carried out in English, in Lusaka, Zambia, in November 2013, which trained officials from Ethiopia, the Gambia, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Nigeria, South Africa and Zambia.
3. Sharpening Your Teeth, carried out in French, in Lusaka, Zambia, in November 2013, which trained officials from Benin, Burundi, Burkina Faso, Chad, Djibouti, Cote D'Ivoire, Niger and Tunisia.
4. Train the Trainers, carried out in English, in Durban, South Africa, in February 2014, which trained officials from Botswana, Lesotho, the Gambia, Malawi, Namibia, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and South Africa. As of 1 July 2014, two of the trainees – one from Tanzania and one from Uganda - have implemented their knowledge obtained at this training in their own offices

In light of the Strategic Objective relating to respond to specific needs of countries, giving priority to the transitional democracies, the following 2 training programmes are envisaged to take place in 2014:

1. Mozambiquan & Angolan Ombudsman Training:

The aim is to conduct the Pilot Ombudsman training in Portuguese. The training programme was conducted in English in July 2012 and in French in November 2013. What has been achieved to date is that the Portuguese Ombudsman has translated the material into Portuguese and has confirmed his interest in conducting the training. The current status of the project is that Mozambique Ombudsman office does not have enough staff to send for training. The project is thus on hold pending the go-ahead from Mozambique.

2. Sudan Training:

The Ombudsman of Sudan has requested that the aforementioned pilot training programme be conducted for his officials in Arabic. What has been achieved to date is that quotes have been obtained for the translation of the material. The current status of project is that the AORC is in the process of sourcing suitable trainers.

STRATEGIC OUTCOME 3 - Conduct relevant research to support the agenda of the AOMA

With regards to the Strategic Objective of developing and implementing a research programme responsive to the Ombudsman institution in Africa, the following has been achieved:

1. The first draft of a Comparative Analysis of Legal Systems was presented at the AORC Summit in Johannesburg in February 2014;
2. A request for reports to comprise a jurisprudence database was circulated to all AOMA member countries and a few responses received;
3. The Terms of Reference for a research project entitled “Enforcement of Ombudsman Decisions” have been circulated to UKZN and a research team assembled. Desktop research has commenced.

Relating to the Strategic Objective of the establishment of a knowledge management system and resource centre with on-line capacity, this has been achieved to the extent that almost all the constitutions, enabling legislation and annual reports of AOMA’s member countries are archived on the AORC website.

STRATEGIC OUTCOME 4 - Enhance the Positioning of AOMA and the Ombudsman institution

With regards to the Strategic Objective of designing and implementing an appropriate advocacy and information programme to promote the AOMA, the ombudsman and the ombudsman offices, the following steps have been taken in order to achieve this:

1. Facebook and Twitter accounts have been set up;
2. An article on the AORC appeared in the UKZN Touch glossy magazine;
3. The 6th edition of the AORC newsletter was disseminated;
4. A 2-day African Ombudsman Summit was rolled-out in February 2014 in Johannesburg, with participants from almost all AOMA’s member countries as well as international delegates.
5. The AORC has been registered as a Section 21 non-profit organization in accordance with South African company law.

A future project that will also serve to enhance the positioning of AOMA is the following: the World Bank, in collaboration with the IOI, would like to host 2 AORC Webinars – 1 in French and 1 in English. Each Webinar will be 1 hour long and will be hosted by Elsa Peraldi from the World Bank. What has been achieved to date is the deciding of the topic of the Webinar– Minimum Standards for Ombudsman. For each Webinar, there will be 2 speakers – one representing the IOI to talk about the IOI minimum standards and one representing AOMA to talk about the OR Tambo Declaration and the difficulties/practicalities of implementing the minimum standards. Mrs Caroline Sokoni has confirmed her willingness to be the English IOI speaker, and Judge Cowan has expressed his willingness to be the English AOMA speaker. Mrs Alima Traore has confirmed her willingness to be the French IOI speaker. The current status of the project is that the Centre awaiting Dr Paulo Tjipilica’s response to his invitation to be the French AOMA speaker.

STRATEGIC OUTCOME 5 - Coordinate the operationalization of the MOU between the AUC and AOMA

It does not appear as though any significant steps have been taken to coordinate the operationalization of the MOU between the AUC and AOMA from 1 April 2013 to present.