



**A FRAMEWORK FOR ENHANCING THE INFLUENCE OF EVALUATION IN THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AFRICAN PEER REVIEW MECHANISM**

BY

MARTIN KIZITO

SUBMITTED IN FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN PUBLIC POLICY

IN THE

**FACULTY OF ECONOMIC AND MANAGEMENT SCIENCES
SCHOOL OF PUBLIC MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA**

**SUPERVISOR: PROF. MICHEL TSHIYOYO
CO-SUPERVISOR: PROF. ADRINO MAZENDA**

DECEMBER 2023

DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I, Martin Kizito, student number 20713178, hereby declare that this thesis entitled “A Framework for Enhancing the Influence of Evaluation in the Implementation of the African Peer Review Mechanism” is entirely my work. That I am submitting it for the award of the degree Doctor of Philosophy (Public Policy) to the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences of the University of Pretoria and has not been submitted by me or any other person for the award of a degree at any institution.



Signature

Date ...31th December 2023

Martin Kizito

December 2023

DEDICATION

I hereby dedicate this PhD thesis to my dear mother, Ms. Sylvia Nakyazze Nabadda, for being my excellent teacher at all times. This thesis is a product of your tireless effort and prayers throughout my academic and life's journey. Mummy I will forever be grateful. My daughter, Lia Keltie Namutebi Kizito, my wife Angella Maggie Kizito and all my brothers, you are greatly appreciated. You have always given me all the reasons to forge ahead and I will forever be proud of you.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This academic journey would never have been possible without the tireless support and guidance from my two professional promoters: Prof. Michel Tshiyoyo and Prof. Adrino Mazenda. I will always be very grateful to you for continuously sharing with me your wealth of knowledge on the subject matter and research experience, which has enabled me to close the different gaps and polish my work. Throughout my interaction with you, I have been fortunate enough to draw both academic and lifelong values from your professional support and mentorship. I greatly appreciate your support.

In addition, I thank the very supportive staff from the School of Public Management and Administration (SPMA), particularly Prof. Nataja Holtzhausen our first PhD Programme Coordinator, Dr. Stella Lubinga the current coordinator, Prof. Margaret Chitiga-Mabugu, the former director of the SPMA and Prof. Gerda van Dijk, the current director amongst others for their continuous encouragement.

My sincere appreciation goes to the Partnership for African Social and Governance Research (PASGR) and the Carnegie Corporation of New York for the generous scholarship award, without which this study would not have been possible. From Uganda, I am greatly indebted to my family, my parents and my siblings Edwin, Daniel, Robert and Jimmy for all of the sacrifices that you endured, but also for the support that kept me going. I thank the APRM Focal Point Minister, the leadership and staff of the National Planning Authority (NPA), the Uganda APRM National Secretariat, the members of the National Governing Council (NGC), and the different MDAs for availing me with the necessary information for this thesis.

Finally, from the Republic of South Africa, I appreciate the support and services that I received from different individuals and units both within the University of Pretoria and outside. My classmates of the 2020 intake, I thank you for the support, especially through the COVID-19 lockdown, until the end.

To all those who I may not have mentioned, I remain grateful and may God bless you always.

ABSTRACT

This study analyses the implementation of the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), as a governance evaluation framework mandated by Article 5(2) of the African Union (AU) Constitutive Act of 2000. It aimed at generating a framework for enhancing the APRM, and in turn positively influence public policy outcomes in AU member states. The study was in response to increasing calls for empirical field studies especially about African home-grown initiatives, to guide stakeholders on how evaluation inputs translate into activities and consequently policy outcomes. In contributing to the decolonising agenda, in policy evaluation knowledge, it argues that APRM, is a Made in Africa Evaluation (MAE), but adopts a Eurocentric rational and outcome oriented approach to evaluation. This mismatch, in light of the limited attention given to the implementation process of peer review, has resulted into concerns of emerging patterns of evaluation under-use, misuse and non-use or inaction. This trend may result into an evaluation crisis, affecting the sustainability of the APRM as a catalyst to the realisation of the AU Agenda 2063. Using a mechanism-based approach, this thesis aims at bridging the knowledge gap by empirically drawing on qualitative data collected from 35 purposively selected participants. Through interviews and a focus group discussion (FGD), it established the perceptions of APRM stakeholders, about the impact of the first and second-generation peer reviews (2005-2018) as well as the refugee policy framework as a reported best practice. The findings were analysed inductively using ATLAS.ti 08 qualitative software and they reveal that the APRM first National Plan of Action (NPoA) was among the 23 core studies that directly informed the formulation of Uganda's initial National Development Plan (NDPI). Nevertheless, APRM influence is declining to show casing best practices, with increasing symbolic use but also misuse of APRM recommendations. This is attributed to inadequate financial and technical capacity inputs, lack of a well-domesticated legal framework supporting APRM activities, stakeholders without a well-established culture of evaluations and a political context that allows selective use of evaluations in policies. In the proposed framework, the study recommends inclusive participation in evaluation input, activities aligned with government plans; institutionalising government wide reporting on NPoA implementation and establish a well-domesticated legal framework.

Key words: Evaluation, Monitoring and Evaluation, Evaluation influence, Evaluation use, Public Policy, Peer review, Stakeholder, Mechanism approach and Uganda.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY	ii
DEDICATION	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iv
ABSTRACT	v
ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS	xv
CHAPTER ONE: GENERAL INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGICAL ORIENTATION OF THE RESEARCH	1
1.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND.....	1
1.2 CONCEPTUALISATION OF EVALUATION INFLUENCE AND PUBLIC POLICY.....	5
1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT	6
1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND QUESTIONS	10
1.4.1 General research objective	10
1.4.2 The specific objectives of the study are:.....	10
1.4.3 Research questions.....	10
1.4.3.1 Specific questions of the study	11
1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	11
1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY.....	13
1.7 CLARIFICATION OF KEY TERMS AND CONCEPTS	17
1.7.1 Evaluation	17
1.7.2 Evaluation system	18
1.7.3 Peer review	18
1.7.4 Mechanism approach	19
1.7.5 Stakeholder	20
1.8 FRAMEWORK OF THE RESEARCH.....	20
1.8.1 Chapter One: General introduction and overview of the study	21
1.8.2 Chapter Two: Theoretical framework locating the study within the discipline of Public Administration.....	21
1.8.3 Chapter Three: The APRM evaluation system	22
1.8.4 Chapter Four: The Evaluation Practice of the APRM in Uganda	22
1.8.5 Chapter Five: Research Methodology	22
1.8.6 Chapter Six: Data analysis and interpretation	23
1.8.7 Chapter Seven: A proposed framework for enhancing the evaluation influence of the APRM.....	23
1.9 CHAPTER SUMMARY	24

CHAPTER TWO: A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK LOCATING EVALUATION INFLUENCE IN THE DISCIPLINE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION.....	25
2.1 INTRODUCTION.....	25
2.2 CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS OF PUBLIC POLICY EVALUATION.....	26
2.2.1 Understanding public policy evaluation in Public Administration	26
2.2.1.1 The characteristics of public policy.....	29
2.2.2 Conceptual analysis of public policy sub-fields	30
2.2.2.1 Policy formulation.....	30
2.2.2.2 The policy implementation.....	33
2.2.2.3 Policy Analysis Vs Evaluation.....	35
2.3 THE CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS OF EVALUATION USE AND INFLUENCE	36
2.3.1 Evaluation research in the public sector	39
2.3.2 Conceptual understanding of evaluation influence	42
2.3.3 The scope of evaluation influence	43
2.3.4 The development of the evaluation use typology within public policy	46
2.3.5 The influence of evaluation in public policy	47
2.3.5.1 Evaluation influence through the policy learning function.....	48
2.3.5.2 Evaluation influence through the accountability function	49
2.3.5.3 Mechanism-based approach to understanding evaluation influence	51
2.4 THEORETICAL ANALYSIS AND ORIGIN OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION	53
2.4.1 Public administration: Conceptual analysis	54
2.4.2 Public Policy evaluation as a sub-field in Public Administration.	55
2.4.3 Nature of Public Administration theory and practice.....	55
2.4.4 Origin of Public Administration as an academic discipline.....	58
2.4.5 Locus and focus of Public Administration.....	59
2.4.6 The functions of public administration	63
2.4.6.1 Policy-making.....	63
2.4.6.2 Organising	64
2.4.6.3 Financial management	64
2.4.6.4 Human Resource Management.....	65
2.4.6.5 Determining work procedure	65
2.4.6.6 Control.....	66
2.5 PARADIGMS IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION THEORY	67
2.5.1 The politics/administration dichotomy paradigm (1900-1926)	70
2.5.2 The principles of the Public Administration paradigm (1927-37)	71
2.5.3 Public Administration as Political Science (1950-70).....	76

2.5.4 Public Administration as Management	76
2.5.5 Public Administration as Public Administration (1980s).....	77
2.5.6 The shift from public administration to public management.....	78
2.5.6.1 The functions of public management.....	82
2.5.7 The New Public Administration/New Public Management (NPM) paradigm....	87
2.5.8 The governance era and the sixth paradigm	92
2.6 PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND ADOPTION OF POLICY EVALUATION IN AFRICA	98
2.7 THEORIES EXPLAINING EVALUATION INFLUENCE IN PUBLIC POLICY ...	101
2.7.1 The political systems theory (Easton 1953) and its application in the study ..	101
2.7.2 The schematic theory of evaluation influence by Mark & Henry (2004).....	104
2.7.3 The stakeholder theory and analysis in the public policy context	106
2.8 CHAPTER SUMMARY	113
CHAPTER THREE: THE APRM EVALUATION SYSTEM	114
3.1 INTRODUCTION.....	114
3.2 CONCEPTUAL UNDERSTANDING OF PEER REVIEW AS A FORM OF EVALUATION	115
3.2.1 Peer reviewing governance in Africa	116
3.2.2 The institutionalisation of evaluation systems in Africa.....	118
3.2.3 APRM: A home-grown type of Made in Africa Evaluation (MAE) system	120
3.2.4 Purpose, mandate and principles of the APRM.....	125
3.3 THE AU AGENDA 2063	129
3.4 THE APRM EVALUATION SYSTEM	131
3.4.1 The functioning of the APRM evaluation system	136
3.4.1.1 Phase 1: Base review and institutionalisation (2003-2014)	136
3.4.2. 2 Phase 2: Revitalisation (2015-2020)	138
3.4.3.3 Phase 3: The APRM renewal (2020-2024).....	143
3.4.3.4 Phase 4: The thirteen bottlenecks hindering Africa's development	144
3.5 ANALYSIS OF THE KEY ELEMENTS OF THE APRM EVALUATION MECHANISM	148
3.5.1 Evaluation inputs into the APRM and their influence on national policies	148
3.5.2 Policy setting	161
3.5.3 The evaluation activities in the APRM process	165
3.5.4 Evaluation outputs from the review process	176
3.5.5 Contingencies in the APRM environment.....	181
3.6 APRM EFFORTS TOWARDS MANAGING THE REFUGEE CHALLENGE IN AFRICA	183

3.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY	185

CHAPTER FOUR: THE EVALUATION PRACTICE OF THE APRM IMPLEMENTATION IN UGANDA..... 186

4.1 INTRODUCTION.....	186
4.2 BACKGROUND TO APRM IMPLEMENTATION IN UGANDA.....	186
4.2.1 Uganda governance context covering the period under peer review	188
4.3 CASE ONE: THE FIRST-GENERATION OF THE APRM EVALUATION IN UGANDA (2005-2015)	191
4.3.1 The effect of evaluation process on the type of use and non-use of APRM in Uganda's public policy.....	192
4.3.2 Stakeholders' participation in influencing the type of use or non-use of APRM in Uganda's public policy.....	208
4.3.3 The extent to which the APRM context affects the type of use or non-use of the APRM in Uganda's policy framework	220
4.4 CASE TWO: THE SECOND GENERATION OF THE APRM EVALUATION IN UGANDA (2017-2021)	232
4.4.1 The effects of the APRM process on the type of use or non-use in Uganda's public policy process	232
4.4.2 APRM stakeholders' participation in influencing the type of use or non-use of APRM in Uganda's public policy	244
4.4.3. The extent to which the APRM context affects the type of use and non-use of the APRM in Uganda's public policy	249
4.5 THE EFFECT OF CONTEXT ON THE TYPE OF USE OR NON-USE OF APRM DATA IN UGANDA'S REFUGEE POLICY FRAMEWORK.....	253
4.5.1 The role of the APRM evaluation system in influencing the refugee policy framework in Uganda	254
4.6 STRATEGIES FOR ENHANCING THE INFLUENCE OF APRM FINDINGS FOR PUBLIC POLICY IN AU MEMBER STATES	264
4.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY	268

CHAPTER FIVE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY 270

5.1 INTRODUCTION.....	270
5.1.1 Research approach.....	271
5.1.1.1 Types of research approaches	271
5.1.1.2 Characteristics of qualitative research.....	275
5.1.1.3 Justification for adoption of a qualitative approach.....	276
5.2 RESEARCH PARADIGM	278
5.2.1 Positivism	279
5.2.2 Interpretive Paradigm	279

5.2.2.1 Types of qualitative research designs	282
5.3 LIMITATIONS AND DELIMITATIONS.....	291
5.4 THE STUDY AREA	295
5.4.1 Case selection.....	295
5.4.2 Scope of the study.....	298
5.5. POPULATION AND SAMPLING	301
5.5.3 Sampling procedure and method	302
5.5.4 Sampling method and sample size determination	305
5.6 RESEARCH PROCESS.....	307
5.7 DATA COLLECTION.....	308
5.7.1 Data collection methods	309
5.7.2 Document review and content analysis	310
5.7.2.1 Primary sources of qualitative data	312
5.8 DATA ANALYSIS AND REPORTING STRATEGY	317
5.10 PILOT STUDY	327
5.11 ETHICAL IMPLICATIONS.....	328
5.11.1 Informed consent.....	329
5.11.2 Privacy and confidentiality	330
5.11.3 Anonymity	331
5.11.4 Researcher's responsibility	331
5.12 CHAPTER SUMMARY	332
CHAPTER SIX: DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION	333
6.1 INTRODUCTION.....	333
6.1.2 Findings and data analysis of the APRM's evaluation influence	334
6.3 THEME 1: THE INFLUENCE OF THE APRM'S EVALUATION PROCESS ON THE TYPE OF USE OR NON-USE OF DATA IN UGANDA'S PUBLIC POLICY ...	335
6.3.1 Use of APRM data between the first and second generation reviews	335
6.3.2 The effect of APRM's evaluation inputs.....	339
6.3.2.1 Plans and best practices	340
6.3.2.3 The human resources inputs	344
6.3.2.4 The APRM evaluation tool: questionnaire adaptation and domestication...	346
6.3.3 The effect of the APRM's evaluation activities and methods.....	347
6.3.4 The effects of the APRM reporting and outputs.....	353
6.4 THEME 2: THE ROLE OF THE APRM STAKEHOLDERS IN INFLUENCING THE TYPE OF USE OR NON-USE OF APRM DATA IN UGANDA'S POLICY PROCESS.....	361
6.4.1 Degree of APRM stakeholders' participation in the policy process.....	361

6.4.1.1 Stakeholders' knowledge	362
6.4.2 The presidents' role in providing political leadership	364
6.4.3 Members of Parliament (MPs).....	366
6.4.4 The Development Partners	370
6.4.5 National Governing Council (NGC)	372
6.4.6 Civil Society Organisations.....	374
6.5 THEME 3: THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE APRM CONTEXT AFFECTS THE TYPE OF USE AND NON-USE OF THE APRM DATA IN UGANDA'S POLICY ...	377
6.5.1 Facilitating contextual factors	378
6.5.1.1 Institutional capacity	378
6.5.1.1.1 The APRM Cabinet Sub-Committee led by the National Focal Point Minister	381
6.5.1.1.1 The role of the National Governance Commission (NGC).....	383
6.5.1.1.1 The National APRM Secretariat and the National Planning Authority (NPA)	387
6.5.2 Inhibiting contextual factors	388
6.5.2.1 The lack of a well domesticated legal framework supporting APRM operations in Uganda	389
6.6 THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE CONTEXT OF THE APRM EVALUATION SYSTEM HAS INFLUENCED UGANDA'S REFUGEE POLICY FRAMEWORK	393
6.6.1 Stakeholders' knowledge of the refugee policy framework.....	393
6.6.2 The role of APRM in influencing the refugee policy framework	394
6.6.3 The other factors that influenced the refugee policy framework	397
6.7 STRATEGIES PROPOSED FOR ENHANCING THE APRM PROCESS AND UTILISATION OF FINDINGS FOR PUBLIC POLICY IN AU MEMBER STATES ..	402
6.7.1 Funding	403
6.7.2 Massive awareness.....	405
6.7.3 Legal framework.....	406
6.7.4 Institutionalisation.....	407
6.8 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS	408
6.8.1 Theme 1: The effect of the APRM evaluation process on Uganda's Public policy.	408
6.8.1.1 The effect of evaluation inputs of the type of use or non use of APRM data in Uganda's public policy.....	411
6.8.1.2 Effect of the APRM activities and Methods	414
6.8.1.3 Effect of the APRM reporting and output.....	416
6.8.2 Theme 2: The role of stakeholders in influencing use of APRM data	419
6.8.3 Theme 3: Effects of the APRM context on the type of use and non use of APRM data.....	424

6.9 Extent to which the APRM evaluation system affected the refuge policy framework	429
6.10. CHAPTER SUMMARY	432

CHAPTER SEVEN: A FRAMEWORK FOR ENHANCING THE INFLUENCE OF EVALUATION IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE APRM 435

7.1 INTRODUCTION.....	435
7.1.1 Enhancing the use and influence of the APRM	436
7.2 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED FRAMEWORK	448
7.2.1 The APRM Evaluation context.....	453
7.2.1.1 The location of the Focal Point Minister	453
7.2.1.2 The National Governing Council.....	454
7.2.1.3 The National APRM Secretariat	455
7.2.1.4 The Technical Research Institute	456
7.3 THE APRM QUESTIONNAIRE	456
7.4 THE PROPOSED APRM EVALUATION PROCESS	458
7.4.1 The country self-assessment process	460
7.4.2 Inputs for the country self-assessment process	461
7.4.3The APRM activities	466
7.4.3.1 Stakeholder participation	466
7.4.4 The selection of consultants for the TRI	469
7.4.5 Data collection.....	470
7.4.6 Validation	472
7.4.7 Reporting and evaluation output.....	473
7.4.8 Publication of the costed NPoA with CRR recommendations	477
7.4.9 Incorporation of the final NPoA into the NDP	477
7.5 AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH.....	478
7.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY	479
LIST OF ANNEXURES	496

LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1: Summary of the various influence mechanisms	59
Table 2 .2: Contrasting Public Administration and Public Management	93
Table 3.1: A SWOT analysis of APRM between 2003 - 2015	145
Table 3.5: APRM membership distribution by region on the continent	188
Table 4.1: The second peer review roadmap for Uganda 2006	201
Table 4.2: Distribution of donor funds to the APR process 2006 - 2008.....	204
Table 4.3: Funding allocations for the POA between 2008 - 2011	204
Table 4.2: Distribution of donor funds to the APR process 2005 - 2008	224
Table 4.4: NPoA Financing per Thematic Area from 2019 to 2022	242
Table 5.2: The sample size for interviews and focus group discussions	314
Table 5.3: Code names given to the participants	317
Table 5.4: FGD participants from different MDAs	324

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.1: The APRM Evaluation System at the Country Level	15
Figure 2.1: Evaluation tree illustrating development of evaluation in policy	54
Figure 2.3: An illustration of the political systems model	109
Figure 2.3: An illustration of the schematic theory of evaluation influence.....	111
Figure 2.4: An illustration of the public policy analytical model for systematic stakeholder identification, management, and analysis	117
Figure 3.1: The aspirations for the AU agenda 2063	137
Figure 3.2: An illustration of the APRM structure	140
Figure 3.3: An illustration of the African peer review process	174
Figure 3.4: The APRM Country Self-Assessment Process	176
Figure 5.1: Sample selection process	312
Figure 6.1: Summary of participants' responses on the use of APRM data	341
Figure 7.2: Adapted APRM evaluation influence framework	430

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADB	African Development Bank
APR	African Peer Review
APRM	African Peer Review Mechanism
AU	African Union
CBO	Community Based Organisations
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
CPI	Corruption Perception Index
CRR	Country Review Report
CSAR	Country Self-Assessment Report
DFID	Department of International Development
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EAC	East African Community
EC	Electoral Commission
EGM	Economic Governance and Management
GAPR	Government Annual Performance Report
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GoU	Government of Uganda
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
IMF	International Monetary Fund
LGs	Local Governments
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDAs	Ministries, Department and Agencies
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MoFPED	Ministry of Finance Planning and Economic Development
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPs	Members of Parliament
MTEF	Medium-Term Expenditure Framework
MTR	Mid-Term Review
NDP	National Development Plan

NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGC	National Governing Council of the APRM
NIMES	National Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation System
NPA	National Planning Authority
NSA	Non-State Actors
OPM	Office of the Prime Minister
PoA	Programme of Action
RECs	Regional Economic Cooperation Blocks
UBOS	Uganda Bureau of Statistics
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UPE	Universal Primary Education
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	United States Dollar
WFP	World Food Programme

CHAPTER ONE: GENERAL INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGICAL ORIENTATION OF THE RESEARCH

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

This study examines the evaluation influence of the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) in public policies of Uganda as one of the pioneer AU member states. Studies on evaluation systems have attracted considerable research attention over the past two decades, with evaluation considered an integral source of influence to strategic policy advice for addressing public governance deficiencies.

The study acknowledges that research about evaluation has evolved from the use/utelisation phase (1960-86), impact phase (1986-2000) and currently the influence phase (Herbert 2014:389). This was partly in attempt to resolve the paradox that the conduct of evaluation is intended to inform public policies but the generated information would not be used to serve the intended goal of policy changes (Alkin & King 2017; Patton 2015; Pawson 2013; Laderman 2012; Weiss 2004; Alkin & Taut 2003; Cousin & Leithwood 1986). Besides, the shift in scholarly attention from evaluation use to the broader concept of influence in the 2000, has attracted increasing calls for empirical field case studies that map a theory of change to guide stakeholders on the relevant evaluation inputs, activities, outcomes and the necessary strategies for increased effect on policy (Scriven 2019; Hojlund 2015; Herbert 2014; Holvoet Gildemyn & Inberg 2012; Mark 2011; Mark & Henry 2004). Likewise, there has been a growing demand and political recorgnition of the importance of evaluation in promoting good governance in Africa (Mofolo 2014: Porter & Goldman 2013). However, increasing concerns have also been raised on the limited contextually sensitive Afro-centric evaluation innovations (Ofir 2018: Chilisa, Major & Petersen 2016; Carden & Alkin 2012). Therefore, this study adopted a mechanism based approach to evaluation and proposed a framework for positively enhancing the evaluation influence of the APRM as a home-grown evaluation system for the African Union (AU) Agenda 2063.

In Africa, the pressure for reliable data to inform efficient policy design led to the institutionalisation of evaluation systems based on Aspiration 7 of Agenda 2063,

aimed at a strong Africa that provides home grown solutions to its problems (African Union Commission 2015:2).

In 2003 the African Union (AU) established the APRM as an accountability tool to evaluate public sector policies of member states as a catalyst to attaining Agenda 2063. It focuses on five thematic areas of: democracy and political governance; economic governance and management; cooperate governance; socio-economic governance and the recently added state resilience to shocks and disasters (APRM 2021). However, most reports and studies on APRM performance which are largely descriptive and outcome-oriented, reflect mixed findings about the APRM evaluation effect with focus limited to successes and weaknesses (Mangu 2014:64). It is against that background that the study takes a mechanism-based approach to examine the process of APRM implementation, compliance to the standards, as well as the resultant types of use and non-use in a country's public policy.

Chapter One presents a road map of the whole research project composed of six major sections. Section One starts with the introduction and background, which covers conceptualisation of the independent and dependent variables. Section Two covers the research problem, the objectives of the study, and the corresponding research questions. Section Three highlights the methodology in which the research approach, design, sampling, data collection, analysis procedures and ethical principles are presented. Section Four explains the significance of this study and defines the study's key concepts and terms. Finally, Section Five closes the chapter by giving an outline of the proposed structure of the study and an outline of the consequent chapters. The following section provides the motivation of the study followed by conceptualisation of the variables and a highlight of the literature on the evolution of evaluation influence as an independent variable, and its linkage to public policy outcomes.

1.1.1 Purpose and motivation of the study

The purpose of the study was to analyse the implementation of the APRM in Uganda with a purpose of developing a framework for positively enhancing the APRM's evaluation influence. In Africa, evaluation was introduced with the first wave of public sector reforms in the 1970s when an economic crisis had resulted in budgetary cuts (Basheka & Byamugisha 2015:80). In the 2000s, an evaluation system-based

approach was emphasised by donor agencies to aid recipients for the purposes of ensuring aid effectiveness as stressed in the Paris Declaration (OECD 2005). However, over time political recognition of its importance for good governance (Mofolo 2014:5), coupled with the adoption of a governance approach to public administration triggered the establishment of in-house evaluation units. In 2003, driven by the desire for a self-sustaining African continent, the AU established the APRM as an external accountability tool considered appropriate to the culturally cooperative African governance context. The APRM as a home-grown evaluation system was institutionalised to collect data to inform mutually agreed policy reforms. Therefore, amidst dominance of the western evaluation epistemologies, this study went out to contribute towards responding to the increasingly emerging calls for decolonisation of evaluation in Africa by developing or adapting culturally relevant evaluation frameworks (Cloete 2016; Chilisa, Major, Gaothobogwe, & Mokgolodi 2015; Chilisa 2015; The Bellagio Report 2013; Chilisa 2012).

The APRM Guidelines (2016:22) describe the required APRM methodology as a multi-stakeholder representative assessment process, informed by the African communal ideology of 'Ubuntu' (Gaothobogwe, *et al.* 2018:52). This indigenous approach is rooted within the African philosophical assumptions, communal practice values, cultures and informed by the African traditional communal ideology which assumes supreme concern and fundamental importance of stakeholder needs, interests, reciprocity, and a harmonious co-existence Khupe (2014:74). By embracing this philosophy, the APRM emphasises a bottom-up, consultative, and participatory approach to policy evaluation, built on the foundation of a communal relationships." This philosophy emphasises multiple stakeholders' engagement to promote a form of governance that empowers citizens in decision making processes as opposed to the asymmetrical and hierarchical command and control structures (Bevir 2006:427). In addition, it is informed by local cultures and indigenous knowledge with emphasis on values as communal promotion of the wellbeing of others, cooperation, relationship caring, reciprocity, compassion, and empathy that constitute interdependency among African people (Tshivhase 2018:23; Chilisa & Mertens 2021:23). Since 2003, efforts have been made to institutionalise APRM as a home-grown culturally sensitive Afro-centric evaluation system which involves a more participatory approach which meet the imperatives of the African cultural

contexts (Chilisa & Mertens 2021; Mbava & Chapman 2020:3; Cloete 2016:58; Chilisa 2015; Malefetsane, Lungepi & Tembile 2014:5). However, in practice, Gboyega (2019:24) indicates that despite the inevitability of the wide stakeholder participation peer review guidelines ignores the inherent politics within the middle range routinised activities and other contextual factors within the APRM environment.

With emphasis on wide stakeholder participation to inform policies, while the APRM evaluation system is intended to serve as a catalyst for continental policy reforms towards achieving Agenda 2063 (Tshiyoyo 2017:173), performance evaluation reports reflect very low scores on direct utilisation. In many cases codes and standards have been ratified commonly for symbolic purposes to legitimise political decisions (Achieng 2014:58; Hermans, *et al.* 2014:4; Hoppe 2017:386). These concerns constitute the locus that motivates the focus and methodology of this study. Over time, the mixed findings reported on the influence of the APRM on policies of AU member states have resulted in calls for empirical studies examining its implementation in line with the original philosophies and ideas of its founders. Gaothobogwe, *et al.* (2018:52) call for adoption of an appropriate context sensitive, home-grown and customised evaluation policy framework based on African values. As a point of departure from previous output-oriented studies, the current study takes a mechanism-based approach to establish a theory of change that works to bring about policy reforms. As opposed to the popular input-output model, the study adopts a mechanism-based approach to contribute towards addressing the knowledge gap where limited emphasis is given to understanding the process, stakeholder participation, and policy implications of the inherent politics in the APRM implementation. The central argument advanced in this study is that understanding the degree of the APRM evaluation's influence provides deeper insights in explaining the different types of use and non-use of APRM data, as well as how they can be enhanced beyond the current focus on identifying best practices.

Consequently, it proposed a framework for positively enhancing the evaluation influence of APRM on Public Policy's of AU member states. Unlike the existing APRM Guidelines which are informed by a rational economic theory and output oriented model which assumes direct use of APRM data in the policy process, the current study analyses the effect of the APRM evaluation process which includes the

inputs, activities, outputs, contexts as well as contingencies in the environment of the APRM evaluation system. It seeks to build upon multi-disciplinary insights from three bodies of theories to develop a framework for enhancing use and influence of the APRM. The study draws insights from the theory of evaluation influence by Mark and Henry (2004) from the evaluation literature, the political systems theory (Easton 1953) from political science, and the systematic stakeholder analysis from stakeholder theory by Freeman (1984). Furthermore, it takes an inductive qualitative approach and a case study design to examine the evaluation influence of the APRM implementation in the context of Uganda. In doing so, the study adopts a case analysis of Uganda's first and second generation peer reviews (2005-2018) and narrows down the focus on the reported best practice in Uganda's refugee policy framework as a model which has won international recognition (Omata 2020:3). Therefore, this study uses a mechanism-based approach to contribute towards bridging the knowledge gap in the literature of policy evaluation by integrating insights from governance, evaluation and public policy research into a framework intended to ensure sustainable evaluation of the AU Agenda 2063.

1.2 CONCEPTUALISATION OF EVALUATION INFLUENCE AND PUBLIC POLICY

The concept 'evaluation influence' as an independent variable in this study is based on attributes of inclusiveness towards understanding the impact of evaluation, in comparison to the construct of evaluation use. Kirkhart (2000:7) defines influence as the "capacity or power of persons or things to produce effects on others". In addition, Alkin and Taut (2003:9) state that the notion of 'evaluation influence' goes beyond the narrow focus of use to consider additional dimensions. These include the source of influence (process and results), the intention (intended and unintended) as well as the different levels of feedback generated by evaluation on the policy process (Hebert 2014:23). The process and results dimensions according to Marks and Henry (2011:111) include: inputs (evaluation plans and methods, evaluation best practices, lessons learnt, stakeholders' inclusion and evaluation capacity), as well as evaluation activities (involvement in evaluation, generation of the evaluation reports and the dissemination of findings). They add that the unintended use may take the form of symbolic (justificatory, political, ritual), conceptual or imposed use, which

together with intended use constitutes the broader construct of evaluation influence. All of these concepts are explained in detail in Chapter Two.

As a dependant variable, public policy is presented as a concept without a precise universal definition, but Smith and Larimer (2009:4) indicate that it involves “a process of making choices and the actions of particular decisions”. Considering the different efforts to define the concept, Birkland (2019:8-10) argues that there is instead a general agreement on the attributes that constitute what public policy is: firstly, it is made by the government as argued by Howlett Ramesh and Perl (2009:5), even though it may originate from outside the government or through its interaction with other different actors. Secondly, it is a statement that constitutes a response to a public issue or social problem that deserves the attention of the government on what it intends to do. However, to emphasise policy as a deliberate course of action or inaction, Anderson (1994:5) adds that the absence of such a decision is by implication a statement not to undertake any action. Thirdly, public policy is ideally made in “public interests” which suggests that it involves the interaction of multiple stakeholders. Fourthly, a policy is interpreted differently by different actors who may be members of the public or the private sector, having varying perceptions of the policy problem and possible solutions. Fifthly, it is intended to achieve a certain desired state or goal that reduces the incidence or scope of the targeted problem. In an attempt to accommodate the different attributes, this study operationalises public policy to be generally understood as a statement made or implied by the government that reflects its intentions, in the form of a law, decision, regulation, ruling, order, or inaction regarding an issue or problem of public interest.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The technical rational approach to policy evaluation suggests that quality information that is generated from an evaluation system is used by objective actors in designing the most appropriate policies through policy learning and accountability. Similarly, the APRM evaluation system was established and institutionalised in member states to play a catalytic role towards realising the AU Agenda 2063 (Tshiyoyo 2017:173). This home-grown mechanism is implemented through periodic collection of

governance data on patterns of progress made and used to inform policy improvements among AU member states through recommended National Plans of Action (Bosman & Clifford 2021:2). When assessing the APRM's effectiveness, Jiboki and Okeke-Uzodike (2016:62) observe that while the AU member states are expected to integrate key APRM evaluation recommendations through policy reforms and annual budgets, this rarely happens.

According to Achieng (2014:58), APRM performance reports reflect very low scores on direct utilisation, and several standards have been ratified without being adhered to and sometimes amended for political reasons of some stakeholder groups as opposed to national interests. In the context of the APRM in Uganda, the second Country Review Report (CRR) (2018:23) indicated that overall, since 2008, the country has registered significant progress in institutionalising the necessary mechanisms for promoting constitutional democracy, as well as political, socio-cultural rights and economic rights. However, it is emphasised that the reported progress is largely legislative, primarily evidenced by signing or ratifying standards, codes and policies, but exhibits weak implementation of such instruments.

The African Governance Report (AGR2019:36), in its assessment of 38 countries between 2008 and 2019, indicated a downward trend of performance, especially in Democracy and Political Governance. The thematic area is said to be largely characterised by symbolic use and selective adoption of evaluation recommendations to legitimise pre-determined political priorities. This suggests that countries continue to undertake periodic reviews and annual progress reporting on the implementation of their NPoAs, without or using selective policy reforms. As a result, there are emerging concerns that evaluation under-use, misuse and non-use may result in what Hojlund (2014:29) refers to as an “evaluation crisis”.

In an attempt to explain the above contradiction, Sore (2014:24) argues that “the APRM is fundamentally a political process”, yet the existing APRM Guidelines assume a technical process where rational stakeholders use the reports to directly and positively influence public policy. The APRM Guidelines (2016:22) describe the required APRM methodology as a multi-stakeholder representative assessment process, informed by the African communal ideology of ‘Ubuntu’ (Gaothobogwe, *et*

al. 2018:52). This indigenous approach is rooted within the African traditional communal values of a harmonious co-existence, emphasises multiple stakeholders' engagement to promote a form of governance that empowers citizens in decision making processes as opposed to the asymmetrical and hierarchical command and control structures (Bevir 2006:427; Khupe (2014:74Tshivhase 2018:23; Chilisa & Mertens 2021:23). Consequently, efforts have been made to develop and institutionalise APRM as home-grown culturally sensitive participatory evaluation system which which meet the imperatives of the African cultural contexts (Chilisa & Mertens 2021; Mbava & Chapman 2020:3; Cloete 2016:58). In practice, Gboyega (2019:24) indicates that despite the inevitability of the wide stakeholder participation as a core principle, the rational and input-output approaches adopted in peer review guidelines ignores the inherent politics within the middle range routinised activities and other contextual factors within the APRM environment. This study observes that the establishment of such guidelines without a contextually informed national domestic legal framework reduces the likelihood of use APRM data and compliance to the standards, which necessitates the proposed framework.

Furthermore, most research analysing the APRM's agency to bring about policy reforms are largely outcome-based, with emphasis put on reporting best practices (Hansungule 2014:36). Consequently, focus is put on reporting outputs in the form of best practices, based on the standard checklist of codes ratified by a country. This has created a knowledge gap in understanding the politics among stakeholders and the evaluation process through which inputs translate into activities and consequently outputs. This study attempts to respond to Holvoet *et al.*'s (2012:764) call in evaluation studies for empirical field studies that map a theory of change so that stakeholders can be guided properly on the necessary inputs, activities, implementation behaviours, outcomes and strategies.

To contribute towards enhancing the evaluation influence of the APRM in Uganda, the study adopts a case analysis of the country's first first-generation peer review from 2005 and the second generation review in 2017 (African Governance Report 2019:35). It narrows down to the case of the refugee policy framework in Uganda as a best practice reported in the first thematic area of Democracy and Political Governance. Refugee management is evaluated by the APRM questionnaire in two

objectives: firstly, Objective Three on management of inter-state conflict and refugees; and secondly, Objective Eight on protection and promotion of the rights of vulnerable groups among which are refugees (APRM Base Document 2003:349).

From the APRM evaluation, the first Uganda Country Review Report (CRR 2009:57-60) observed that Uganda had put in place legislation such as the Refugee Act of 2006 and ratified regional and international standards, but identified challenges, key among which was the meagre resource allocation 0.46% in the national budget. According to the APRM Uganda Country Self-Assessment Report (2017:2), recommendations from the 2008 Report were integrated into the National Development Plan (NDP II). The Government of Uganda in response introduced the Refugee Regulations of 2010, and the Refugee and Host Population Empowerment Strategy (ReHoPE), which was integrated in the National Development Plan (NDP II, 2015/16-2019/2020). Relatedly, the APRM's second Uganda Country Review Report (2018:1-9) acknowledges the reforms made and associates them with the first APRM recommendations. The study observes that despite the regular reporting of stakeholder participation and best practices among AU member states, an in-depth analysis of the implementation process lacked adequate attention.

The original philosophy of wide stakeholder participation into the APRM implementation by the founding members, identifies stakeholder categories to include both state actors with decision authority and direct responsibility over the policy and non-state actors as beneficiaries, and those disadvantaged by the policy (APRM Statute 2016:3). To contribute towards restoring the intentions of pro-people contextually responsive policies, this study explores empirical data from stakeholders' perceptions to understand what works and under what conditions to bring about policy influence of APRM data. This goal is based on Johnson *et al.*'s (2009:377) argument from their review of 41 empirical studies, which reveal that stakeholder involvement in evaluations is a major factor for influencing utilisation. Furthermore, a recent landmark study by Bosman and Clifford (2021:36-47) in their reflection on the first and second peer reviews in Uganda, Kenya and Mozambique, reveal patterns of progress and regress reflecting persistent under use, misuse and non-use of data. As a result, they recommend that a holistic approach to implementing the APRM is adopted on a continuous basis to improve governance.

Therefore, as a theoretical and empirical contribution aimed at addressing the gaps in the literature, the current study presents a proposed framework that integrates the philosophy of stakeholder participation in a complex political context, to enhance the APRM's evaluation influence.

1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND QUESTIONS

1.4.1 General research objective

The main research aim is to generate a framework that could assist to enhance the APRM evaluation system and in turn positively influence policy among AU member states. This objective is informed by the reported emerging trend of under-use, non-use, and mis-use of APRM recommendations which undermines the mechanism's goal as a catalyst for the realisation of the AU agenda 2063. The reported nature of APRM's influence is reflected in the different types of use, including instrumental, symbolic/political and conceptual use. Johnson *et al.* (2009:378), refer to evaluation use as "any application of evaluation process, products, or findings to produce an effect" and in this study, the "type of use" reflects the variations in consequences of the evaluation taking place.

1.4.2 The specific objectives of the study are:

- i. To establish the effect of the APRM's evaluation process on the type of use or non-use of data in Uganda's public policy.
- ii. To assess the role of the APRM stakeholders in influencing the type of use or non-use of APRM data in Uganda's public policy.
- iii. To analyse how the context of the APRM system influences the type of use or non-use of data in Uganda's refugee policy.
- iv. To generate a framework that can positively enhance the APRM's evaluation influence in policy design at the national level of AU member states.

1.4.3 Research questions

In line with the above objectives, the central research question which this study seeks to answer is: *“How can the APRM’s evaluation system be improved to positively influence policy design among AU member states”*? To answer the above general question, the study proposes the following four sub-questions focusing on each of the specific gaps identified above.

1.4.3.1 Specific questions of the study

These research questions guide the development of this study at more specific levels of analysis in this research. They represent a disaggregated linkage of operational elements of the evaluation system and public policy process as reflected below.

- i. How does the APRM evaluation process affect the type of use and non-use of data in Uganda’s public policy?
- ii. What is the role of APRM stakeholders in influencing the type of use or non-use of data in Uganda’s public policy?
- iii. How does the context of the APRM system influence the type of use or non-use of data in Uganda’s refugee policy framework?
- iv. How can the APRM framework be enhanced to positively influence public policy at the national level of AU member states?

1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To generate relevant answers for the research questions and realise the purpose and objectives of the study, this section presents a highlight of the research strategy adopted, which is reflected in the research approach, design, sampling, data collection and analysis. The concept research methodology is described by Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2011:38) as the bridge between the researcher’s philosophical standpoint and the adopted methods of data collection and analysis. The methodology adopted in this study consisted of an exploratory qualitative approach and a case study design through which semi-structured interviews and documentary

analysis of data. Bryman (2012:629), suggests that the research methodology adopted in any study should be rooted within certain ontological and epistemological paradigms. Therefore, the choice of the approach in this study was based on the nature of evaluation influence as a social phenomenon, the nature of the research questions and the in-depth type of data to be collected which makes it consistent with the objectives.

As a procedural plan, Kumar (2014:122) defines a research approach as a precise strategy that outlines how various methods and processes should be employed to ensure that the researcher answers the questions validly, objectively and accurately. This qualitative exploratory approach was informed by the researcher's world view being an interpretive paradigm with phenomenology as its philosophical underpinning. Bryman (2012:380) identifies three characteristics associated with the approach namely: being inductively applied, perception of reality as being socially constructed, informed by interpretivist epistemological position, and on-site data collection in a nature setting. Besides, the theoretical disposition of public administration as a field of study that focuses on social phenomena explains the adoption of a qualitative approach as well as the ontological, the epistemological and the theoretical orientation adopted. The researcher's justification for its preference is based on Creswell's (2009:179) recommendations which include: suitability to investigate the nature of complex phenomena, latent variables which cannot be measured quantitatively, its ability to offer context relevant data from multiple perspectives through triangulation.

Regarding the design, the study adopted a single case study of Uganda, in which case analysis of the first and second APRM generation peer reviews are assessed in terms of their use to and influence on the country's public policies. From the literature of evaluation use and influence, Hojlund (2015:68) identifies case study as one of the most preferred qualitative designs, since it enables any researcher to undertake in-depth interviews with different stakeholders in their natural environment. Besides its ability to address the why and how questions, the use of several sources of evidence, the ability to deal with multiple variables, as well as the adoption of theoretical propositions to inform data collection and analysis of data are key advantages (Goffin, Ahlstrom, Bianchi & Richtner 2019:597-605).

In terms of study population, data was collected from 35 participants out of the 57 internal and external stakeholders within the different units of the APRM national level system where decision-making for evaluation use takes place as provided for in the APRM Guidelines (2016:15). A sample of representative elements from the targeted population was purposively identified based on their positions, roles and the researcher's judgement of their ability to have the requisite data for generating answers to the research questions (Daniel 2012:88; Teddlie & Fen Yu 2007:77). To ensure accurate data for validity and rich understanding of the phenomenon, the researcher adopted triangulation of secondary and primary data collected through a range of techniques namely: document analysis, semi-structured interviews as well as FGDs (Flick 2014:183; Creswell 2013:137; Tracy 2010:843; Edmond & McManus 2007:1157; Polkinghorne 2005:145).

Regarding analysis, the primary data captured by electronic recorders through interviews and FGDs was translated into transcripts in form of MS-Word documents. Together with the secondary data, were loaded into ATLAS Ti Version 08 software, interpreted, and subjected to content analysis through comparison, classification, coding as well as identification of recurring themes and sub-themes relevant to the study (Hsieh and Shannon (2005:1278). A detailed discussion of the research methods, tools and techniques are presented in Chapter Five.

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The importance of evaluation in public policy cannot be over emphasised and this study reflects the need for an enhanced APRM as an evaluation system to positively influence public policy outcomes. Considering policy evaluation as the least explored stage in the policy cycle (King & Alkin 2018:23), the study provides a response to Stephenson *et al.*'s (2019:665) concern that in public administration literature, policy evaluation is given limited attention. This study makes a theoretical contribution in advancing the decolonisation of evaluation and public policy knowledge amidst the dominance of Eurocentric models. It proposes an operational framework for the APRM as a Made in Africa Evaluation Framework (MAE), that is informed by a mechanism-based approach in Chapter Seven to strengthen the APRM's policy

evaluation capacity by guiding stakeholders on the relevant evaluation inputs, activities, outputs and mechanisms through which they translate into different types of use or non-use. In addition, Chapter Six provides empirical data which not only builds on existing decolonisation evaluation literature, but also responds to calls for empirical evaluation case studies and culturally sensitive frameworks from the global south which are critical in fostering a culture of effective evaluation and informing practical decisions for evidence-based policy making.

From this study, it is hoped that the findings will contribute to policy evaluation theory and the evaluation practice in several ways. Firstly, this study contributes to the growing literature of the broader decolonisation evaluation agenda, and specifically evaluation influence in the context of made in Africa Evaluation (MAE). Emerging literature suggests that efforts towards developing the MAE perspective have remained theoretical with minimal evidence of documented practical examples highlighting its theory of change and methodological application (Fish 2022:7; Chirau & Ramasoboza 2022:4; Chilisa 2015:5). The study also contributes empirical data towards understanding the multi-dimensional influence of evaluation on public policy design (Hojlund 2014:430).

Considering the African contextual challenges, the study adopts a mechanism-based approach by shifting the attention from examining the effects of evaluation which focuses on the outcome in form of performance to analysing the mechanism constituting the evaluation process. It observes that despite the existence of implementation guidelines and reported non-compliance to objectivity and stakeholder involvement, previous studies about the APRM put emphasis on factors explaining successes and challenges. It emphasises that limited attention was given to a systemic investigation into the underlying mechanism, actors, context and their effect on the degree of use and non-use of evaluation at a micro-level for which the study recommends an Afro-centric framework for improved influence. In light of the limited empirical evidence of MAE, the study responds to Cloete's (2016:58) call for an African rooted evaluation approach, recommendations of the Bellagio Report (2013:23), as well as Morkel and Sibanda's (2022:1) plea for empirical evaluation

studies that take into account the historical legacies and postcolonial institutions in Africa.

Moreover, this study recognises the inherently political nature of APRM evaluation and that stakeholder' decisions to use its data are greatly influenced by the context in which it operates. The study takes into account the fact that while evaluation is considered a technical matter, yet it takes place within a political context which is not recognised within the current APRM framework that assumes a rational approach, despite the consistently reported executive control and bureaucratisation of the APRM implementation process at national level stakeholder interactions. It is in line with the argument that public organisations are neither rational, nor run by objective administrative actors, but they are influenced by multiple forces from their environments (Steven 2014:33; Dah-Larsen 2012:56; Vaessen & Leeuw 2010:234).

The findings from the study provide insights towards a more context sensitive theory of change, which elaborates a causal chain that links inputs, outputs, outcomes and impacts from the experiences of the different stakeholders who are involved in the decision-making process on the use of APRM data at a micro level. In doing so, the study is relevant to the growing literature of the relationship between democratic health in a country and the policy process. As a result, it contributes towards solving the challenge of a country's non-compliance to the APRM evaluation system which presents a threat to APRM sustainability to evaluate the AU Agenda 2063. Therefore, by analysing the process, actors and context, a more holistic approach to understanding the consequences of evaluation is explored beyond instrumental use to consider conceptual and symbolic uses which are rampant in the APRM country contexts in Africa. It builds on works of prominent researchers in the decolonisation of policy evaluation agenda to develop or adapt culturally relevant evaluation frameworks that meet African relational needs (Cloete 2016; Chilisa, Major, Gaothobogwe, & Mokgolodi 2015; Chilisa 2015).

Secondly, this study contributes by filling a theoretical gap by empirically explaining the non-use of evaluation which has been given little attention in policy evaluation literature. In addition is the application of the evaluation use typology which together constitutes evaluation influence. By doing so, the study is in response to Holvoet *et*

al.'s (2012:764) call for more empirical evidence on how evaluation systems influence non-use and the different types of use in public policy, since assessment using evaluation checklist is normally limited to instrumental and direct use of evaluation findings. It builds upon multi-disciplinary insights from three bodies of theories to develop a framework for enhancing the influence of the APRM data which include the Schematic theory of evaluation influence by Mark and Henry (2004) from the evaluation literature, the political systems theory by Easton (1953) from political science, and the Stakeholder theory by Freeman (1984) from Public Administration. In addition, the study is relevant to the growing literature of the relationship between democratic health in a country and the policy process. As a result, it contributes towards solving the challenge of a country's non-compliance to the APRM evaluation system, which presents a threat to APRM sustainability to evaluate the AU Agenda 2063 and the MDGs 2030. Therefore, the study contributes empirical data towards understanding the multi-dimensional influence of evaluation on public policy design (Hojlund 2014:430) and addresses a major concern by Holvoet *et al.* (2012:764), that evaluation checklists normally assess instrumental and direct use of evaluation results in decision-making without consideration of non-use factors.

Thirdly, by focusing on the case of the Model Refugee Policy Framework of Uganda, the study is contributing towards understanding the APRM's role in addressing the refugee crisis in Africa. Uganda is one of the continent's top problems hosting the lion's share of 28% of the entire world's refugee population. Adopting the case of Uganda which has won international recognition as a model for championing refugee rights (UNHCR 2019:18) provides learning experiences. It is, therefore, of interest in this study to establish the extent to which the country's progressive refugee policy framework may be attributed to the APRM evaluation intervention in order to draw lessons for similar country contexts. In terms of practical application, considering that the APRM was established to serve the purpose of catalysing the continental policy reforms towards the African Union (AU) Agenda 2063 (Tshiyoyo 2017:173), it is hoped that the study findings and proposed framework contribute towards the APRM sustainability in evaluating a continental blueprint for socio-economic transformation. It emphasises the role of the mechanism-based approach in addressing the challenge of non-compliance to the APRM guidelines as well as providing strategies for improving on the existing types of use from non-use, to conceptual use, to

symbolic use, to instrumental use, towards realisation of both the AU agenda and related SDGs 2030. The broader significance of the study lies in contributing to a more context sensitive continent-wide approach intended to generate home-grown solutions to African problems than reliance on externally donor driven models.

1.7 CLARIFICATION OF KEY TERMS AND CONCEPTS

This section explains the key concepts operationalised as understood by the researcher in relation to the study. It is aimed at enabling the reader to make relevant interpretations of the text.

1.7.1 Evaluation

Public policies are designed to achieve certain goals of public interest. This makes it important to establish the extent to which the desired policy objectives have been realised by means of evaluation, to decide on the next course of action. In this study, evaluation is operationalised as the application of rigorous research methods to investigate policy issues of interest. Ile (2015:179) refers to evaluation as the systematic assessment of a policy where actual results are compared with the anticipated outcomes using pre-determined objectives. According to Hanberger (2012:14), evaluation may take three types which differ in terms of scope, structure and knowledge. The first type is the Monitoring and Evaluation system, based on ongoing production of indicator-based information, which may focus on the Monitoring (data collection on inputs and outputs) or on Evaluation (focussing on performance measurement in terms of attainment of objectives). The second type of evaluation is the stand-alone or single studies, where knowledge is generated through systematic enquiries and assessment. The third type combines synthesised knowledge generated through the first two types and any other relevant studies. Moreover, Brynard *et al.* (2015:179) explain that evaluation may take the form of formative evaluation (before the policy adoption), during the implementation process, or summative evaluation at the end of a policy activity.

Relatedly, with regard to evaluation influence, every evaluation is said to have some sort of influence which Kirkhart (2000:7) refers to as “the capacity to or power of an evaluation to cause a spiral effect”. The notion of influence was initially presented as

an extension of use and later embraced as a replacement on providing a “more inclusive understanding of the impact of evaluations” (Alkin & Taut 2003; Henry & Mark 2003; Mark & Henry 2004, 2012). In addition, Henry (2000:85) emphasises that the concept of evaluation influence offers a more comprehensive framework of understanding the consequences of evaluation, by considering the attributes of being “multi-dimensional, incremental, unintentional and non-instrumental, alongside those that are unidirectional, episodic, intended and instrumental, with use subsumed within it. The focus in this study is on analysing the effect of the APRM process and findings on the degree of use or non-use of data in shaping policies of implementing states.

1.7.2 Evaluation system

Policy scholars emphasise that evaluations do not occur in a vacuum, but in an organisational system (Schoenfeld & Jordan 2017:275). To generate the quality evidence necessary to inform appropriate policy design from a knowledgeable point of view, evaluation systems are established as instruments of control (Hermans *et al.* 2014:4). The concept evaluation system is defined differently by different scholars, but there is consensus on Leeuw and Furubo’s (2008:223) four elements constituting the defining characteristics of an evaluation system. These include reliance on widely agreed evaluation objectives, professional conduct of evaluations, with a formally institutionalised unit, a permanently set up system, and a clear focus on the intended evaluation process. In addition, Raimondo (2019:27-33) includes multiple actors with different roles at different phases of the evaluation activity from planning to utilisation, multiple institutions in the form of beliefs and rules governing evaluation, as well as complex governance norms and values. Therefore, Martinaitis *et al.* (2019:49-53) maintain that evaluation systems can affect the degree of use and non-use of data based on seven complementary critical elements of a system’s environment. They include: the evaluation owner(s), the evaluators, reporting units, implementation agents, the type of evaluation questions, the methodology of evaluation and how the generated evidence is used to serve intentional or unintentional functions.

1.7.3 Peer review

In the public policy evaluation context, performance can be assessed by either internal peers or external oversight actors. Although there is no universally agreed standard of a peer review mechanism, the OECD (2011:13) identifies structural elements to include: standards and associated criteria upon which a member state's performance is assessed, agreed upon principles, actors designated to conduct the review, as well as the procedure to be followed. According to Khupe (2014:74), peer review is a form of evaluation which assumes the supreme importance of supporting stakeholders' interests for purposes of collective improvement by learning from one another's best practices. It takes the form of a mutual learning process of facilitated systematic information exchange, involving expert committees, interactive dialogue on collegial assessment of progress and application of formal recommendations for policy improvement (Pagani 2002:5; Tawfic 2004:13; Micheal 2003:7). In this study's context, peer review is generally understood as a systematic examination of a state's performance by another with the ultimate purpose of supporting it to improve its policy-making, observing established standards and adopting best practices (Adele-Jinadu 2019:4; Mangu 2014:64; Pagani 2002:4). This research examines the influence of the APRM, from the lenses of an African home-grown type of evaluation, informed by the contextually collective ideology of "Ubuntu" to foster the adoption of mutually agreed upon policies.

1.7.4 Mechanism-based approach

In the past decade, emerging studies for improved understanding of the impact of evaluation emphasise identifying causal mechanisms. Despite a lack of consensus on its definition, Lorenz, Sorensen and Frederiksen (2014:32) define a mechanism as "a description of how things work beneath the surface, delving into the inner workings". Furthermore, Schmitt (2020:12) defines mechanisms as "pathways, processes or intervening variables" that causally link interventions to changes reflected in outcomes. So, mechanisms provide an explanatory account of how stakeholders' ideas about the desired policy change are achieved through the preferred intervention. As underlying processes, mechanisms are normally considered to be hidden forces and causal processes that cannot be observed directly in generating outcomes but are sensitive to variations in context (Alvarado 2017:448; Lacouture, Breton, Guichard & Ridde 2015:4; Ambrose & Ker 2014:299; Astbury & Leeuw 2010). They reflect causally linked events through which

interventions result in the desired effects. Astbury and Leeuw (2010:364) indicate that the growing focus in evaluation influence research is about “identifying mechanisms that link cause and effect relations” as a more effective approach of explaining evaluation influence on public policy. Schmitt (2020:11) attributes the strength of the approach to addressing the challenge of the black box which increases policy relevance and strengthens causal capacity of evaluations. As a point of departure from earlier outcome-oriented studies which assess the performance of the APRM focusing on successes and failures, this study takes a mechanism-based approach to analyse the process, the actors and the context.

1.7.5 Stakeholder

Public managers involved in decision-making are expected to recognise and respond to claims of those that affect or are affected by the public policy decisions. According to Streicher (2017:15), one of the key factors affecting evaluation influence is stakeholder involvement, the nature of their interaction and their interests in each political context. This study adopts a more inclusive and broader definition of a stakeholder as referring to any organisations, individuals or groups that can affect and/or are affected by the evaluation process, findings and achievement of organisational objectives (Bryson 2011:1). While stakeholders may be internal or external, Greene (2005:397) presents stakeholder categories to include people: with decision authority over the policy, with direct responsibility (as staff, administrators and implementers), intended beneficiaries, and those disadvantaged by the policy. In the context of this study, in the APRM Statute (2016:3) stakeholders are identified to include the internal staff and the representatives of external stakeholder groups in the structures of the APRM at the national level. According to Strjny (2018:374), due to their significance, the stakeholders influence the different forms of use of APRM data depending on the convergence of their interests with the evaluation objectives. Therefore, the study takes the form of policy analysis to establish the extent to which the Government of Uganda’s policies and specifically the Refugee Policy as a best practice were informed by the APRM’s evaluation system during the first and second peer reviews. Therefore, the study is intended to develop a framework for enhancing the APRM evaluation to positively shape policy design among member states.

1.8 FRAMEWORK OF THE RESEARCH

This section presents the outline of the study which consists of seven chapters as reflected in their details below.

1.8.1 Chapter One: General introduction and overview of the study

This chapter introduced the study with sections presenting the orientation, the conceptual and theoretical background, the research problem statement, the objectives of the study, the research question and the justification for the study. In the methodology a discussion of the qualitative approach is adopted, with a detailed illustration of the targeted population, sampling criteria and the methods for data collection and analysis. The selected case is APRM implementation in Uganda, with a case analysis of the first and second generations as well as the Refugee Policy Framework. Other sections included: the ethical considerations observed in the study, the significance of the study, key concepts, as well as the chapter outline reflecting the structure of the entire research report.

1.8.2 Chapter Two: Theoretical framework locating the study within the discipline of Public Administration

Chapter Two explains the theoretical framework for this research, explaining the location of the topic of evaluation influence within the contextual field of public policy and the wider foundational discipline and practice of Public Administration. It starts with conceptualising the key study variables, then it discusses the literature explaining the evolution of public policy evaluation towards the research gap within the influence of evaluation information. It revisits the debate in the literature of evaluation utilisation in the public administration context, and captures the different types which reflect the extent and levels of use referred to in this study as influence. It goes further to cover the evolution of the discipline of Public Administration and emphasises that public policy plays the functional role in Public Administration and Management as a tool for efficient conduct of public service delivery through processes of policy formulation, implementation as well as evaluation (Purshtama *et al.* 2014:164). The chapter concludes by showing how the study draws insights from three theoretical frameworks from public administration, evaluation and governance theory, to contribute to expanding the knowledge base of policy evaluation in the Public Administration discipline through a mechanism-based approach.

1.8.3 Chapter Three: The APRM evaluation system

This chapter presents a detailed assessment of the literature on the APRM evaluation system covering the different elements that constitute it such as the factors and actors including the evaluation methodology, evaluator competence, institutions, context and actors. It aims at describing the nature of the environment within which the APRM evaluation system is implemented, and how it affects public policy design. It examines the underlying mechanism linking inputs, activities, outcomes as well as the role of political context, how it affects policy design, as well as influencing compliance of APRM standards. By explaining its theory of change as an African rooted evaluation model, the chapter analyses the actors, institutions and their interactions to explain the degree of influence exhibited and how it can be enhanced.

1.8.4 Chapter Four: The Evaluation Practice of the APRM in Uganda

This chapter focuses on the domestication and practice of the APRM evaluation system in Uganda. It follows Chapter Three, which presents the standard APRM evaluation system in Africa as institutionalised from the continental guidelines to the participating countries. To contextualise the APRM evaluation the chapter seeks to assess: the role of the APRM evaluation process (inputs, activities and outputs) in influencing the type of use or non-use, and the role of the APRM stakeholders' participation in influencing the type of use or non-use of APRM data in Uganda's policy process. This chapter is organised based on the elements of Mark and Henry's (2004:43) schematic framework to examine how the APRM evaluation system operates through the inputs, activities, outputs and outcomes to bring about influence in public policy. Drawing from multiple secondary sources of literature, the chapter presents a case analysis of the two APRM generation reviews showing the extent to which use and influence were realised in Uganda's public policy. The analysis makes comparison with successful innovations in other APRM member states like the innovations in the South African review and the collapsed process in Mauritius' peer review to draw lessons.

1.8.5 Chapter Five: Research Methodology

The chapter presents the research process detailing how the data was collected to generate answers to the research questions stipulated in Chapter One. It covers different sections including the description of the study design by first highlighting the dominant paradigms, and identifies interpretivism as the preferred paradigm adopted to inform the study with associated justifications leading to a qualitative approach. Furthermore, it presents all of the three approaches, narrowing the focus on the qualitative approach, characteristics of the approach, justifications for its adoption, the designs in the approach and the case study design adopted in the study.

In addition, the chapter discusses the study area and case selection of APRM implementation in Uganda. It then details the research process, sampling and data collection methods and techniques along with their justifications. Finally, the chapter presents the ethical considerations, how they were observed during the study, as well as the pilot study. Therefore, this chapter presents the pragmatic arrangements of how data was obtained and analysed during the research project.

1.8.6 Chapter Six: Data analysis and interpretation

This chapter summarises the research findings from the first chapters, demonstrating their linkage and contribution towards answering the research question and realising the research objectives. An analysis and interpretation of the data from stakeholders on the influence of the APRM's evaluation system on Uganda's policy process is presented. The chapter discusses the multiple views on stakeholders' understanding of the APRM's implementation realities in the Ugandan context. It analyses the APRM's influence on public policy in general and then narrows its focus on Uganda's 'generous' refugee policy regime as a best practice. Finally, the chapter describes the characteristics of the study participants, and then presents the interpretation and discussion of findings.

1.8.7 Chapter Seven: A proposed framework for enhancing the evaluation influence of the APRM

This chapter focuses on responding to the central question that this study sought to answer: 'How can the APRM's evaluation system be improved to positively influence public policy among AU member states'? Using a mechanism-based approach, the researcher presents a summary of the findings and recommendation in the form of

an adapted framework to address identified shortcomings within the missing middle of the APRM system. The chapter identifies the changes and analyses the strategies for enhancing the APRM evaluation influence as informed by the empirical data. It presents the detailed explanations for enabling factors in each of the elements identified in the APRM evaluation system covering the inputs, activities, outputs and the mechanisms through which the different types of use occur. Moreover, it presents the description of the proposed framework by combining insights from three theoretical frameworks explained in Chapter Three. Finally, the chapter details the proposed APRM evaluation process with emphasis on the original philosophy of multiple stakeholder participation, and highlights the major recommendations intended to enhance the mechanism's use and influence.

1.9 CHAPTER SUMMARY

Chapter One provided an overview of the thesis. It presented the background to the research and explained the methodology adopted in generating data for the research questions. The chapter started by describing the background to the research problem, the purpose of conducting the study which is the mis-use and non-use of evaluation in the context of the APRM evaluation system in Uganda. It then presented the motivation of the study, namely to understand the mechanism underlying the APRM implementation process and how it affects the type of use and influence. It covered the study's objectives of generating a framework for enhancing the influence of the APRM evaluation system in response to the general research question as "How can the APRM evaluation system be effectively improved so that it can positively influence policy design among member states? Furthermore, the chapter discussed the research design highlighting the preference of a qualitative approach and its justification, the different qualitative research designs, with emphasis on the case study design adopted in the study.

The case selection and rationale for the case analysis of Uganda's first and second generation review was provided, as well as the focus on Uganda's refugee policy framework explained. Then the data collection methods were discussed which include document review, in-depth interviews, key informant interviews, and FGDs, in addition to a highlight of the data analysis process using Atlas. Ti 08. Other

sections included the study limitations and de-limitations, ethical considerations observed, and a highlight of the preliminary framework reflecting the content covered under each of the chapters in the report. Finally, the chapter presented the significance of the study highlighting the contribution of the proposed framework towards understanding what works and the relevant pathways to bring about evaluation influence of the APRM on public policies of AU member states.

CHAPTER TWO: A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK LOCATING EVALUATION INFLUENCE IN THE DISCIPLINE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter Two provides a theoretical construct for this study. It comes after Chapter One which discussed the introduction section of the research, including the problem statement, and the research methodology adopted in data collection to answer the research questions. The chapter seeks to explain the locus of the study of public policy evaluation, within the wider foundational discipline of Public Administration. Since literature review reflects a theoretical basis for any study (Hofstee 2006:91), this chapter presents the theory of Public Administration to ensure its alignment with the study's objectives and the key concepts.

This chapter is divided into four sections, locating the study of public policy as a sub-field that plays a functional role in Public Administration, and highlighting the study's contribution to expanding the body of knowledge of the discipline. Section One presents a conceptual analysis of public policy evaluation as an accountability tool within managerialism in the public sector. Furthermore, the concept of evaluation influence is discussed, detailing its evolution from the evaluation use taxonomy by Mark and Henry (2004) in explaining the consequences of evaluation to public policy. Section Two details the review of the literature in the Public Administration discipline, explaining the conceptualisation, the theoretical approaches and paradigms, the

evolution into the managerial approach, as well as the managerial roles related to the study. It discusses the New Public Management and the Governance era as paradigms in managerialism, with emphasis on accountability and results that are relevant to the study topic of evaluation influence in public policy. In addition, Section Three presents an analysis of evaluation theory and practice within the public sector administration in Africa, highlighting the new direction and emerging trend of evaluation institutionalisation in the public sector. Finally, Section Four discusses the theories related to the study from which insights are drawn to inform improved evaluation use and influence on public policy. They include: Easton's (1953) political systems theory, Mark and Henry's (2004) schematic theory of evaluation influence, and Freeman's (1984) stakeholder theory. The chapter concludes with a demonstration of the proposed contribution towards a framework for enhancing the influence of evaluation in the context of the APRM.

2.2 CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS OF PUBLIC POLICY EVALUATION

This section explores how the major concepts in this study are linked to the discourse of Public Administration.

2.2.1 Understanding public policy evaluation in Public Administration

Conceptually, public policy, just like its mother discipline of Public Administration, lacks a single unified definition. This is reflected in the debates as to whether it is interpreted as an independent discipline or field with multiple orientations. Policy literature suggests that there is neither agreement nor a unified definition for public policy and might not be conceived in the foreseeable future (Smith & Larimer 2009:3; Bobrow & Dryzek 1987:4). Some scholars have argued that public policy was traditionally not established as a concept with a standard definition, but a field having several specialised sub-fields under a unified multi-disciplinary approach (DeLeon 1997). Other scholars maintain that public policy can be interpreted in several ways and may take different dimensions (Purshottama *et al.* 2014:157). Consequently, the term public policy is associated with fields like public administration, political science, and sometimes economics. Smith and Larimer (2009:1-3) argue that each field adopts its definitions and applies whatever is considered suitable for the issue at hand.

Over time, Dror (1968:49) indicates that with a focus on different aspects of the policy cycle, efforts have been made to generate different definitions with emphasis ranging from the practice, content, process, activities and outcome. Similarly, Govender in Thornhill, van Dijk and Ile (2010:157), maintain that public policy can be interpreted in several ways and may take different dimensions. While Purshottama, *et al.* (2014:157) indicate that the term public is generally understood as a “group of people sharing a common interest”, Smith and Larimer (2009:3) insist that there is no unified definition for public policy and it might not be conceived in the foreseeable future. Among the earliest efforts to define public policy, Lasswell (1951:5), who is said to have laid the foundation for studying policy through what he called “policy sciences”, refers to the concept of public policy as a response to “the most important choices made” by the government (1951:5). According to Smith and Larimer (2009:10), Laswell’s conceptualisation intended to integrate academic knowledge with the real problems of the political world, scientifically diagnose the causes and implications of social problems, recommend appropriate intervention, as well as evaluate its impact. This is analysed along with other emerging definitions to identify the most appropriate conceptualisation applied in this study.

Regarding the practice perspective, Dye (1987:1) advances a broad definition covering the practice of public policy as “whatever governments choose to do or not to do”. Some attempts have been made to narrow the focus on the activities or content, while others focus on the outcome of public policy as solutions to society’s problems. Considering the activities and process, Birkland (2001:7) refers to public policy as the process of making choices, the outcomes from specific decisions, which are considered public because they are backed by coercive state powers. Relatedly, Wilson (2006:154) defines public policy as “the actions, objectives and pronouncements of government” on particular matters including the steps taken or not as well as explanations given. According to Smith and Larimer (2009:4), public policy involves positive or negative patterns of action taken by the government over a period in response to public demand. Other scholars like Peters (2010) summarise public policy as the “sum of all governmental activities, whether acting directly or through agents but having an influence on the life of citizens” in the country.

With a focus on the outcomes, Gumede (2011:167), refers to public policy as involving “all formal and publicly known decisions of governments that come about through pre-determined channels in a particular administration” and the declaration and implementation of intent over a period in response to public demand. Birkland (2001) adds that such outcomes as a government response to an issue of interest qualify to be called public policy due to the backing from coercive powers of the state. Furthermore, efforts have been made to generate definitions that combine the process, activities and the outcome of public policy. Cochran and Malone (2010) refer to public policy as involving political decisions made for implementing government programmes to achieve societal goals. More recently, Basheka and Byamugisha (2015:18) go a little further to define public policy as a system of laws, decisions of actors, regulatory measures and funding priorities of the government. While such definitions are considered accurate, Smith and Larimer (2009:3) argue that they remain too general to bring out a clear intellectual difference between public policy and public administration, political science, or even welfare economics, which also study behaviour in government institutions.

With the lack of a precise and universal definition, this research shifts the attention from defining a concept of public policy as a single field, to focusing on characteristics of a cross-cutting policy process generally agreed upon in the multiple fields of public policy studies. According to Birkland (2019:8-10), there is a general agreement on the set of attributes that constitute what public policy is. Firstly, it is a decision made by the government, implying that it is public and affects all citizens. Howlett and Perl (2009:5) maintain that a public policy is made by the government even though it may originate from outside the government or through its interaction with other different actors. Purshottama *et al.* (2010:158) add that policy can be construed as a set of separate or interrelated ideas, formal actions, proposals, planned activity, or government programmes of a particular public entity. Any policy qualifies to be a public policy when it involves political decisions promulgated by the government to deal with specific social problems and implement programmes of public interest (Madumo 2017:49; Cochran & Malone 2010). Therefore, this study acknowledges that a public policy is not only formulated through government, but includes a wide range of stakeholders who affect and are affected by its implementation and outcome.

Secondly, it is a statement that constitutes a response to a public issue or social problem that deserves the attention of the government on what it intends to do at which level. It is also emphasised that the absence of such a decision is by implication a statement not to undertake any action. This is well articulated by Anderson (1994:5) who refers to public policy as “a purposive course of action or inaction undertaken by an actor or set of actors in addressing an issue of public concern”. The reference suggests the goal-oriented nature of public authorities within government undertaking certain purposive courses of action or inaction in response to demands or perceived problems.

Thirdly, public policy is ideally made in the public interest which suggests that it involves the interaction of multiple stakeholders either directly or through their representatives. These are assumed to take part throughout the policy cycle to ensure that harmonised interests are aggregated from problem identification, the agenda-setting stage, policy formulation and adoption stages, implementation as well as evaluation stages. Fourthly, policy is interpreted differently by different actors who may be members of the public or the private sector, having varying perceptions of the policy problem and possible solution. Fifthly, public policy is intended to achieve a certain desired state or goal which reduces the incidence or scope of the targeted problem.

Therefore, considering the varying interpretations as well as the defining characteristics of a public policy, this study operationalises public policy as a statement made or implied by the government that reflects its intentions or its inaction regarding an issue or problem of public interest. Theodoulou (1995:2) generates a list of what the government does as public policy purposes to include behaviour regulation, directing benefits in the public interest, conflict resolution over scarce resources, and rights protection among others. In addition, Birkland (2019:10) presents policy outcomes to exist in the form of laws, decisions, regulations, rulings and orders. The next sub-section discusses the construct evaluation influence as an independent variable and is intended to establish the linkage with public policy as a dependent outcome. The next section discusses the characteristics of public policy and its origin as an academic field of study

2.2.1.1 The characteristics of public policy

In his original vision of public policy, Laswell (1951:7) pointed out what he considered the distinguishing characteristics of policy sciences. Firstly, it is problem orientation towards important issues faced by the government, devising the best policy choices on how to address the policy problem (policy analysis), and how to assess what has been done (policy evaluation). Secondly, it is the multi-disciplinary nature of policy science cutting across the different disciplines from which methods, models as well as findings are drawn to address major policy issues before the government. Thirdly, it is the adoption of methodological sophistication like psychometrics, economic forecasting, and attitude measurements. Fourthly, it is theoretical sophistication to effectively examine the interaction of the social, political and economic systems as well as understand the issue's cause and effect. Fifthly, it is value orientation, where Laswell emphasised the development of what he called the "policy sciences of democracy" (Laswell 1951:15), an orientation that maximises democratic values through observation of human dignity in both facts and theory, and not just "policy sciences". This study observes from the above characteristics that public policy was traditionally not established as a concept with a standard definition, but a field having several specialised sub-fields under a unified multi-disciplinary approach based on the above-distinguished features.

2.2.2 Conceptual analysis of public policy sub-fields

This section discusses the major sub-field of public policy, covering policy formulation, policy implementation and analysis, which includes policy evaluation as the focus of this study.

2.2.2.1 Policy formulation

Policy formulation according to Purshottama *et al.* (2014:165) refer to a theoretical and conceptual exercise that involves "developing and synthesising of alternative solutions for public policy problems". Govender (2001:1) adds that the emphasis in policy formulation is on understanding the nature of the problem, as well as determining the objectives that reflect the intended outcomes for the particular policy intervention. In answering the question of what should be done, the policy process is concerned with understanding why attention by public authorities is paid to certain policy issues as opposed to others, explaining where policies come from, as well as why some keep changing while some remain static (Smith & Larimer 2009:6).

As a unified theoretical framework to enable systematic understanding of policy formulation in the political world, policy sciences have advanced two conceptual tools, namely the stages theory and the typologies theory (Smith & Larimer 2009:27). The stages model suggests that policy-making is a comprehensive, linear, hierarchical and unitary intellectual activity where actors, through a series of analytical steps which follow a structured cyclical process make use of objective knowledge to rationally decide among alternatives (Enserink *et al.* 2013; Walker 2000; Simon 1981). The next section discusses the policy formulation models relevant to the study of evaluation influence.

(a) The stages model

This approach to policy formulation suggests that a policy process is a linear and continuous process of inter-linked logical steps which starts with a problem or policy issue that must attract the attention of the government for which an appropriate solution is sought, implemented and evaluated against the purpose (Purshottama *et al.* 2014:157; Jones 1977:10; Anderson 1975:26). Furthermore, Enserink *et al.* (2013:18), explain five key stages in the policy cycle. First is the stage of problem definition which refers to an unsatisfactory situation that calls for government intervention (Mohr 1995:14). It involves identifying and ranking the governing values, and defining which objectives are well-matched with the values. Second is generating a series of alternative possible courses of action with causal links to the problem by identifying the possible means for attaining the pre-determined objectives. Third is the estimation of outcomes by identifying a criterion based on which to assess the impact of different alternatives by calculation and comparison of likely consequences from the options. Fourth is ranking the different alternatives depending on their likely performance on the set criteria and choosing an alternative whose outcome is likely to maximise achievement of the identified values (Fischer 1989:944). Fifth is choosing the most highly scored alternative to be implemented as the public policy.

Within the policy process, evaluation is therefore considered a critical stage in providing what Streicher (2017:11) calls a “forward-looking” perspective for planning purposes (ex-ante evaluation) or “backward-looking” (ex-post evaluation). It involves focusing on results with the aim of taking corrective action to improve a given policy

(McDavid & Hawthorn 2006). Literature, reflects certain weaknesses associated with this approach as a basic framework as inadequate, falling short of scientific enquiry and not applicable in the complex nature of the public management context. The approach is said to be too simplified, lacking explanations for different outputs assuming a straightforward and linear cycle to be idealised yet dynamic, multi-dimensional and integrated (Purshottama *et al.* 2014:157; Smith & Larimer 2009:37; Lowi 1972:300).

Despite the weaknesses, several scholars acknowledge that the model with late improvements, until today provides a practical and intuitive frame of reference for organising and conceptualising the complex study of public policy. Stone (2002) indicates that in providing a basic framework of reference, the approach remains viable in responding to Laswell's question for policy studies of how public policies are put into effect. In addition, Smith and Larimer (2009:46) insist that the process perspective stands to provide a foundational reference to policy scholars in understanding, organising and framing public policy. The model has certain advantages for researchers in the policy field. First, it provides researchers with a more generalisable outline for conceptualising the policy process and organising policy research. According to Jann and Wegrich (2008:57), the process presents a simplified framework for investigating the "complex conditions, factors and outcomes of the policy process". Such efforts to simplify the complex policy process provide a starting point but are also critical in understanding public policy analysis and influencing factors of the different policy outcomes (Streicher 2017:10; Jann & Wegrich 2008:57; Sabatier 2007). Consequently, different research agendas focus on different stages of interest and this study focuses on the policy evaluation stage.

(b) Alternative models relevant to the influence of evaluation in policy-making

Unlike the rational approach embedded in the stages theory that emphasises efficiency as the most important and only value considered in policy-making, the political game model and the discourse models in addition provide a better explanation considering context, and politics in shaping policy outcome as explained. One approach is the political game model advanced by Lindblom (1965) perceives policy-making from the political lenses as a power game between powerful interest groups. To explain how it works, Lowi (1972:304) presents certain assumptions

about the model and its predictive abilities (1964:688). Firstly, actor's expectations determine politics, which is the type of relationships between them. Secondly, policies or governmental output determine expectations in politics. Thirdly, the type of policy determines the political relationship and there is a distinct one for each policy. The policy makers in the process strongly identify with personal and organisational interests and settle for decisions that serve their interests while avoiding unfavourable solutions which ultimately result in forming compromises or winning coalitions. However, the criticisms of the political game model are based on the argument that the focus is on 'power play' alone which is not sufficient to adequately explain policy-making (Hoppe 1999).

Another approach is the discourse model which gives more attention to the strategic interaction between stakeholders focusing largely on stakeholder power, strategic behaviour and interests. Enserink *et al.* (2013:23) present three major pillars that reflect the assumptions upon which the model rests. The first assumption is that "policies consist of constructed and shared meanings" among stakeholders in a policy debate (Enserink *et al.* (2013:23). The perspective regards policy-making to be composed of conversations in which stakeholders engage in an exchange of arguments, with the purpose of influencing others' perceptions. The second assumption suggests that policy-making is largely an interactive learning process that occurs during the exchange of augments and meanings among stakeholders. The third assumption is that institutional context is characterised by several policy advocacy coalitions involving policy communities of stakeholders sharing similar belief systems based on which they resist or support particular policy alternatives. Hall (1993:275) maintains that during the policy discourse, values and ideas of either party are discovered, maintained, or reshaped on a continuous basis. According to Enserink *et al.* (2013:26), failure in the discourse perspective occurs when weak policy coalitions do not attain shared meaning through which to adequately address the policy problems faced.

2.2.2.2 The policy implementation

Literature presents three generations of policy implementation studies that date from the 1950s. To explain successful implementation, DeLeon and DeLeon (2002:469) indicate that the first generation thinking was informed by the assumption that when

appropriate policies are authoritatively proclaimed, the implementation would automatically happen. Championed by Sabatier (1986), the model focuses on the authority which crafts the policy as having the capacity to control the environment in which the policy is implemented and its decision as the beginning point of tracing the implementation problem. The emphasis is on the need for governments to have clear goals that require minimal changes in the process, assuming that implementation is a matter of administration and availability of resources. However, the model is criticised for ignoring the role of the context and political aspects that affect it, and the policy opponents that make demands on the process to bring about the implementation gaps (Signe 2017:9). Relatedly, Head and Alford (2013) emphasise that the modern society which is pluralistic with varying perspectives, values and aspirations is not amenable to the generic top down solutions.

The second generation emerged as a response to challenge the first-generation assumptions, insisting that implementation is complex, nothing works and gaps should be attributed to the politics in the context of public policy implementation (Brynard 2005). Advanced by Lipsky (1980), the model assumes that successful policy implementation depends significantly on the discretion of the implementers or street level bureaucrats to overcome challenges like resource constraints. The emphasis is on administrative accountability and local autonomy, insisting that successful implementation depends largely on the policy implementers. However, Matland (1995:146) argues that the model is criticised for ignoring parsimony in the interests of all stakeholders other than focusing on authoritative decisions. According to De Leon and De Leon (2002:470), this generation prescribes calls for more active participation of citizens as primary stakeholders in the planning and execution.

Over time, the third generation of implementation emerged, championed by Goggin (1990), with the goal of presenting more scientific explanations to explain specific implementation failures, why implementation behavior varies, and how it can be improved (Brynard 2005:651). However, as a result of the disagreements among researchers in this generation about the theory outline, Mischen and Sinclair (2007:3) advanced a theory that combines bottom-up responsiveness, top-down accountability and the policy context. Consequently, policy scholars have recognised the value of combining the above two models of policy implementation, to generate a

comprehensive explanatory approach. Further, Signe (2017:14) concludes that where ambiguity is low and conflict is high, implementation of more politically successful implementation is dependent on power, while when ambiguity is high and conflict is low, then implementation depends on the conditions in the policy environment.

2.2.2.3 Policy Analysis Vs Evaluation

This section discusses policy evaluation as a subset of policy analysis, highlighting the similarities and differences between the two. According to Geva-May and Pal (1999:262), the two differ in terms of conceptualisation, function, procedure, target audience, research methodology, problem definition, presentation and argumentation. Smith and Larimer (2009:6) define policy analysis as the normative ex-ante exercise undertaken to determine “the best public policy decision to be utilised by public authorities in political settings”, to resolve policy problems of concern. They add that it is done through establishing government actions to the most fundamental question of what should be done.

The notion of public policy analysis is generally understood in two forms (Mayer *et al.* 2004:23). The first branch is the study of public policy which may take an explanatory, descriptive or interpretive sense with the goal of establishing strong scientific and rational foundations for policy-making, based on expertise and technocracy. The second branch is the art and craft involving approach where a series of activities, tools and methodology of the policy analysis discipline is learned by professionals and adapted to generate advice in a public policy-making context (Fischer *et al.* 2007; Radin 2002). It focuses on generating more action-oriented and user-friendly knowledge as opposed to the objective and generalised scientific knowledge in the first branch. Enserink *et al.* (2013:16) explain that policy analysis has been swinging back and forth between the two forms of accommodation, trying to find some form of balance between the dichotomy of scientific rationality or ‘truth’ and political rationality power. The rationalist approach emphasises quantitative and post-positivism but is challenged based on its firm bias towards the economic values of efficiency, technocracy and value maximisation, while it neglects the moral and democratic values (Lynn 1999; Williams 1998; DeLeon 1988). In defense of qualitative techniques, William (1998:ix) is of the view that the concern should not be

the technique or data used, but the context and political perspective. Further, he argues that technically generated honest numbers from the rationalists without the inclusion of the political incentives to fit within the partisan needs of the stakeholders, may not serve the purpose. Therefore, a combination of both approaches is recommended in conducting a comprehensive analysis, which also covers the cultural context for a holistic perspective.

2.3 THE CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS OF EVALUATION USE AND INFLUENCE

The concept evaluation has been adopted and practiced in Public Administration since the 1950s. According to Sabatier (2007:23), the early stages of the public policy processes have been widely explored in Public Administration, except policy evaluation. However, a study by Streicher (2017:33) indicates that the recent decades have witnessed increased research on the importance of evaluations in informing policies in public sector organisations and this demand is even projected to continue growing. The development and evolution of studies about evaluation have been detailed by Herbert (2014:389) in the form of three phases, along with their related types of use: firstly, the utilisation/use phase (1970-1986), secondly the evaluation use/impact phase (1986-2000) and thirdly the evaluation influence phase (2000 - to date) which has increasingly become more relevant and is the focus of this research. Relatedly, the three types of evaluation use, namely conceptual, symbolic and instrumental, will be explained in detail as components of the broader concept of evaluation influence. From that background, Chianca (2008) emphasises that since the 1990s, most development efforts and approaches the world over have been shaped by evaluation as a means of attaining meaningful policy impact throughout the 2000s.

In conceptualising evaluation, King and Stevahn (2013:12) indicate that “the term evaluation means different things to different people”, as a result, the evaluation process and outcome are assumed as given. However, the earliest definition of evaluation within the government context was advanced to justify strong public sector controls for results during the global economic crisis in the 1970s. From the earlier attempts to define evaluation, Rich (1979:11) refers to: “...the process of whether the desired or undesired outcomes have been reached ...and suggesting new strategies and/or definitions of future problems”. Therefore, it is about

determining whether the intervention should be continued in the future. Over time, Weiss (1984:4) introduces the aspect of policy by referring to evaluation as the “systematic assessment of the operation and/or the outcomes of a policy, compared to a set of explicit or implicit standards as a means of contributing to the improvement of a policy”. The emphasis here is put on the intended purpose of evaluation being to support decision-making retrospectively to cause policy changes by learning from the generated information.

As a tool for improving decision-making in public governance, Vedung (1997:172) advances a more generic definition of evaluation referring to evaluation as “a careful and retrospective assessment of the merit, worth and value of administration, output and outcome of government interventions, which is intended to play a role in future practical action situations”. The definition suggests that evaluation is exclusively applicable to government interventions in public administration with the purpose of using findings to inform decision-making. Relatedly, Brynard *et al.* (2015:179) refer to evaluation as the systematic assessment of a policy where actual results are compared with the anticipated outcomes using pre-determined objectives, which fits well into the context of this study. They further emphasise that the purpose of informing “future practical action situations” such as policy learning and decision-making may not always occur.

While all of the above definitions focus on the assessment of the outcome, more recent definitions include the indicators of policy impact. Considering the different definitions, this study advances a more synthesised definition that refers to evaluation as the systematic collection of data about the characteristics, activities, and outcomes of policies using research procedures to inform decisions concerning improvement in its effectiveness (Martinaitis *et al.* 2019:49; van der Meer & Edelenbos 2006; Frederiksen *et al.* 2003; Luukkonen 2002; Holzinger 2002; Patton 1997). The key element emphasised is that it is a control tool adopted to support future decision-making in government. Therefore, as a control tool, in Public Administration, it is used to collect information for assessing actual results against policy plans, and the reasons for success or failure are analysed (Mofolo, Malefetsane, Lungepi, Mkunyana & Tembile Skade 2014:5). to Smith and Larimer (2009:5), the fundamental question that policy evaluation seeks to answer is: what have we done and what values have we used in deciding on the best response, and

to what extent have the intended goals been realised? Such information is intended to establish the extent to which the desired policy objectives have been realised and decide on the next course of action. As a process of systematically investigating a given policy intervention, Brynard *et al.* (2015:179) explain that evaluation involves activities like planning, evaluation design, collection of data and analysis, as well as recommendations. It may occur in the form of a system based on the ongoing production of indicator-based information on performance, a stand-alone single study, or a combination to generate synthesised knowledge.

In terms of classification, evaluation types are distinguished based on the timing, phase of the policy, and intention of the evaluation activity. Ile (2014:165) explains that evaluation may take place at different times of the policy cycle ranging from pre-implementation, during implementation, as well as post-implementation, depending on its intended area of focus. Smith and Larimer (2009:134) present the most recognised efforts involving the pairing of twinned categories of formative and summative evaluation on the one hand, and process and outcome evaluation on the other. Further, Scriven (1991:20) asserts that the formative (*ex-ante*) evaluation focuses on policy improvement, while summative evaluation aims at establishing whether policy goals were realised. In the first category, Weiss (1998:32) explains that the forward-looking *ex-ante* conducted before the policy intervention and process evaluation for monitoring the implementation are intended for purposes of policy improvement through corrective action. According to Ile (2014:193), this pre-implementation investigation takes place at the beginning of the implementation when policy options have been identified, to predict the likely consequences of the policy direction, thereby avoiding the would-be administrative inefficiencies.

Moreover, Smith and Larimer (2009:135) explain that process evaluation may be carried out at different times, but relatively mature parts of the policy cycle make critical decisions as to whether to continue with the policy, expand it, or terminate it. Scriven (1991:19) identifies the question asked here as “should we keep doing what we are doing, do something different, or stop doing it altogether?”. Smith and Larimer (2009:134) assert that the central function of process evaluation is to establish whether the actions of the implementation actors are in line with the policy objectives by comparing current policy data with previously collected baseline data.

In the second category, the backward-looking ex-post evaluation is aimed at assessing whether the intended policy objectives have been realised and to what extent (McDavid & Hawthorn 2006; Stufflebeam 2001; Brynard *et al.* 2015:179). Relatedly, Streicher (2017:11) notes that the timing of the two is very important as a key factor in determining the use and influence of the evaluation on a policy. The third category of outcome evaluation aims at assessing what has been achieved by the policy motivated by questions as to whether the policy reflects an impact on the intended problem it was designed to solve and if not, why? Streicher (2017:14), explains that impact assessment may take a formative approach of *ex-ante* evaluation to establish possible effects of a proposed intervention. In addition, Cloete, Wissink and De Coning (2010) identify methods that can be adopted at this stage including cost-benefit analysis, trend projection, techniques, scenario-building, and modelling. The lessons from the findings are used to inform the policy direction for wider application. In the context of the APRM, the findings are shared to identify best practices and lesson learning for the purposes of improvement in mutually agreed administrative policies adopted by the AU by member states.

2.3.1 Evaluation research in the public sector

A study by Hojlund (2015:41) about the influence of evaluation emphasises intended assessment of government interventions, decision-making, and to promote policy learning and accountability in public administration. Alkin and Taut (2003:23) state that researching evaluation utilisation was motivated by concerns of evaluation under use and non-use by public sector officials in the United States' government in the 1950s when huge public investments were being made to establish and expand welfare states in North America and Western Europe. Governments focused on the use of a positivist approach to generate objective evaluation findings as feedback to policy makers to improve public expenditure efficiency, effectiveness and quality (Easton 1965). The review of literature suggests that while evaluation influence is a concept which has been relatively recently researched in the 2000s, studies on the effects of evaluation started in the 1960s with concerns of evaluation under use and non-use by public sector officials in the United States' government (Alkin & Taut 2003:23). The changing focus has been reflected in two eras from evaluation use (Leviton & Hughes 1981:527), to evaluation influence with Mark and Henry's (2004)

schematic theory of evaluation influence which has attracted more scholarly attention to date.

Over 30 years of research in evaluation have been characterised by a debate on the extent of evaluation utilisation in public administration decision-making (King & Alkin 2019:447). The debate focused on the degree to which evaluation use should occur to affect policy decisions. Various efforts examining the ways in which uptake of evaluation into the policy-making process occurs began to emerge. The evaluation studies have been characterised by debates focused on the degree to which evaluation use should occur to affect policy decisions. In the 1970s, research focused on instrumental use suggesting that evaluation information and recommendations are followed in policy-making. The findings from a major study by Patton, Grimes, Brennan, French and Blyth (1977:145) reflected a consensus on insufficient links between evaluation and policy decisions. It was argued that government officials rarely use evaluation findings to immediately make grand decisions with visible impacts, but use them conceptually in a relatively “subtle, reinforcing and reorienting way” (Patton *et al.* 1977:161). Consequently, research in “utilisation focused evaluation” (Patton 1997:82) called for a better understanding of the evaluation use and the likelihood for improved effects. Consequently, various efforts examining the ways in which uptake of evaluation into the policy-making process occurs began to emerge but with limited empirical data.

Herbert (2014:391) argues that “one of the most important events in the development of evaluation theory post 1986 was the Weiss-Patton debates”. The study of evaluation utilisation attracted considerable attention from several scholars such as Agawala-Rogers (1977:328), Johnson, Greenesid, Toal, Lawrenz and Volkov (2009:378) and Leviton and Hughes (1981:527). They emphasise the application of evaluation processes and or findings to produce an effect on decision-making. The contention was mainly between the two camps of Caplan and Patton. On the one hand, findings from a major study by Patton, Grimes, Brennan, French and Blyth (1977:145) reflected an emphasis on insufficient links between evaluation and policy decisions. Weiss (1979:427) advanced that evaluation findings may not always influence policy decisions directly and immediately but over a longer period. Weiss insisted on the indifferences in successes registered, where she argues that

“expecting evaluation to routinely result in instrumental use is unrealistic” (Weiss 1988:5). It was argued that government officials rarely use evaluation findings to immediately make grand decisions with visible impacts, but use them conceptually in a relatively “subtle, reinforcing and reorienting way” (Patton *et al.* 1977:161). On the other hand, Caplan (1979) suggested a direct connection between evaluation researchers and policy makers. He is of the view that there is a linear linkage of instrumental use of evaluations where findings translate immediately into “specific decisions and actions in line with the rational choice theory” (Mark & Henry 2004:36-38; Johnson *et al.* 2009:377; Steven 2014:33). This type is said to involve the direct and documented translation of evaluation findings and recommendations into specific actions leading to policy implementation, revision for future improvement or even termination (Alkin & King 2016:568; Weiss, Murphy-Graham & Birkeland 2005:12; Mark & Henry 2004:36). Consequently, there were increasing calls for a better understanding of the evaluation use for improved effects, with “utilisation focused evaluation” research attracting considerable attention (Johnson, Greenesid, Toal, Lawrenz & Volkov 2009:378; Leviton & Hughes 1981:527).

Findings indicate the consensus that “evaluation information must have consequences of some sort - hence use....and its negative, relative misuse”, both of which are acknowledged to take place. King and Pechman (1982) explain that evaluation use is ideally the active extreme of the utilisation continuum which implies the users’ intentional and purposeful involvement, while the other extreme of non-use is where the user may ignore, abuse, or act passively and even be unaware of the evaluation information. Johnson *et al.* (2009:378) provide a more practical definition in which they refer to evaluation use as “any application of evaluation process, products or findings to produce an effect”, while Steven and Dial (1994:3) indicate that “misuse of evaluation means that an evaluation has been used for the wrong purpose or the results of an evaluation have been misapplied or used improperly”. It may involve the manipulation of evaluation processes or findings for personal goals or self-interests to attain something in the form of support or position (Alkin & King 2017:440). Relatedly, Alkin and King (2017:435) explain that there is a situation where the output may be questioned. In the 1980s, policy evaluation became an important component of the New Public Management paradigm adopted in public administration across North America, Europe and eventually Africa (Hood

1991). During this period, most research attention had narrowed down to the actual effect of the evaluation activities or lack of it. While the emphasis had been on the direct use of evaluation data in policy-making, a systematic review of 64 studies in evaluation use by Cousin and Leithwood (1986) was a major milestone in evaluation research. Since the 1990s, Hojlund (2015:41) emphasises that the use of data in assessing government interventions gained momentum gradually with development aid in social service sectors of education and health.

2.3.2 Conceptual understanding of evaluation influence

This section discusses the adoption of evaluation influence in this study as an umbrella construct which offers a more holistic understanding of the consequences of evaluation across space and time. In the 2000s, the construct of ‘evaluation influence’ was introduced to the evaluation community by Kirkhart (2000), who called for a shift in scholarly attention from the narrower concept of evaluation use. Accordingly, Kirkhart (2000:7) observes that the term influence refers to “the capacity to or power of things”. Further, Kirkhart (2000:5) argues that the notion of influence in comparison to use is more comprehensive and provides a “more inclusive understanding of the impact of evaluations”. To explain the full effect of evaluation on policy, the notion of influence was initially presented as an extension of use (Kirkhart 2000:7; Alkin & Taut 2003). Later, it was embraced as a replacement for evaluation use insisting that it offers the potential of wider thinking of all potential evaluation effects which include mechanisms, levels and conditioning factors (Henry & Mark 2003; Mark & Henry 2004, 2012).

With inspiration from Kirkhart’s (2000:5) works, the multi-dimensional nature of evaluation utilisation was better explained under the concept evaluation influence. Henry (2000:85) emphasises that the concept of evaluation influence offers a more comprehensive framework of understanding the consequences of evaluation, by considering the “multi-dimensional, incremental, unintentional and non-instrumental, alongside those that are unidirectional, episodic, intended and instrumental, with use subsumed within it. To recognise that the practice of evaluation has a more pervasive impact than perceived, Kirkhart (2000:20-13) integrated three important variables which the many levels of and dimensions of evaluation feedback capture the potential constitutive effects of evaluation on policy processes. The first

dimension is the sources of influence, which incorporate results-based and process-based dimensions. It reflects the idea that influence can stem from both the process as well as the findings, having an effect. Kirkhart (2000:7) argues that the effect of evaluation is normally guided to attain an intended direction of ensuring social betterment, yet such effects may always be predicted, implying the existence of unintended outcomes. The second dimension is the intentions of influence, which includes the intended and unintended aspects, the process of evaluation, and the results or evaluation findings. Kirkhart (2000:7) explains that while the influence of an evaluation is normally guided properly in the intended direction to achieve the ultimate goal of social betterment, the evaluation effects may not always be predictably leading to unintended effects as well. The third dimension is the time of influence which ranges from immediately after evaluation to the end when the evaluation cycle is concluded, and finally the long-term influence way after the evaluation.

In capturing the whole story of change considering both intended and unintended outcomes, the concept of evaluation influence has been associated with several advantages (Herbert 2014:394). Firstly, it not only offers a wider scope definition, but also a framework that manifests the full impact; the theoretical organisation to effectively inform empirical knowledge on all the effects of evaluation on public policies. Secondly, its comprehensive understanding of the effects of evaluation goes further to explore the implicit mechanisms and processes affecting policy change at the various levels from individual to collective or organisational heights. Thirdly, its framework designs are oriented around linkages to already existing contracts developed in the public policy and evaluation literature like attitude change, persuasion and skill acquisition. Fourthly, the extensive nature of the influence framework enables one to study both the pathways in the influence processes as well as the situations within which the effect of evaluation failed to cause a change in policy.

2.3.3 The scope of evaluation influence

The use branch reflects the different typologies that constitute the taxonomy of evaluation use originally advanced as instrumental, symbolic, conceptual and process use (Alkin & King 2016). The first type of evaluation use is instrumental use,

which has featured more prominently in the literature about evaluation consequences to imply the direct, immediate, specific and documented adoption of relevant evaluation findings actions to inform decision-making (Rich 1977:200; Weiss 1990:22). It is characterised by immediate translation of relevant observable evidence from evaluation findings and recommendations into “specific actions leading to continuation in policy implementation, revision or even termination” (Mark & Henry 2004:37; Hojlund 2015:55). This use type is informed by the rational choice theory which suggests that evaluation findings directly translate into specific policy decisions and actions (Steven 2014:33; Graham & Birkeland 2005:14). However, Streicher (2017:24) insists that evaluation use may not always serve the actual intended objective or directly be absorbed as mainstream rationalists anticipate.

The second type of evaluation use is symbolic use, which is described as involvement in an evaluation for “self-interest or ulterior motives”, without taking any direct action even though actors’ understanding may be affected (Johnson 1989:93). Such use is manifested in the political or strategic use of findings selectively with the aim of convincing others to support a particular political position indirectly and informally to justify, legitimise and defend certain vested interests (Mark & Henry 2004:38; Kirkhart 2000:6). According to Weiss *et al.* (2005:13), this type of use is normally intended to indirectly shape policy choices without resulting in immediate decision-making or actions. Smith and Larimer (2009:115) emphasise that in this type, there is a common tendency for politics to wilfully ignore the factual outcome from the rational evaluation process, because such decisions carry minimal probability and connection to the realities in the value-driven politics. Peck and Gorzalski (2009:141) are of the view that this type is considered in the evaluation use studies as the most adopted, to justify the policy practice for accountability and compliance.

The third type of evaluation use is conceptual use or conceptual enlightenment. According to Rich (1977:200), this type of use involves “influencing a policy maker’s thinking about an issue without putting any information to any specific documentable use”. Herbert (2014:390) refers to it as an effect of evaluation that cannot be directly linked to any form of documented absorption of evaluation information as a frame of reference to decision makers. The purpose is changing the actors’ levels of understanding, attitude and knowledge, but not necessarily integrating findings into

policy documents (Peck & Gorzalski 2009:141). The insights generated from evaluation findings may take a while to inform decision-making, by questioning and challenging existing practices, but Weiss (2004:153-155) adds that findings may translate into programme reform in the long run. The fourth category of evaluation use which was introduced much later but is of central importance to this study is process use. Patton (1997:90) defines process use as “an individual change in thinking, behaviour and policy, or organisation changes in procedures and culture that occurs as a result of the learning during the evaluation”. Hojlund (2015:56) remarks that while the above four categories were recognised to dominate the literature about the theoretical conceptualisation of evaluation use, they are criticised for being vaguely defined in their measurement and operationalised multiple use types leading to overlaps between categories.

Literature indicates that by the end of the 20th Century, most scholars increasingly expressed dissatisfaction with the inconsistent and vague definition of the term evaluation use, coupled with its limited and inadequate scope, making it offer a limited contribution to the evaluation goal of improving social conditions (Caplan 1980; Patton 2000; Kirkhart 2000; Henry & Mark 2003; Mark 2008). Relatedly, Mark and Henry (2004:35) insist on key shortcomings persistent in the use literature indicating that the “contemporary theories of evaluation use were simultaneously overgrown and impoverished” due to their overlapping forms as well as lack of clear indicators. Herbert (2014:393) emphasises the tendency of the term evaluation use to “underestimate the impact of evaluation by emphasising results-based use implying that use suggests an intentionality, immediacy and directness that may not always exist”. He adds that with increasing questioning of the definitions of use, a body of research emerged as the evaluation community started discussing evaluation influence as a likely successor of evaluation use. In the new millennium, several attempts began to emerge towards updating the narrow term of evaluation use to accommodate a more revised, expanded and improved understanding of the impact of evaluation, out of which influence was conceived (King & Stevahn 2013:23; Christie 2007; Mark & Henry 2004:36; Weiss *et al.* 2005). Based on the above criticisms, Kirkhart (2000) developed the first influence framework, inspired by Alkin and Taut (2003), along with Henry and Mark (2003:294), with a focus on the major change processes triggered by the evaluation. As a way of addressing the

limitations of use focusing on direct uptake, Christie (2007:9) emphasises that the term ‘evaluation influence’ was presented as an umbrella construct adopted in describing the consequences of evaluation on public policy. Despite the scarcity of empirical knowledge about evaluation influence, some recent empirical studies are emerging in literature. Among the recent studies are Gildemyn (2014), who applied a case study in investigating the influence of Monitoring and Evaluation in Ghana’s National Health insurance. Other studies include Streicher (2017) with his study “*Evaluations, actors, and institutions in Austria*” as well as Martinaitis, Christenko and Kraučionienė (2019) with their research entitled: “*Evaluation systems: How do they frame, generate and use evidence*”.

2.3.4 The development of the evaluation use typology within public policy

The evaluation practice according to Lemire *et al.* (2019:47), has continuously evolved as a source of actionable evidence to inform public policy decisions. Reflecting the recent developments in evaluation theory and practice, Christie and Alkin’s (2013:13) classification system in the form of an evaluation theory tree identified three intellectual foundations that motivated the development of evaluation. First is social accountability, which involves the demand for demonstration of the impact of social policies and programmes. Second is systematic social inquiry, which calls for the committed application of scientific methods in conducting evaluation practice. Third is an epistemology that focuses on the nature and validity of the knowledge generated. However, this study will focus on social accountability where the use branch and influence as an offshoot are located as reflected below.

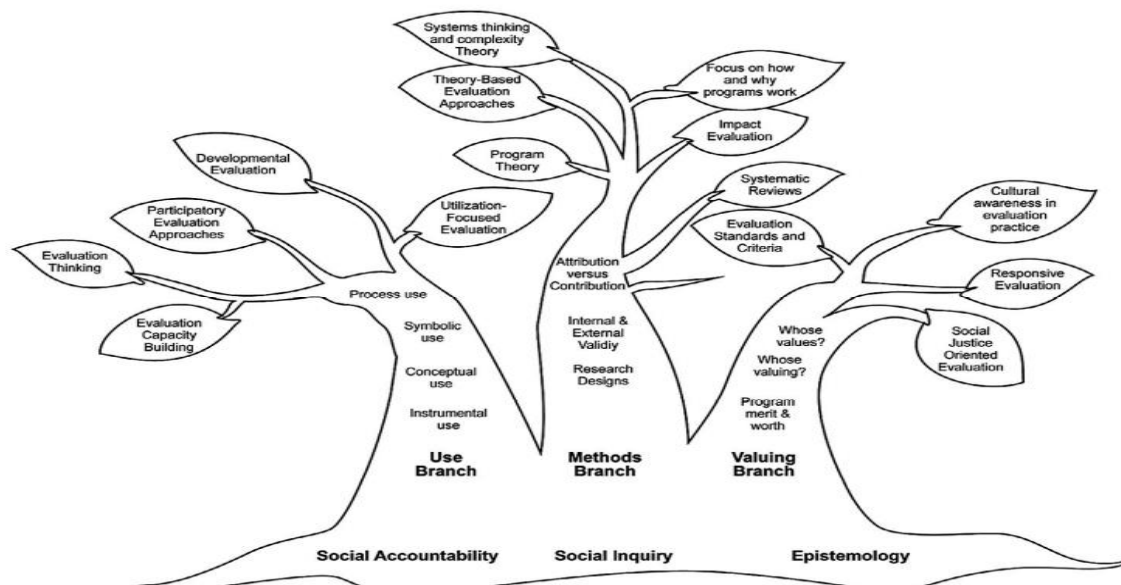


Figure 2.1: Evaluation tree illustrating development of evaluation in policy

Source: Christine & Alkin (2013:11)

With reference to Figure 2.1, in explaining what they called the emergence of “the evaluation tree in the policy forest”, Lemire *et al.* (2019:52) present the evaluation use branch as one of the three major branches of the evaluation theory tree.

Therefore, while researching evaluation influence has significantly evolved over the last 20 years, its literature is described as steadily growing but not yet of reasonable size to attract sufficient attention (Alkin & King 2019:449; Tri 2015:58; Preskil & Torres 2000). Christie (2007:9) is of the view that evaluation influence literature is still scarce, with relatively little knowledge of the ways through which evaluation influences the decisions, actions and attitudes of policy makers. Therefore, in response to calls for more empirical knowledge, this study adopts the more inclusive and broader concept of evaluation influence to contribute towards increasing its knowledge base using an empirical case of the APRM implementation in the context of Uganda. The following section assesses the functions of evaluation in a public policy context.

2.3.5 The influence of evaluation in public policy

Evaluation practice was introduced as an administrative tool intended to enhance policy makers' knowledge to respond to the growing complexity of policy issues through scientifically generated feedback (Gottstein & Matz 2004; Stone *et al.* 2001). With the increasing demand for specialist knowledge and the need for evidence-based decision-making, evaluation studies in the public sector have continued to attract increased more attention in recent two decades with interest directed towards evidence-based policy-making (Head 2008; Sanderson 2002; Stone 2002). The focus has been on understanding the nature of evaluation use, misuse and non-use which includes inaction.

Different uses of evaluation in public policy have been presented by Milzow, Reinhardt, Soderberg and Zinocker (2019:95), and include steering for establishing policy objectives, information provided to decision makers, learning for the different stakeholders, legitimisation by justifying the use of public funds, and mediation between interests of stakeholders among others. However, emerging literature

emphasises that evaluation is intended to serve two main functions of facilitating learning and accountability through which it influences policy outcomes (van der Meer & Edelenbos 2006:201; Frederickson *et al.* 2003; Holzinger 2002). The dichotomy of policy learning from previous experiences is facilitated through formative evaluation, while accountability is enhanced through summative evaluation (Scriven 1967). On the one hand, facilitating learning in evaluation is aimed at improving policy-making through formative evaluation. On the other hand, accountability enhancement is emphasised in a retrospective assessment as a means of securing oversight of a policy through summative evaluation (Hojlund 2015:43). In what follows are explanations for the two functions of evaluation through which public policy is influenced, namely: accountability promotion and learning from previous experiences.

2.3.5.1 Evaluation influence through the policy learning function

The first major function of evaluation in public administration is to promote policy learning. Policy learning and the legitimacy of past actions have been researched in political science since the 1960s (Bennet & Howlett 1992). According to Hojlund (2015:62), policy learning refers to the adaptation of views and beliefs that result inherently from the learners' sense-making from their policy involvement experience. The learning from specific evaluation exercises and sense making of the actors' past experience gathered systematically through evaluation informs the adaptation of that specific policy intervention. It involves a change in policy actors' knowledge, policy-relevant skills and attitudes due to previous or present policies (Biegelbauer 2013:50). In this section the assumption that policy learning is intrinsically linked to the use of evaluations is analysed.

Literature maintains that evaluation influence which was introduced in 2000 is intrinsically linked to policy learning theory as an alternative to knowledge utilisation (Radaelli & Meuwese 2010; Grin & Loeber 2007:201). Streicher (2017:13) argues that it is a social learning process of policy assessment, mediated by stakeholders' orientations, capabilities and interactions with other actors". Patton (2003:223) maintains that the purpose is to inform stakeholders of "what works" to improve future policy practice. Secondly, the interpretive perspective on the other hand aims

at assisting the stakeholders in providing legitimate interpretation, as well as reducing the degree of uncertainty about the workings of policy intervention.

Furthermore, Hall (1993:278) identifies three levels at which policy changes may occur due to the learning process. First are the adjustments within the setting of policy instruments such as the changes in budgetary size. Second are the changes in the actual policy instruments such as the adoption of new systems of controls. Third may involve drawing lessons leading to a complete shift in policy goals. However, some scholars have expressed concern that empirical studies in the policy learning field have remained scarce with the field “struggling to produce truly cumulative knowledge” (Dunlop & Radaelli 2013:3). Although implemented to support policy learning, Albek (1995) insists that evaluation does not always translate into learning while Boven (2005:182) argues that such control tools may be adopted at the expense of performance.

2.3.5.2 Evaluation influence through the accountability function

The second function of evaluation in public administration is the promotion of accountability. In this study, accountability is generally operationalised as “a social relationship in which an actor feels an obligation to explain and to justify his or her conduct to some significant other” (Boven 2005:23). In line with this, Hojlund (2015:32) highlights that while the primary intention of evaluation is policy learning, the institutionalisation of evaluation in public administration should be purposed to enhance accountability. He maintains that accountability is a central pillar in promoting democratic governance within the public administration context, since it is synonymous with legitimacy (Dahler–Larsen 2012). As an administrative tool, summative evaluation serves the function of enhancing accountability through retrospective assessment of policies through which legitimacy is secured (Streicher 2017:12). Therefore, accountability is associated with oversight of public administration attained through democratic control.

Basing his analysis on evidence, Hojlund (2015:32) asserts that the relationship between the two evaluation functions of accountability and learning is contradictory. He explains that the adoption of evaluation in public administration resulted in a shift in emphasis from the learning function of formative evaluation to the accountability function of summative evaluation. This situation gave rise to a paradox where the

inherent evaluation function as a learning tool was in practice rarely used as initially intended. Striking a balance between promoting policy learning and ensuring accountability is normally difficult since the emphasis is normally on one depending on the intended uses (Lethonen 2005). Therefore, this study observes that in public administration, the use of evaluation is primarily for accountability, and policy improvement through policy learning from previous experiences becomes secondary.

According to Alkin and King (2017: 436) to effectively understand use, it is necessary to focus on the intention of the user since “both the evaluation use and misuse continua have the potential to be active or passive”. On the one hand, King and Alkin (2019:432), explains that evaluation use occurs when specific types of users’ interface with types of evaluators (committed) to undertake evaluation in a particular way in a particular context where stakeholders can respond to the evaluation stimuli by considering the process or results. Patton (2015:142) explains that the more use for evaluation increases, the more misuse is also likely to occur. On the other hand, Steven and Dial (1994:3), indicate that “misuse of evaluation means that an evaluation has been used for the wrong purpose or the results of an evaluation have been misapplied or used improperly” It may involve the manipulation of evaluation processes or findings for personal goals or self-interests to attain something in form of support or position (Alkin and King 2017:440). Further, Alkin and King (2017:440) identify the various categories of misuse. Firstly, the commissioning stage of an evaluation, where it may occur for purposes of delaying action, a political show, or simply for justification of an already made decision. Secondly, during the evaluation process stage where the user may intentionally subvert the evaluation process by either preventing access to the necessary data or even cutting funding. Thirdly is the misuse of the findings which may involve the users’ intentional modification of the report content, actively misrepresenting the evaluation findings through distributing incomplete results, or even changing the evaluation information. Other forms may also include deliberate use of inaccurate evaluation information or purposeful ignoring of findings for self-interest.

Relatedly, the significance of inaction or policy actors ‘doing nothing’ within public policy learning or accountability has attracted increased attention in policy sciences. With reference to Dye’s (2012:12) definition for public policy as whatever

government chooses to do or not to do, there are increasing calls for research towards understanding and evaluating the abstinence, non-intervention, and delay of purposeful government action or inaction in public policy (Peters 2019; Howlett 2019. 't Hart and McConnell (2019:646-449) identify the forms, and drivers' inaction while highlighting the strategies for dealing with it. They explain inaction to constitute patterns of non-intervention, commitment of resources, authorisation or undertaking of executive actions by government, public organisations, policy makers and networks. The categories are presented as calculated, imposed, ideological, inadvertent, imposed and reluctant forms of inactions driven, by convictions, inadequate resources and tools, lack of political support as well as rational and institutional constraints.

To examine the common assumption that policies are made intentionally to meet public need, Maor (2019:186) explains disproportionate policy responses as outcomes that are not equally distributed to different society segments to include policy under reaction or overreaction or errors of either commission or omission as intentional responses. They are characterised by a lack of balance between the means and end or cost and benefit derived from a given policy but the intentions vary with the political motivation behind a given policy (Mele 2009:693). Further, to distinguish the different policy reactions, Maor (2014:23) explains intentional under reactions as motivated by the attempt of political executives to avoid blame from voters associated with electorally risky reforms. While overreaction is a result of desire by vulnerable politicians to claim credit through manipulation of voters' opinion to reap political capital from benefits attached to a given policy. Barber (2016:23) argues that voters prefer candidates or parties that share their perspectives on policy issues with hope that they will bring about change. In between the above two categories, non-intentional disproportionate policy responses are also advanced as policies political executives accidentally or unknowingly never intend to implement (Rhodes 2011; Maor 2017). However, the above assumptions may vary with context, which makes findings from this study relevant to understand actors' reactions. The next section provides an explanation for application of a mechanism-based approach to evaluation.

2.3.5.3 Mechanism-based approach to understanding evaluation influence

In the past decade, emerging studies for improved understanding of the impact of evaluation emphasise identifying causal mechanisms. Despite a lack of consensus on its definition, Lorenz, Sorensen and Frederiksen (2014:32) define a mechanism as “a description of how things work beneath the surface, delving into the inner workings”. With reference to policies, mechanisms give a causal account of how interventions work through a cause–effect relationship to result in the desired effects. Astbury and Leeuw (2010:364) indicate that the growing focus in evaluation influence research is about “identifying mechanisms that link cause and effect relations” They insist that the approach is a more effective way of explaining evaluation influence on public policy using a mechanism-based approach. Moreover, mechanisms as underlying processes or pathways provide an explanatory account of how stakeholders’ ideas about the desired policy outcomes are achieved through the preferred intervention (Alvarado 2017:448; Lacouture, Breton, Guichard & Ridde 2015:4; Ambrose & Ker 2014:299; Schmitt 2020:12).

For the last two decades, the mechanism-based research has attracted sustained scholarly interest as an important building block in evaluation research, and has focused on exploring the circumstances under which policy interventions work, why, and for who (Lemire *et al.* 2020: 73; Dalkin *et al.* 2015:2). The mechanistic view of thinking inside the black box is associated with advantages of identifying the “underlying entities, structures and processes which operate in specific contexts to generate certain outcomes of interest” (Schmitt 2020:11; Gerring 2007:161; Chen & Rossi 1987:102). As a result, the approach offers better explanations for understanding the internal workings of complex policy evaluations, explains variations in policy effect and increases policy relevance and effectiveness (Schmitt 2020:14; Funnel & Rogers 2011:15; Keele *et al.* 2015:1).

2.3.5.3.1 Mechanisms leading to evaluation influence

Henry and Mark (2003:299) explain that influence of evaluation at different levels through different mechanisms leads to different outcomes. The mechanisms that mediate evaluation influence include the motivational, behavioural, general, cognitive and affective mechanisms as illustrated below:

Table 2.1: Summary of the various influence mechanisms

Types of process/ outcomes	Level of analysis		
	Individual	Interpersonal	Collective
General influence	Elaboration Heuristics Priming Skill acquisition	Justification Persuasion Change agent Minority opinion influence	Ritualism Legislative hearings Coalition formation Drafting legislation Standard setting Policy consideration
Cognitive and affective Motivational	Salience Opinion/attitude valence Personal goals and aspirations	Local descriptive norms Injunctive norms Social reward exchange	Agenda setting Policy-oriented learning Structural incentives Market forces
Behavioral	New skill performance Individual change in practice	Collaborative change in practice	Program continuation change or cessation Policy change Diffusion
Relational	Self-perception of empowerment	Networks Shifts in power relations	Democratic forum Learning organizations Social justice

Source: Adapted from (Mark & Henry 2004:41; Mark 2006; Mark & Henry 2012).

With reference to Table 2.1 above, the levels of evaluation influence are identified at collective, interpersonal and individual levels (Mark & Henry 2004:43; Henry & Mark 2003:298). The first level is the individual level, at which individual-level changes take place within the actions, opinions, attitudes and knowledge of an individual due to an evaluation. The likely measurable outcomes identified include behavioural change, skill acquisition, attitudinal change, elaboration, salience and priming. The second level, interpersonal, includes changes that emerge from interactions between individuals, covering mechanisms such as persuasion, minority opinion influence, justification, social norms and change agents. The third level, the collective level, involves direct and indirect evaluation influence on the organisation's decisions and practices reflected in mechanisms such as policy agenda-setting, diffusion and policy-oriented learning. Mark and Henry (2004:41) maintain that each evaluation outcome can be an underlying mechanism leading to an outcome. However, the current study focuses on analysing the individual level of stakeholders involved in the evaluation, since decision-making takes place mainly at the level of an individual stakeholder. The next section discusses the discourse of public administration and how it lays the foundation for understanding evaluation influence in public policy.

2.4 THEORETICAL ANALYSIS AND ORIGIN OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

This section covers the origin of Public Administration and the locus of public policy evaluation in the wider discipline. It details the review of the literature of the epistemology of public administration, discusses the nature and historical evolution of the public administration discipline, the functions of public administration, as well as the link between public administration and public policy as reflected in the following sections.

2.4.1 Public administration: Conceptual analysis

The concept of public administration has been presented as complex, dynamic, fluid and without a universally agreed definition. Over time, some simple and comprehensive definitions have been identified. Among the earlier definitions, Pfeiffer and Presthus (1967:6) presents public administration as a field of study concerned largely with the different means of implementing political values that result from political processes and actions. Their emphasis is on the theory and study of the discipline. This is closely followed by Simon *et al.*'s (1968:4) definition who refer to public administration as a cooperative group effort aimed at efficient and effective execution of public policies in a public sector organisation environment. It is generally concerned with the nature of individual and collective human behavior in influencing the achievement of set goals. Rosenbloom (1986) cited in Tshiyoyo (2018:85) offers a more comprehensive definition capturing different aspects of the public sector, suggesting that: "Public administration is the use of managerial, political and legal theories and processes to fulfill legislative, executive and judicial government mandates for the provision of regulatory and service functions for society as a whole or some segments of it". The above definition is adopted in this study due to its comprehensive nature integrating the theory and practice of public administration. The evolution and growth of evaluation is deeply reflected in the theories, approaches and paradigms of public administration from the writings of Plato, when he introduced the idea of evaluation of government performance (Scruton 2007:527). Likewise, the evaluation system promotes accountability by producing information on service delivery which is used to inform decisions in public administration through accountability and learning functions. In what follows the study reflects on how public administration theory lays the foundation for the development, study and practice of evaluation.

2.4.2 Public Policy evaluation as a sub-field in Public Administration.

The concept of evaluation can also be traced from the writings of Plato when he introduced the idea of evaluation of public sector performance of governments. From the above statement, Scruton (2007:527) comments that this political philosopher was justifying the need to align policies with the public interest. Relatedly, Aristotle in his works is said to have laid the foundation for evaluation by questioning whether the interest of those in government is aligned to the public interest, which is intended to promote governance principles of accountability, effectiveness and equity. The two philosophers were interested in the questions around government results and seeking explanations for the nature of policy impact. Their works contributed to the initial ideas towards the establishment of evaluation systems in public service to promote accountability and results (Steen & Valters 2012).

Over time, evaluation was emphasised in public administration in the 1960s in the United Kingdom. It was later institutionalised as an integral part of managerialism with the major purpose of promoting accountability through efficient and effective public service delivery. The literature on evaluation suggests that it is still growing, and a debate continues as to whether it is a discipline without fully-fledged and recognised theories. Relatedly, Basheka and Byamugisha (2015) observe that “while the field has methodological challenges as well as utilisation challenges and has not yet developed its theories, its multi-disciplinary approach has seen different disciplines injecting the needed theories”. As a result of its evolution, no specific theory of evaluation is presented, but instead there are some frameworks that are linked to theories from other disciplines, key to which is public administration. This argument forms the basis for justifying the theoretical location of this study within Public Administration as reflected in the following sections of the chapter. The next section explains the nature and context of Public Administration in which policy evaluation is adopted as an accountability tool to ensure result-oriented efficient and effective service delivery.

2.4.3 Nature of Public Administration theory and practice

This study recognises Public Administration as a complex field of relations and processes between government actors, but efforts have been made to understand what it constitutes. Thornhill and van Dijk (2010:102) argue that the ontology of

Public Administration is more complex, with no clear characteristics or empirical phenomena agreed upon by authors. Some scholars tend to apply Public Administration (discipline, science and study) to mean the same thing as public administration (sector or profession). This study observes the two interdependent elements of theory and practice that constitute public administration (Thornhill 2014:4). The researcher differentiates between the two to avoid a similar mistake of using them interchangeably. Public Administration exists in the form of an academic discipline as well as a practical activity, which makes it necessary in this study to distinguish between the two.

In line with the above, Raadschelders (2011:923) describes public administration as characterised by a multi-faced nature of which is reflected in the art/craft and science. To precisely understand what it is, attempts to differentiate between public administration (with lower case) from Public Administration (with upper case) began with Hughes (2003:3) and was expounded upon by Rutgers (2010:3). According to Botes and Roux (1992:257), Public Administration with a capital P and A refers to an academic field studied at university as a subject, that involves understanding the public administration with a lower case and an as a field of practice.

On the one hand, Public Administration (upper case) refers to an academic discipline concerned with studying specific administrative phenomena as observed within the public sector. Thornhill (2014:5) is of the view that Public Administration as an academic discipline with an upper case refers to “a discipline that studies specific phenomena in the public sector”. Madumo (2018:40) explains that to be considered a discipline any clustered knowledge should have a theoretical framework that is working towards advancing the development and purity of that discipline through which phenomena associated with it can be explored, described and explained. As an academic field, Public Administration involves studying the operations of civil servants while implementing public policies, as well as their interactions with politicians who pass the policies (Bovaird & Löffler 2009:6). As society evolved, the need to effectively deal with complex public challenges necessitated the training of professional administrators through studying the discipline which Thornhill (2014:5) presents as the effective execution of public policies. Although not as old as the

practice, scholars have proposed theories, structures, systems, processes and procedures through which government objectives can be achieved.

Public Administration involves procedures through which policies are translated into action to achieve intended public service delivery objectives and results with maximum efficiency (Mullins 2019:938). Relatedly, in Waldo's 1948 publication entitled *The Administrative State*, Public Administration is conceptualised as a specialised academic field and autonomous science with different fields focusing on studying the behavior of public servants. Similarly, Rutgers (2010:11) explains that theorists in this field consider Public Administration to include a combination of structures, systems, processes, procedures and actions serving the purpose of attaining government goals and objectives, although the latter emphasises processes and procedures for translating public policies into management actions in pursuit of public interest and service delivery. The area of emphasis depends on the approaches informing the theoretical line of argument as explained in the following section.

On the other hand, public administration (lower case) is defined as the practice and procedure of various activities in which public officials are engaged in serving the public by implementing the formulated policies into action (Rutgers 2010:3; Hughes 2003:3). This practice is said to be as old as when people started living in societies with different groups to achieve collective interests. Thornhill (2014:4) refers to public administration with lower case as a practice of activities performed by public officials through supervisory posts when they are contributing to policy-making, coordination of functions, are involved in human resource issues, determine the procedures of work, exercise control within the branch, directorate or sections for which they are responsible. Public administration as a field of practice is generally understood as an activity aimed at serving the public through which public servants and officials implement policies derived from the interaction of different policy actors. This supports Nnoli (2003:10) who points out that it is a process and machinery through which government functions are performed, it is composed of a network of human relationships and interactions across government, business and civil society, as well as activities concerning public wellbeing.

Based on the above mentioned arguments, Tshiyoyo (2018:84) demonstrates that public administration is both the machineries of government and also an integrated process through which government functions are conducted. It is presented as constituting multi-faced, complex and networked relationships cutting across those governing and the governed through which government activities are performed (Nnoli 2003:10). Based on that background, a more comprehensive definition of public administration associated with various aspects of the public sector is considered. It is presented as the use of political, legal and managerial processes to execute legislative, judicial and executive mandates of government in the provision and regulation of extended public service functions (Rosenbloom 1986). The two are continuously interdependent as the practice is largely influenced by ideas proposed by the theorists, while at the same time, what is found to work in practice is integrated into the theory.

In the context of the current study, a combination of both the practice and theory will be adopted in explaining the phenomenon of evaluation influence in public policy. According to Rutgers (2010:4), the two appear intricately intertwined, but this chapter focuses more on explaining the linkage between the phenomenon under study and the theories within the Public Administration discipline. Therefore, after synthesising the different definitions, and the phenomenon of evaluation influence, this study operationalises Public Administration as a field of study and practice concerned with understanding the behaviour and actions of individuals within a public sector organisational context, as well as how these influence decisions, collective performance and outcomes in service delivery.

2.4.4 Origin of Public Administration as an academic discipline

This section explains the development of Public Administration in terms of its evolution from being a co-discipline of political science to a fully-fledged separate discipline with its theoretical framework and body of knowledge. The study acknowledges that public administration has existed since human civilisation as a function through which organised groups of people achieve collective objectives by working together. Available literature suggests two possible origins to the Public Administration discipline. Sieving from that argument, Henry (2013:36) mentions one school of thinking suggests that the discipline has its origin traced in the United

States with Woodrow Wilson's 1887 seminal essay on "*The Study of Administration*" which was published in 1887 in the *Political Science Quarterly*. Consequently, the discipline is presented as an academic field concerned with understanding the functions and processes of government to ensure the effective execution of public policies. Although evaluation was not directly embraced at the time, the American Political Science Association (APSA) Conference on public service in New York in 1914, resolved that both practitioners and university theorists agreed to enhance the operations of public agencies. This was ensured by investing in the training of professionals through the establishment of public specialised public administration schools (Henry 2013:37).

Another school of thinking, according to Langrod (1961:69), instead associates its origin with the European continent, where it was being taught in German Universities between 1774 and 1817. He insists that American scholars who explain its evolution could have missed or disregarded capturing the historical component, thereby presenting it as a new American innovation. It became popular to American universities with formal training of administrative bureaus as opposed to being the European historical innovation (Hanakon 1983:44). To emphasise this argument, Thornhill (2006:794) indicates that by 1855, a European professor, by the name of Lorenz von Stein was already acknowledged as the founding father of the Science of Public Administration which was mostly linked to administrative law. Thornhill (2014:9) explains that the discipline was also explored by other scholars from Europe and Africa who studied administrative requirements for giving effect to public policies with an emphasis on legality of actors and accountability. At the time however, limited emphasis was directly given to evaluation.

2.4.5 Locus and focus of Public Administration

This section explores the location of Public Administration in terms of the institutional place of this discipline, as well as the focus which addresses the aim that constitutes its specialisation. On the one hand, Thornhill (2014:5) defines *focus* as the major goal for the study of the Public Administration discipline, either on society's social contract or the law and order maintenance. On the other hand, he explains that *locus* deals with examining where the discipline is located, whether in sociology, political science, or any other social science. Henry (1986:20) identifies paradigms that form

the development of the science of Public Administration by considering the discipline's focus (the major aim of the study) or locus (where it is located). Relatedly, Thornhill (2014:5) identifies three major stages, namely the embryonic, the bureaucratic and the public management stages. He presents the embryonic stage as constituted by contributions from philosophers like Aristotle, Plato and Machiavelli, on the moral and political issues in the functioning of the national state towards meeting social needs during the 16th Century. The focus was on training expert civil servants with administrative knowledge to efficiently run state operations, a need that increased in the 18th Century.

Relatedly, Rutgers (2010:2) puts forward an argument that the scope of Public Administration is considered so wide that it covers several concepts and constructs related to the functioning of the state. Its theory covers areas such as public institutions, purpose and meaning of government, organisational structures, politics, human resource issues, financial matters and public accountability among others. The multi-faceted nature of Public Administration creates an identity crisis in defining the uniqueness of the discipline and what it is about in its existential terms. Raadschelders (1999:285) argues that this lack of clear identity has resulted in controversies related to firstly, its epistemological status, as well as the discipline's universally acceptable methodological and theoretical approaches. Secondly, challenges related to the nature of government operations and how they affect the Public Administration practitioners in public service, the members of the public, as well as the academicians studying it. Irrespective of its identity crisis, evaluation is conducted in all of the functions of that stated covered under Public Administration.

Over the years, the study of the Public Administration discipline has evolved as a complex field manifesting elements of both art and science studies (Berkley & Rouse 2004:7). It has undergone several changes with debates surrounding both its recognition as a science with a precise definition, as well as its appropriate applicability in a dynamic society. According to Riccucci (2010:15-17), an identity debate emerged on the status of Public Administration, either as an art or science within the broader context of social sciences or a unique craft with both traits. In response to the identity question, Dubnick (1999:7), brings out three strands of scholars. The first strand is of the view that Public Administration is a science that

should observe a positivist scientific and analytical rigor. The second strand suggests that it is an art that takes a softer approach as a social science. The third strand considers it both an art and a science.

In the first strand, Riccucci (2010:15) observes that Public Administration is historically considered an art with a focus on the centrality of metaphysical factors in administrative theory building, and an applied field for solving problems based on experience and relevant to practice. This strand suggests that administrative knowledge is generated out of reasoning through empirically descriptive, normative and prescriptive methods. Since the discipline is normally mixed up with elements of management practice, Hodgkinson (1978:4) points to the difficulty of ensuring clear distinction of public administration until the concepts of administration and management are well differentiated. The administration is therefore perceived as art through which various resources are put together to attain intended goals. Consequently, it is through public administration that the actions of individuals involved in working towards realising particular objectives are directed, coordinated and monitored. He concludes that Public Management is concerned with the art leading to the application of managerial techniques, while Public Administration represents more of the science component.

The second strand is the scientific strand which insists that administrative knowledge should be rationally derived with testable hypotheses, in a deductive value-free way (Riccucci 2010:15-16). While science is understood as a branch of study whose body of knowledge is characterised by facts, some scholars argue that due to its practical application, public administration presents characteristics of science since it is informed by a set of standard principles. This position was largely influenced by insights from Herbert Simon's work *Administrative Behaviour* (1947). Concerning how policy choices are made, he preferred a scientific perspective suggesting that decision-making is central in public administration.

To further explain Lorenz's von Stein's seminal work, Thornhill (2006:794) are of the view that the science of Public Administration is characterised by the following key aspect: firstly, a science that integrates several disciplines, secondly, composed of both theory and practice, and finally, must aim at adopting a scientific methodology.

This collaborates with White (1955:2) who indicates that the system of public administration is composed of laws, regulations, codes, relationships, customs and practices existing in any organisation to fulfill public policy. In addition, Thornhill and van Dijk (2010:98) argue that the justification of Public Administration as a scientific study lies in its generalisation of what causes certain actions and offers explanations for deviations from expected standards. However, Raadschelders (2011:920) cautions that this scientific position was questioned later by Greenfield (1986) based on its non-scientific method of inquiry. Similarly, Fukuyama (2004:189) questions the scientific nature of public administration since the discipline lacks globally standardised valid rules, insisting that the discipline is more of an art than a science. It is considered an art because it requires creativity, innovation and experience to be effectively conducted by public officials.

The third stand advances Public Administration as both a science and an art. According to Riccuci (2010:15-18), considering the existing variations, the discipline should strive to attain an appropriate methodology. This is further based on the argument that understanding its complexity necessitates more than scientific analytical skills but also judgments, experience and reasoning. In line with the above, Zalmanovitch (2014:812) proposes that Public Administration's unit of analysis is "the sum of all interrelationships between the three pillars" of political, legal and managerial approaches to public administration. He indicates that due to the complex nature of administrative issues that are unpredictable, positivist thinkers limited their interest to managerialism as opposed to political and legislative pillars of public administration. Zalmanovitch (2014:812) maintains that Public Administration is a profession without a distinct status in social sciences; it is more than a management practice but a technical discipline.

Consequently, due the uniqueness of Public Administration as an academic field of study that combines both the art and science elements in addressing public challenges, Kuye (2005:526) stresses that the discipline is not purely either of the two but a combination of both science and art. Therefore, as a social science with results that give limited attention to politics (Ringeling 2012:2), several tools have been introduced which focus on decision-making, efficiency, output, quality, cost-benefit analysis and performance, among others. This study emphasises that all of

the above strands of public administration involve the application of evaluation as an accountability tool for realising results in the public sector.

2.4.6 The functions of public administration

To provide a clear understanding of public administration, the general functions of administration provide important insights into how pre-determined goals can be attained. Cornell (2010:1) explains that Public Administration is the governance of public organs; the administration is the practice of organising government policies in a way that government activities are handled correctly to the public interest. In doing so, attention is given to the regulations and rules governing the conduct of public servants while executing their duties.

Cloete (1986:2) points out that administration can be divided mainly into six multi-faceted functions. These include policy-making, staffing, organising, financing, control and determination of work procedures. Thornhill (2012:88) explains the term generically as opposed to line functions by indicating that they are cross-cutting and commonly performed by all public institutions while following certain standardised, rational and logical guidelines. As each of the generic functions will be thoroughly explained, the focus in this study will be closely related to those out of which evaluation is conducted.

2.4.6.1 Policy-making

The policy-making function is considered to be the most basic in the establishment of public organisations, as it informs the activities to be undertaken. Policy refers to a statement of intent to be pursued or a plan of action intended to translate public challenges into solutions. Smith and Larimer (2009:49) indicate that public policy is fundamentally about decision-making, involving representative choices which are backed by coercive powers from the state. Public administrators conduct their functions through the public policy process of development, legitimisation, implementation, evaluation as well as the termination of policies considered irrelevant (Madue 2016:118). Purshottama *et al.* (2014:158) explain that policy can be construed as a set of separate or interrelated ideas, formal actions, proposals, planned activity, or government programmes. Since public administration conducts its functions through public policy, the ultimate goal is the realisation of pre-

determined common objectives by ensuring a system of accountability for the results (Cloete & de Coning 2008:4; Brynard 2006:166). Based on the policy evaluation outcomes, Smith and Larimer (2009:4) maintain that public policy involves positive or negative patterns of action taken by the government over a period in response to public demand. Basheka and Byamugisha (2015:18) identify outcomes to include a system of laws, measures, regulations, decisions of actors and priorities of funding by the government.

2.4.6.2 Organising

The second generic function is organising, where in public administration multiple stakeholders participate in public policy design, implementation and consequently evaluation. To Baird, Post and Mahon (1990:10), organising involves identifying the activities to be undertaken, dividing and assigning them into the different units and responsible persons, while coordinating such efforts towards accomplishing the organisational objectives. Thornhill (2012:167) suggests that it is a complex process that includes the coordination of individuals and groups that are responsible for performing assigned functions in a given structure and laid down procedure. Likewise, Sohela (2017:109) is of the view that it is a practice of structuring human and other organisational resources necessary to implement policies and plans in alignment with the available resources. In doing so, Denhardt and Denhardt (2009:164) add that through organising the organisation is divided into structures along with major activities and specialties. Mudumo (2011:26) explains that the process of organising involves identifying tasks, classifying them into clusters, assigning the employees responsibilities, and evaluating the responsible persons. The purpose is to develop a logical pattern for ensuring the effective realisation of pre-set objectives using evaluation among other tools. It is through evaluation that administrators must ensure that the designed job descriptions are commensurate to the set criteria for the position and the allocated responsibilities.

2.4.6.3 Financial management

The third function is financial management where a system is considered critical in facilitating the realisation of the public need to ensure accountability and value for money to the taxpayer for the public revenues. Irrespective of the type of

organisation, public or private, this generic function ensures that limited resources are put to maximum utilisation (Selepe 2009:59). The functions involve activities like budgeting, accounting, control, reporting, monitoring and evaluation (Fourie 2017:272). In his final analysis Thornhill (2012:191) asserts that without this function, no policy-making, implementation or evaluation can occur, since all administrative actions conducted have financial implications directly or indirectly. Van Dijk (2003:40) explains that all public institutions operate through different sources for government financing such as taxes, loans, fees, levies and tariffs to facilitate public service delivery to the benefit of the public. Over time, financial administration has evolved from activities like basic record keeping and theft control to financial policy analysis, forecasting, and impact studies (Mikesell 2000:348). It is through evaluating utilisation of public funds, that governments are expected to ensure maximum efficiency and value for the money kept in the trust of the public by observing the legislations regulating the collection and use of public finances.

2.4.6.4 Human Resource Management

The fourth function is human resources management (staffing) which involves activities related to the provision and utilisation of human resources which includes evaluation of their performance. While Condrey (2005:38) broadly refers to it as public human resource administration, Van Dijk (2003:41) describes this administrative function as an activity that ensures that the most suitable individuals are recruited and utilised fully according to their potential. Effective organisational performance and service delivery require staff members who are contented since they are the most valuable resource (Kahn 2008:87). According to Dessler (1985:197), the range of activities covered in this function include personnel recruitment, training, appraisal and development in a workplace setting where they perform specific functions. The centrality of this function in administration is further explained by Lussier (2006:260) who argues that it forms the basis on which the appropriate quality and quantity of public servants are selected, appointed, trained, and utilised to efficiently achieve organisational objectives. Therefore, evaluation cuts across all of the stages of people management from ensuring entry of the right number and quality of public administrators to appraisal of performance.

2.4.6.5 Determining work procedure

The fifth function is the determination of work procedures. To ensure effective realisation of the collective objectives in any public organisation, clear work procedures constitute the guide to individual employees with varying viewpoints, and how to go about their duties cooperatively. Work processes and systems are established with the assumption that each employee's act is informed by a logical and organised method (Madumo 2011:25). In line with this argument, Thornhill (2012:253) explains that the determination of work procedures involves identifying the most effective way of performing a task which leads to the more efficient functioning of an organisation with minimal cost, labor and time. The information generated through an evaluation system on the procedures for realising organisation objectives and policies is used by public administrators to determine what works and what does not work in a particular context of government institutions. The reviewed policies may prescribe better procedures, tasks and technology or enhance the capacity of systems and individual actors.

2.4.6.6 Control

The sixth generic function is control. It is concerned with activities intended to maintain certain standards within an organisation through evaluation of the activities in public administration (Sokhela 2017:1090). To successfully perform this function, Shafritz (2004:186) explains that control involves a process of comparing actual performance with the planned or standard performance followed by implementation of corrective action where inadequate or unsatisfactory performance is observed. The function is aimed at ensuring accountability of officials' decisions and actions to the public, in whose interest policies should be made and implemented, since the citizens finance the government activities through payment of taxes. Donnely, Gibson and Ivancevich (1981:141) explain the three prerequisites for implementing the control function to include established standards, information available based on which deviation is determined, as well as corrective action to address the observed shortfall. Van Dijk (2003:43) emphasises control over government activities as one of the major practices that make public administration unique. Standard measures in the form of a control system are intended to both regulate the functioning of the public servants and ensure effective policy implementation (Madumo 2011:26). Through evaluation, the public administrators determine the progress of the

organisational performance in line with the set objectives and timelines. Evaluation is conducted to assess the degree of adherence to the control standards and provide explanations for any possible deviation.

2.5 PARADIGMS IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION THEORY

This section presents approaches, theories and paradigms for locating the study within the Public Administration discipline. The section discusses approaches in the Public Administration discipline that contribute towards explaining policy evaluation and its functions of efficiency, accountability, effectiveness and learning. The major approaches in explaining evaluation in the public sector include the classical approach, the systems approach the rational approach, and the human relations approach. By considering approaches and paradigms connected to evaluation, this section explains how this study fits within the discipline of Public Administration. Emphasis is on the evolution of paradigms, which were advanced to promote beliefs in efficiency and performance in public policy.

In their analysis, Basheka and Byamugisha (2015:16) assert that the growing literature in the field of policy evaluation lacks its developed theories due to its multi-disciplinary nature. Therefore, the study considers evaluation as a form of policy analysis within the discipline of public administration. In the study of government, different academic fields tend to focus on specific aspects of human behaviour. With the lack of a uniform disciplinary focus on solutions to challenges facing governments, approaches have varied from prescriptive to pragmatic ways of developing knowledge. Consequently, in explaining the public administration phenomenon, reference has been made to schools of thought, paradigms and approaches in the discipline. Tshiyoyo (2018:79) identifies the different waves in the discourse of public administration which have resulted in paradigmatic changes prescribing new organisational patterns with theoretical and practical applications. Farazmand (2010: 352) explains that the underlying assumptions of what is practiced in public administration have been critiqued with some rejected and replaced by new approaches and paradigms. Henry (1986:20-43) identifies several paradigms that explain the focus or the locus of the Public Administration discipline.

A paradigm is described by Thornhill (2014:3) as a set of assumptions, practices, values and concepts that constitute the way in which a discipline is considered to look at a given phenomenon. Like wise an approach is presented by Denhardt (2004:73) as a real-life case of an organisation for transmitting knowledge. Above all, a theory is explained by Thornhill and van Dijk (2010:97) as characterised by universal application and ideal but not limited to any organisation. This study recognises the argument made by Thornhill and van Dijk (2010:103) that there is not a single paradigm to adequately explain a phenomenon being studied.

Theories are developed to offer knowledge to intended users in explaining the phenomena, enhancing their understanding of human behaviour and actions, as well as predicting likely outcomes. To Thornhill and van Dijk (2010:97), theories refer to generalisations universally applicable across phenomena to support explanations and predictions about human actors or activities of interest across space and time. Van der Walt (2017:2) considers a theory as a formalised and systematic expression of observations previously registered by the investigator which is testable, logical and predictive. In his analysis, Whitten (1985) emphasises that a theory contains four essential elements. Firstly, logical factors, variables and constructs may be considered to explain the phenomenon of interest. Secondly, there is a need for a criterion for assessing the extent of relevant factors to consider for comprehensiveness in explaining the phenomenon. Thirdly, there is the justification for selecting factors for explaining a given relationship in the phenomenon of interest. Fourthly, there are boundary conditions by answering the questions of where and when. This study observes that evaluation with its multi-disciplinary origin also lacks a generally agreed-upon theory, but attempts have been made to generate a universal theory along with several approaches to address emerging challenges in the field over time.

Govender and Reddy (2012:78) argue that a theory with validity enhances practice by providing knowledge that can be used in practice such as evaluation in administration. The study observes that evaluation is yet to develop a single unifying theory, but is “still engaged in a systematic pursuit of a validated theory”. In line with this, Stufflebeam and Coryn (2014:46) indicate “the evaluation field lacks a sufficient body of research and steadily improving theories flowing from an ongoing process of

rigorous, empirically grounded theory development”. Furthermore, Donald and Lipsey (2006:59) explain that evaluation theory should encompass the descriptive traditional social science theory. It should include generalised statements describing, predicting and explaining what is, which this study locates in the discipline of Public Administration.

To effectively understand the foundation of Public Administration in terms of state functions about the public, Henry (1995:21) recommends the need to consider both its theory and practice which are explained through the paradigms and approaches explained below in this section. The selected paradigms are considered to have laid a solid foundation towards understanding the evaluation phenomenon being studied. The discipline of Public Administration is said to be as old as humanity, and its discourse is classified into various phases which have been changing, shaped by both ideology and political thought. Thornhill (2014:5) identifies three major stages in the development and growth of the science of Public Administration, namely the embryonic, the bureaucratic, and the Public Management stages. He presents the embryonic stage as constituted by contributions from philosophers like Aristotle, Plato, and Machiavelli on the moral and political issues in the functioning of the national state towards meeting social needs during the 16th Century. The focus was on training expert civil servants with administrative knowledge to efficiently run state operations, a need that increased in the 18th Century. Although not reflected in some of the earlier paradigms, the formal birth of policy evaluation research and practice may be directly traced from the 1960s when the demand for data to support efficient decision-making and accountability was introduced in the public sector.

Henry (2013:37) observes that Public Administration has undergone six paradigms through which various scholars have contributed knowledge aimed at distinguishing it as a standalone and unique discipline in three different waves. First, in 1887, the publication of Wilson Woodrow’s seminal article in the United States significantly led to increased interest in the discipline which attracted scholarly contributions in the form of paradigms within and beyond the United States. These include the period from 1900-1926 of the politics/administration dichotomy, from 1927-37 containing the principles of Public Administration, from 1950-70 of Public Administration as Political Science, from 1950-70 for Public Administration as Management and from 1970 to

date. The years from 1900 onward were characterised by Public Administration as Public Administration and the governance era. In what follows is an analysis of each paradigm and how the elements of evaluation are reflected, especially with its emphasis during the era of Public Administration as Management.

While the chapter highlights the different paradigms, it acknowledges that the interest in evaluation and its use for decision-making in public administration began in the 1950s to improve policy-making when assessing huge public investments in government interventions intended to expand welfare states in North America and Western Europe (Hojlund 2015; Easton 1965). Emphasis will however be placed on the managerial era in the 1990s, when it gained prominence, under the wave of New Public Management (Hood 1991). It was during this period that Vedung (1997:173) referred to it as a linguistic magnet. He argued that evaluation in Public Administration was informed by the rational economic theory of human behavior, where attainment of social betterment is the goal of the evaluation. The data generated for policy makers and implementers is used to learn lessons from previous decisions on public spending and consistently improve on the efficiency and effectiveness of their policy interventions (Mark & Henry 2003; Vedung 1997). Over time, with the emergence of the managerial era in public administration, evaluation studies and practice in the public sector have continued to attract increased attention in recent years (Head 2008; Sanderson 2002; Stone 2002). There is increasing demand for specialist knowledge to respond to the increasing complexity of public policy issues and the need for evidence-based decision-making (Gottstein & Matz 2004; Stone *et al.* 2001). According to Streicher (2017:7), policy makers are increasingly using the evidence from evaluation and research to improve their policy measures, arguing that evaluations are now considered an integral component of supporting evidence-based policy-making. In what follows are the six paradigms highlighting the development of evaluation in the discipline.

2.5.1 The politics/administration dichotomy paradigm (1900-1926)

This first paradigm of the Public Administration discipline focused on addressing the core contention of the separation of politics from administration. Wilson (1887:210), argues that “administration lies outside the proper sphere of politics”, which aimed at clearing the confusion between the two. In his seminal article associated with the

origin of studying Public Administration entitled “*The Study of Administration*”, published in 1887, Woodrow Wilson introduced the study of administration as a discipline concerned with executive functions of government which covers the policy processes among which is evaluation. He suggested that administrative questions may not always be resolved through political activities but also technical processes. Furthermore, he argued in favor of distinguishing the study of politics from the study of administration insisting that: “...the field of administration is a field of business, it is removed from the hurry and strife of politics”. This implies that administration which constitutes evaluation is more technical than politics, since it is concerned with a more scientific process of ensuring efficient and effective policy implementation.

In contributing towards this paradigm, Leonard D. White (1955) in his book entitled *Introduction to Public Administration* supported the separation of administration from politics. As one of the very first Public Administration books regarding the debate, its focus was on promoting the position that administrative affairs should be free of political interference (Henry 2013:38). Moreover, the argument is explained by Goodnow (1992:25) who associates politics with the expression of the will of the state through the development of public policies, while the administration concerns the execution of such policies effectively which requires evaluation. Policy, which is the functional approach to public administration, is largely influenced by the policy process as composed of the four core functional stages of agenda-setting, followed by formulation, implementation and then evaluation (Anderson 1990:18; Rosenbaum 1991:66). Therefore, although policy evaluation was not directly presented as a key element within administration during this paradigm, evaluation was implied as part of the technical component of administration to promote efficient and effective public sector organisation. Although associated with the earliest political philosophers like Aristotle and Socrates, the concept of evaluation did not feature in this paradigm but started attracting increasing attention in the second paradigm as explained in the following section.

2.5.2 The principles of the Public Administration paradigm (1927-37)

The focus of this second paradigm was mainly about identifying the core principles of Public Administration. Central to this paradigm was the argument that the application of scientific principles of administration is necessary if maximum efficiency in

government is to be attained. It was during this paradigm that the first wave of evaluation was ushered in within public administration. Vedung (2010:172) indicates that evaluation in Public Administration was informed by the rational economic theory of human behavior as positive and evolutionary.

Henry (2013:38) remarks that this emphasis was highlighted in the seminal work of Willoughby (1927) entitled *Principles of Public Administration* which significantly gave rise to the increased popularity of Public Administration training in universities, as well as the necessity of its practice in the United States public service. Besides William F. Willoughby, other key proponents who greatly contributed to this paradigm were Fredrick W. Taylor, Henry Fayol, as well as Luther Gulick and Lyndall Urwick. In their 1937 publication, Gulick and Urwick contributed significantly to defining the scope of the science of the study of Public Administration borrowed from Henry Fayol's fourteen principles of organisation (Thornhill 2014:7). They emphasised the principles for promoting organisational efficiency through the acronym of POSDCORB, by integrating different ideas from earlier theorists to present a comprehensive theory of Public Administration applicable in the public sector administrative activities.

The first approach in this paradigm is scientific management by Fredrick Taylor and its emphasis on efficiency, productivity and time in undertaking managerial functions in public organisations by adopting the best but cheapest possible way (Shafritz, Russel & Borick 2013:223). To Denhardt (2004:52), Taylor as the father of this approach contributed towards a better understanding of efficiency, productivity and time in organisations. He first coined the concept of management and defined it in terms of the best and cheapest possible way of making people achieve desired objectives. This is realised through performing several management functions which Shafritz, Russel and Borick (2013:223) include as: planning, coordinating, control, organising, command of people and forecasting. All of these are intended to promote organisational efficiency and effectiveness in large-scale organisations, which is the same purpose intended in the evaluation and its learning function.

The second approach in the paradigm is the classical approach by Henri Fayol, Max Weber and Chester Barnard, which introduced the idea of one best way through which a public organisation must pursue its administrative functions and accomplish its economic and production goals (Fox, Schwella and Wissink 2004:9). Its basic tenets originate from the industrial revolution, and the professions of economics and industrial engineering. Fox, *et al.* (2004:9) present the central argument being that in any type of organisation, there is an organisational purpose and one best way of doing things which can be devised by applying a set of principles. These ideas laid the foundation for the development of elements on management, control, auditing and feedback as practiced in modern evaluation. Performance monitoring tools such as a stopwatch and supervision of employees to concentrate on operational functions were introduced, marking the beginning of evaluation systems.

The third approach in this paradigm is the rational approach by Herbert Simon, who in the 1940s emphasised that one is efficient by being rational. His comprehensive theory of *administrative behavior* suggests a positivist approach to knowledge acquisition and interpretation, objective assessment of facts to inform planning, and decision-making to achieve organisational goals (Morgan & Cook 2014:68). To Denhardt (2004:73), Simon's argument is based on the rational approach and suggests that before arriving at any conclusions, the scientists must first objectively and consistently assess the facts regarding achievement of organisational goals. The same principle applies to evaluation where data generated is used as the basis for informing improvements in administrative decisions and actions. The underlying logic inherent within the evaluation theory arose from the economic and rational choice theories (Sanderson 2000; Schwandt 1997; Albaek 1995). Seasons (2003:431) explains that with the introduction of the rational model, the principles of evaluation were introduced and adopted in public administration from the 1950s onwards.

With major investments in social policies within the United States of America (USA) in the 1960s, evaluation was adopted, and studies were increasingly conducted as a control measure in the public sector to track policy impact, efficiency, effectiveness, and value for money (Shadish *et al.* 1991:22). This formed the first wave of the directly intentional introduction of evaluation in Public Administration. Based on the positivist paradigm, it was argued that attainment of social betterment is the goal of

the evaluation, through which data is generated for policy makers and implementers to learn lessons from previous decisions on public spending and to consistently improve on the efficiency and effectiveness of their policy interventions (Mark & Henry 2003; Vedung 1997). The underlying logic inherent within the evaluation theory arose from the economic and rational choice theories (Sanderson 2000; Schwandt 1997; Albaek 1995). Hojlund (2015:32) explains that the reforms that involved the introduction of evaluation were intended to establish the variants that reduce the policy outcome as well as retention of knowledge on effective programmes.

Evaluation in public policy involved three different waves. The first wave involved attempts being made to scientifically establish the impact of the increased public expenditure on new public programmes like education as a way of providing public accountability for efficiency (Streicher 2017:8). The evaluation was introduced into the public sector during a period when policy makers believed that society can be transformed through large-scale infrastructure investments in which decision makers would learn from previous challenges and successes to improve the quality of public policies (Hojlund 2015:32; Vedung 2010; Porter 1995). In addition, Patton (2002) explains that increased spending attracted the government's continued demand for evaluation practice and services, where evaluation data was increasingly being adopted to support policy decisions and ensure public accountability. Sanderson (2000) maintains that right from the beginning of its implementation, evolutionary, causal and rationalist ideas formed the underlying assumptions about the role of policy evaluation in public administration.

The fourth approach in this paradigm is the systems approach which focuses on managers being knowledgeable of environmental factors and non-state actors that affect the process of decision-making in which public institutions operate (Denhardt 2004:83). Decision-making is practiced in consideration of the surrounding environment which may include political parties, pressure groups, as well as non-governmental organisations. Fox *et al.* (2004:13) explain that the executive is expected to ensure a balance between the internal and external environment to ensure maximum resource mobilisation and efficiency in the organisation. The

approach according to Lyn Jr and Hill (2008:232) presents a public organisation as made up of complex, dynamic but interdependent parts in the form of input, processes and outputs, with a feedback loop. Informed by Easton's (1965) systems theory framework, evaluation in public policy literature was considered as a feedback mechanism that guides policy actors on what works, what does not and the reasons why. Performance information generated through evaluation not only helps to assess policy choices but also implementation levels in light of the prevailing environmental factors. However, to Henry (2013:39-40), focus in the approach was placed on the discipline's focus, while limited attention was given to locus which constitutes the approach and method for implementation of the same principles. Further emphasis was placed on criticising the principles, as Simon (1946) dismissed them as proverbs of administration with each having possibly reasonable levels of contradiction, which can make them appear doubtful and unscientific.

The fifth approach is the *human relations* under this paradigm, championed by Elton Mayo. Informed by his Hawthorne experiments at a plant where the application of scientific management principles did not deliver maximum productivity, he tested employees' reactions to different conditions of work. From the results, he identified the major elements of the approach which include participatory approaches to employee motivation and teamwork, recognition of the role of informal networks in affecting work efficiency, the importance of employees' incentives in driving organisational growth, as well as consideration of environmental factors in the evaluation of employees' performance.

However, in the analysis of the scientific management approach, Chakrabarty and Chand (2012:75) argue that the major elements of an organisation were not adequately considered. Key among these include acknowledging that employees pose human attributes, organisations being perceived as social systems, that organisations are characterised by social as opposed to individual ethics, and the centrality of informal elements in influencing the organisational output. To address this knowledge deficit, Greene (2005:135) explains that the focus on the needs of individuals offers an in-depth understanding of organisational life as opposed to mechanistic political systems. Securing this balance through the evaluation of

policies related to both public service delivery and employees' interests contributes to efficient public administration. Therefore, evaluation of this paradigm is an important control tool for influencing the quality of policies designed in public organisations to become an important area for scholarly investigation.

2.5.3 Public Administration as Political Science (1950-70)

The third paradigm was largely characterised by increased efforts to establish the locus of Public Administration. The emphasis was on the search for alternative ways of determining the locus for the discipline of Public Administration. On the one hand, Henry (2013:41) argues that some scholars advocated for the absorption of the discipline of Public Administration by strengthening its interface between it and the wider discipline of Political Science. On the other hand, others insisted on strengthening it as a unique discipline. Zalmanovtch (2014:809) notes that the dichotomy was again intended to artificially separate the managerial function which includes evaluation from politics. Purshttama *et al.* (2014:164) further adds that the public sector, public administration and public management rely on public policy formulation through politics and implementation through administration to conduct their functions. They further add that both policy components in the public sector are complex, since most policies are normally cut across several sectors. This necessitates the establishment of an evaluation system to generate disaggregated data to inform the administrative decisions through policy formulation and as well as implementation in the different units of government.

2.5.4 Public Administration as Management

This fourth paradigm emerged from the debate as to whether the discipline of Public Administration could be considered a management science in which evaluation was popularised. The paradigm informed the second major wave of evaluation through the introduction of public sector reforms aimed at promoting efficiency (Kripper 2011; Furubo & Sandahl 2002). Furthermore, Cameron and Milne (2009:381), explain that during this period, emerging scholars in the United States were of the view that Public Administration was inadequate as a discipline, irrelevant and out of touch with the critical problems of society.

After the Minnowbrook Conference (1968) it was resolved that a more distinct nature of Public Administration should be explored and introduced in the form of the New Public Administration initiative. The 1970s witnessed a paradigm shift to the management approach in which policy evaluation was gradually integrated into Public Administration. The second wave of evaluation became dominant and was significantly characterised by a series of public sector reforms after the economic crisis. This led to budgetary cuts as well as demands for cost efficiency in the public sector (Kripper 2011; Furubo & Sandahl 2002). This collaborates with Davis *et al.* (2000) who explains that the declining budgets amidst increased expectations from the public, forced policy makers to turn to rely on evaluations as a way of establishing what works. Evaluation was increasingly integrated into the second wave of public sector reforms amidst a global economic crisis that resulted in budgetary cuts and calls for efficient policy measures in many countries (Krippner 2011; Furubo & Sandahl 2002).

During the 1970s, Rich (1979:11) presented one of the earliest definitions of evaluation in policy-making as “the process of assessing whether or not desired and undesired outcomes have been reached, of specifying or explaining the outcomes that were reached, and of suggesting new strategies and/or definitions of future problems”. He added that it is “the process intended to establish if the desired outcomes have been realised, future problems identified, and new strategies defined”. Consequently, legislative action institutionalising evaluation was emphasised to influence improvement in the performance of government, by monitoring outcomes of government goals and reducing budget deficits. As a result of the diminishing government budgets, coupled with increased service expectations from the public, policy makers sought expert advice from researchers as a means of establishing what would work in each policy context (Davis *et al.* 2000). The reforms within the field of public administration through evaluation necessitated governments to implement efficient and effective policy initiatives that demonstrate impact as well as value for money.

2.5.5 Public Administration as Public Administration (1980s)

The fifth paradigm was characterised by Public Administration regaining its dominance as an independent discipline from other historically related disciplines

such as Political Science, law and Management were originally considered to constitute its foundation. Henry (2013:44) states that the same paradigm re-emphasised the significance of the public administration and political science interface. Similarly, Bovaird and Loffler (2009:9) observe that public administration of the 20th Century is associated with studying civil servants' work, any other public officials, as well as their interaction with the politicians involved in public policy setting and passing. However, limited attention was given to evaluation in this paradigm.

Skok (1995:327) observes that a lot of functional literature presents public administrators as policy implementers, but limited literature exists to systematically explain administrators as agenda setters, policy formulators, and even policy evaluators. Anderson (1990:18-20) argues that public administrators continue to perform their administrative roles in the policy stages subject to the oversight of the executive political appointees. Therefore, public administration and political science as two bodies of knowledge continuously interface as reflected in the policy process from agenda-setting to policy evaluation.

2.5.6 The shift from public administration to public management

This section presents the evolution of traditional public administration into modern public management, and their concerns, and highlights the difference between the two. The theory and practice of evaluation continued to attract wider attention during this paradigm. The two concepts of public administration and management are normally applied synonymously by some commentators, as “methodical efforts to accomplish the goals of sovereign authority” (Lynn Jr 2006:4). However, in the service delivery context, the two differ in the sense that administration is simply about service, and management goes beyond providing a service to emphasise control to gain results (Hughes 2003:3).

The concept of administration has its roots in the Latin word *ministrare* which means to serve (Heynes 2003:6). Since the 16th - Century, it was adopted with the meaning to train or skill acquisition, but later its application extended to matters of war and eventually public service. The term management on the other hand has its roots in the Italian word “*manus*” which means to control. It also implies leading staff in a particular direction, and monitoring and evaluating their performance progress.

Tshiyoyo (2018:84) explains that the major difference between administration and management is that the former means following instructions to serve, while the latter implies attaining results as well as taking responsibility for the same. Furthermore, Mullins (1996:398) maintains that while administration involves the procedures and processes of translating policies into actions, management includes the administrative component, and the organisation required to attain maximum results efficiently. This serves the same purpose as evaluation in contemporary public management practice.

With reference to its objective, although management was introduced in the 18th Century due to political manipulation, the purpose was dealing with the loopholes of public administration as a means of enhancing accountability and efficiency among public servants (Hughes 2003:6). Consequently, the term administrative management was introduced in the 1930s to mean the process of designing and operating the executive government. Public management was introduced in the academic curricula with an emphasis on management to imply public administration in the operation of public enterprises. This era focused on how public services are administered within a complex society coupled with higher levels of society expectations. Finally, from the 1960s to 1980s, a vibrant public management movement emerged, buttressing the concept of public management to mean both a field of study and the practice of delivering public services in government. This marked the beginning of extensive integration of evaluation into public administration.

In the 20th Century, Ferlie, Lynn and Pollit (2007:8) refer to the earlier efforts to define public management presented it as “the study and practice of design and operation of arrangements for the provision of public services and executive government”. It is used generally to refer to a method of governing institutions to which administrative processes are a sub-component. In addition, it involves a system of government administration that is intended to address criticisms of strategic policy management, rational leadership and efficiency in policy output. Zalmanovitch (2014:813) maintains that while the scholarly work by Waldo (1948) and Gaus (1950) had emphasised the existence of politics in almost all

administrative roles, the dichotomy scholarship was resurrected in New Public Management, limiting public administration to managerial roles.

The concept of public management is associated with Schwella (1985) in his article entitled “Public Administration or Public Management – another perspective or why not Public Administration and Public Management.” His call for the reintroduction of public management in the international literature resulted in a significant shift in approaching the study of public administration. To Thornhill (2018:15), since the 1980s, efforts occurred towards studying the public sector matters, and the use of managerial concepts within public management. Imported from the private sector, the terminology was increasingly integrated into Public Administration to assess the performance of institutions based on their input, as a means of enhancing their efficiency. He further refers to Public Management as the study of the operational part of the Public Administration domain which includes evaluation among other principles like planning, motivation, training, programing, counseling, reporting, and leadership and performance management.

In his analysis, Tshiyoyo (2018:85) describes public management as “an approach which uses managerial techniques (often originating in the private sector) to increase the value for money achieved by public services”. Therefore, the contribution of this administration or management era lies in broadening the scope of Public Administration to include the managerial activities performed by senior public officials (Thornhill 2018:16). This implies that the study of Public Administration also includes management theories and practice, with management considered to be the operational dimension of the discipline. These same managerial principles currently inform the practice of evaluation in the complex public sector as part of the new trends adopted under public management.

Over time, efforts have also been made to differentiate between Public Administration and Management. Hughes (2012:6) differentiates public administration from public management by suggesting that while public administration traditionally narrows its focus on the propriety, procedures and processes, public management emphasises the attainment of results as well as taking responsibility for them. Pollit (2016:6) goes further to argue that in terms of

character and focus, on the one hand, public administration is more concerned with the traditional old-fashioned hierarchical structures and procedures, rules for enforcing compliance and accountability, as well as the machinery through which government operates. On the other hand, public management focuses on dynamic and innovative leadership, as well as efficient management of resources within a multi-stakeholder governance context.

In addition, Thornhill (2014:15) contends that it involves ensuring that “a system is established to acquire human resources to perform the functions assigned to the institution; procedures are in place to facilitate effective and efficient services; sufficient funds are allocated to perform the duties assigned to the institution and that control measures are in place”. He further explains the operational part of the domain of the study involves the understanding of functional issues like planning, leadership, motivation, counseling, training, monitoring, evaluation, performance assessment and reporting. In addition, Bovaird and Löffler (2015:6), public managers engage in policy activities ensuring efficiency and effectiveness that cut across different contexts of not only the public sector but also the private sector and voluntary sector, while undertaking their duties within public sector organisations. To some earlier scholars in the United States, the practice of public management was perceived as a technical sub-field of public administration. This submission is in line with Hyde, Ott and Shafriza (1991:ix), who view public management as simply a branch of the wider field of public administration that involves the art and science of methodologies applied for public administrative programme design and organisational restructuring, management planning and policy, as well as resource allocation through budgeting systems, financial management, budgeting systems, programme/policy evaluation and auditing.

Thornhill (2014:13) further elaborates that public management involves to the ordinary, routine or typical operational concerns. He explains that some authors refer to public management as characterized by new economically driven perspectives on the operations of government. In analysing the need for adopting management, he indicates that the emphasis was on the debate on the question of whether applying techniques for simplifying the complex nature of the public sector to ensure an

efficient and effective public administration. Some scholars argued that practices like management by objective were necessary but not sufficient to promote public sector efficiency and hence the need for emphasising evaluation. In what follows are the various functions performed by managers in the public sector.

2.5.6.1 The functions of public management

Understanding the key management roles is important in assessing the role of evaluation in the public sector. Literature indicates that the impact of managing on the performance of public sector organisations remains a major question (Nicholson-Crotty & O'Toole Jr 2010:1). Building on the works of Henri Fayol's principles of scientific management, Luther Gullick and Lyndall Urwick advanced a set of seven key management principles summarised in the acronym POSDCORB. These functions constitute some of the major elements being evaluated in the management of public organisations and include Planning, Staffing, Organising, Coordinating, Directing, Reporting as well as Budgeting (Tshiyoyo 2012:90; Goel 2008:281).

The first function is planning which involves choosing what needs to be done from among available alternatives and the methods applicable towards a desired future. It is a systematic process of determining the best course of action by formulating policies, missions, objectives and actions, organising the necessary efforts to implement such decisions, and evaluating the results against set expectations. A plan refers to a projected course of action that maps out the activities needed to attain desired managerial objectives. Fox *et al.* (2004:46) mentions that planning follows a process of identifying and implementing a policy objective and it lays the foundation based on which all of the other management functions are performed. The planning process involves identifying several meaningful goals and developing alternative actions towards achieving them (McKunney & Howards 1998:195). In the context of government, national plans as long-term strategies are formulated following public policy processes within. Among the most important plans is the evaluation plan which is developed alongside the identification of objectives and implementation in the form of reports generated to provide feedback to facilitate corrective actions in the plan ministries, departments, sectors and local governments.

The second function is organising which refers to bringing together the different organisational elements by establishing structures and assigning roles for purposes of ensuring an orderly way of attaining organisational objectives. It involves establishing a formal authority structure along which the identified activities are coordinated to realise pre-determined objectives (Hanekom, Rawland & Bain 1993:208). Organising can apply to activities within a formal network of people cooperating in fulfilling their roles to accomplish a common objective under a particular leadership (Fox *et al.* 2004:69). It is through using evaluation as a tool that managers develop a logical pattern for ensuring the effective realisation of pre-set objectives. The organisation is divided into structures along with major activities and specialties (Denhardt & Denhardt 2009:164). In addition, Madumo (2011:26) explains that the process of organising involves identifying tasks, classifying them into clusters, assigning the employees responsibilities and evaluating the responsible persons.

The third function is staffing which is associated with the management of human resources. Van Dijk (2003:41) explains that employees are an integral component of any public organisation. Staffing refers to the process of filling existing vacancies and maintaining them with the right quality and number of organisational workforces. It involves activities like recruitment, training, deployment, development, motivation and evaluation of competent staff under proper working conditions to implement organisational plans (Heathfield 2016:1). The function ensures that suitable employees are recruited, maintained and utilised according to their potential. In performing this function, managers are encouraged to ensure a limited span of control for easy supervision. The evaluation of employees is conducted by managers through performance reviews and appraisal processes of workers to establish their contribution towards realising the organisation's agenda and policies of service delivery. Similarly, Kahn (2008:87) advocates that employees are the most important valuable resources that play a critical role in influencing the quality and performance of public organisations. It is through evaluation that managers in public organisations are expected to execute Human Resources Management practices to determine the degree to which public servants perform their tasks and make use of their capabilities to enhance employees' performance.

The fourth function is directing which is concerned with influencing subordinates in undertaking their activities towards realising the desired objectives. According to Denhardt (1991:300), it involves acts of leadership, motivation and change management. Other associated roles include leadership, communication and the issuance of instructions to guide teams towards realising desired organisational goals in the best way possible within a given time frame. In performing this function, the manager is required to apply leadership, supervisory, mentorship and coaching skills in guiding employees through the implementation of policies. Evaluation becomes an important tool in assessing the extent to which this function has been executed towards attaining the desired impact.

The fifth function is coordination which refers to establishing a harmonious relationship between the efforts of different institutions and activities of government operating at various levels, but towards a common government agenda. Denhardt (1991:300), explains the purpose of this function being to ensure that all of the relevant pieces fall into place for any problem-solving at the appropriate time. Linkages are built and strengthened within and between organisations while removing any possible obstacles to realising the organisational policies. The manager in such a context is responsible for creating harmony among groups and individuals' efforts. Informed by evaluation, coordination is done by developing an orderly pattern of group efforts. The goal lies in ensuring unity of action among subordinates of varying specialisations and interests as they work to organisational goals. In the public sector context, evaluation becomes an important control tool since it cuts across the different units which must be well aligned to both policy goals and the desired service delivery impact.

The fifth function is reporting which refers to the practice of providing relevant information to the various stakeholders of a public organisation about the progress status of implementing policies and planned activities. In the context of public sector organisation, reporting involves different internal and external stakeholders ranging from the public, private and voluntary sector involvement in the public service delivery chain operating at various levels. On the one hand, reporting may take an internal form among departments where information is generated to facilitate decision-making on planning, control of results and allocation of resources. On the

other hand, external reporting covers information generated for external stakeholders such as political institutions, taxpayers and development partners among others. To ensure a sustained process, an evaluation system is institutionalised to capture data regularly on identified indicators for purposes of providing feedback, decision-making, and learning.

The sixth function is budgeting which deals with matters of financial planning and expenditure control against plans of public organisations. It refers to the formulation of plans for a future period and attaching estimates in financial values to the activities aimed at achieving them. It is a process through which resources are allocated towards facilitating the implementation of priority courses of action as identified in the institutional plans. It involves the identification of resources, their sources and ensuring that they are managed adequately. Generally, a budget is a statement of anticipated results expressed in financial terms. In the context of government, it refers to legally binding contracts annually entered into between the legislative and executive branches to enable public institutions to raise and spend finances (Stillman 2010:343). Such contracts take place between the political representatives of citizens who are responsible for the appropriation and the executive which is responsible for initiating and implementing budgets according to national plans.

In performing this role, managers use budgets as tools for implementing priorities from the national plan by allocating the available resources, which makes it not only a legal instrument but also political, economic and social. They are responsible for preparing budgets that show stakeholders how much finance is required, for which purpose, and for which planned expenditures. This process is affected by both the internal and external environment in which the institution operates, and it is necessary that all stakeholders are involved through a participatory and bottom-up approach (Howard 1998:361). Evaluation becomes an important tool in this process since managers are charged with the role of ensuring realization of value for money by assessing the expenditure per planned activity. The evaluation information generated and reported on the budgets is aligned with the plans, constituting the basis for future decision-making on plans. In a government where evaluation is institutionalised, the budget also provides for resources allocated towards evaluation every financial year to facilitate the tracking of the extent to which the policies and

plans are executed in line with the resources allocated. Similarly, Public Private Partnerships were adopted and established to address the complex society needs.

What follows is a highlight of the major principles and the differences between public management and public administration.

Table 2 .2: Contrasting Public Administration and Public Management

	Principle	Public administration	Public management
1.	Employees	Recruited through a competitive process to work on permanent and pensionable employment terms. The practice is to motivate them to serve the interest of the public.	Multiple employment terms are adopted but mainly recruitment on a contract basis. Public officials are not perceived to be selfless and serve the public interest.
2.	Bureaucracy	A more vertical hierarchical structure of the organisation is adopted in government institutions where authoritative policy decisions flow from above and obedience is expected from below.	A more horizontal and less bureaucratic structure is preferred to minimise its negative effects. The purpose is to ensure quick decision-making, responsiveness, and efficient utilisation of resources.
3.	Procedures of work	A standard working procedure as set out in manuals is observed by administrators as the one best way of service delivery.	Several working procedures are considered in a pragmatic and flexible way.

4.	Accountability	In the conduct of their administrative work, accountability of public servants is to the public but not necessarily tied to the results provided the right procedures and regulations are observed.	The administrators' accountability and responsibility are directly linked to the results delivered by the administrator.
5.	Politics	Politics is considered to be separate from administration as public servants are expected to be perceived as politically neutral in the course of their service.	Bureaucratic processes and actors are not perceived to be operating separately from politics. Administrative decisions and objectives are determined through political processes (Madumo 2011:23).

Sources: Compiled from Hughes (2012:2); Lynn Jr (2006:1); Hughes (2003:1-3)

2.5.7 The New Public Administration/New Public Management (NPM) paradigm

In the 1980s, the concept of New Public Management (NPM) was strongly emphasised by the British government led by the former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. She championed the NPM practice to address shortcomings associated with cumbersome procedures prescribed within the public sector institutions causing unnecessary delays. Thornhill (2018:19) adds that the period also ushered in the third wave of evaluation in public administration that covered the 1980s and 1990s. It was triggered by decreased public expenditure and the adoption of New Public Management strategies of control, effectiveness and performance from the private sector management principles of what Bouckaert (2004) refers to as a Neo-Weberian state (Meyer *et al.* 2014:861). The period was characterised by the shift from the traditional bureaucratic administrative system which Clarke and Newman (1977) refer to as the managerial state.

Furthermore, Basheka and Byamugisha (2015:80) argue that the economic crisis of the 1970s had resulted in budgetary cuts which increasingly led to the demand for public accountability, well-informed policy decisions, and driving policy makers to invest in evaluation research as a means of assessing what works. The continued decline in public expenditures motivated the integration of evaluation as control strategies into the New Public Management (NPM) in Europe (Rothwell 1985). The NPM approach to running the government is defined by Vigoda (2003:2) as “an interdisciplinary study of the generic aspects of administration a blend of planning, organising and controlling functions of management with the management of human, financial, physical, information and political sources.”

The NPM paradigm saw the extensive adoption of management within public administration along with concepts like planning, motivation as well as evaluation (Thornhill 2014:19). Its philosophy emphasises the focus on results from the objectives and actions of public sector officials without being hampered by delaying bureaucratic measures that cause delays in the service delivery process (Thornhill 2018:19). As an integral part of the NPM, evaluation was introduced in public administration and institutionalised as an accountability tool through practices of managerialism and result-based management. Managerialism was emphasised as a more inclusive client-centered networks approach based on trust as well as mutual adjustment (Thornhill 2014:19; Rhodes 1996:653). In addition, Rutgers (2010:10) explains that this managerial approach was aimed at extending public administration boundaries beyond policy implementation to policy-making, as well as understanding the impact of public policies (Denhardt 2008:105).

The NPM was informed by the strong belief in the supreme importance of economic principles, and it involves the integration of private sector principles of efficiency, accountability, enhanced productivity, and strategy focused planning into the public sector (Haynes 2003:9). Similarly, Naidoo (2011:19) indicates its emphasis on an efficiency-based outcome, a result-oriented approach and consumer satisfaction. In addition, Thornhill and van Dijk (2010:103) present the view that it was intended to assess effectiveness in the public service delivery. The justification for private sector approaches is associated with the inefficiency that causes poor quality and slow service delivery which can be improved by ensuring accountability and results

measurement through establishing standard outputs from private-sector practices (Hughes 2012:8).

To clarify NPM, the literature identifies seven elements that constitute the principles of NPM reforms intended to improve public sector performance (Garson & Overman 2003:2; Vigoda 2003:2; De Kool & Vab Bnuren 2004:173). They include greater explicit standards, performance measures, greater emphasis on output control, hands-on professional management, emphasis on private sector management styles, a shift towards increased competition, disaggregation of the unit, as well as greater discipline in the use of resources. In addition, Vries *et al.* (2018:86), explain that inherent among the seven core components of running public sector like a business were reform initiatives like the adoption of streamlined performance standards and measures, as well as a greater emphasis on controlling output in the public sector functioning. They add that those two elements in managerialism laid the foundation for policy evaluation that was later emphasised in the public sector governance era of co-partnership by public officials with recipients in service delivery. Other key initiatives were the decentralisation of administrative structures and responsibilities termed as agencification aimed at promoting efficiency, responsiveness and service innovation through horizontal and vertical specialisation (Verhoest 2013; Pollit & Bouckaert 2011; Hood 1991).

Gumede (2011:167) asserts that the transition through the NPM was characterised by major elements such as a shift in emphasis from input controls such as rules and procedures to output monitoring and establishing performance targets. The new perspective represents the dominance of managerialism from the private sector (Rhodes 1996:655). The approach focused on the efficient and effective performance of the public sector organisations' leadership by adopting a private sector managerial approach (Meyer & Stockmann 2016). The developments in the form of the Neo-Weberian state (Bouckaert 2004) emphasised the philosophy of accountability and control that was aimed at reducing public expenditure which had characterised the previous traditional bureaucratic system of administration (Meyer *et al.* 2013). Therefore, several recommendations towards reforming the public sector included Rayner's Raiders' emphasis of the 3Es (Efficiency, Effectiveness and

Economy) that are linked to the development of both the NPM and the entrepreneurial government (Rhodes 1996:652).

In the 1990s evaluation, which is the focus of this study, was part of the reforms in the New Public Management (NPM) principles aimed at controlling expenditure among governments through performance standards and efficient policies (Vries *et al.* 2018:86). Evaluation practice gained prominence, under the wave of New Public Management (NPM) across different sectors in Europe and North America (Hood 1991). It was during this period that Vedung referred to it as a “linguistic magnet” (Vedung 1997:3). Vedung’s (1997:3) study however observes that the definition of what constitutes evaluation has been a source of contestation associated with its limitations. The interest was motivated by the desire for accountability, learning and manipulation of political opportunity structures by actors in government (Schoenefeld & Jordan 2017:274). With the rise of the Result Based Management (RBM) agenda in the late 1990s, evaluation has been fully integrated into public organisations as part of reinventing government (Osborne 1993:352-356). Rutgers (2010:10) indicates that the focus was on reinventing government. The trend in the early years of the 21st Century began to change with calls for a shift to governance which involves a collaborative working relationship with the private sector and civil society to perform the functions of government. Thornhill and van Dijk (2010:104) maintain that the reforms aimed at creating more effective public sector organisations, informed by rational input and outputs in meeting public demands which led to the Reinventing Government discussion of 1992, and it was considered one of the outstanding global trends within public administration.

Over time, a new era of post-NPM environment emerged characterised by what Bumgarner and Newswander (2012:546) refer to as loosely constructed networks.

However, Pollitt and Bouckaert (2011:183) present the post-New Public Management challenges associated with addressing cross-cutting policy issues within a decentralised and fragmented public sector under agencification. In addition, Thornhill (2018:20) explains that while the philosophy assumed that the results are more important than the process, it was later realised that public officials need to remain accountable to the public for the process of their actions and decisions for

attaining the desired goals. Consequently, the tedious procedures had been intended to ensure equity, fairness and accountability, which needed to continue to be enforced to generate justifiable results from a consultative policy process, without neglecting accountability for public officials' actions. It was therefore concluded that since NPM could not be fully applicable to the public sector to meet the contemporary needs of the contemporary state, alternative paradigms were considered. Manning (2001:298) argues further that, even though the paradigm has contributed to a wider scope of managerial choices, it has not greatly improved the efficiency and responsiveness of public organisations.

This study acknowledges that by adopting NPM, the choices available to governments have increased to restore the state legitimacy by focusing also on non-economic values in addressing policy issues. Besides, the NPM approach also resulted in some negative effects in some contexts. In Africa for example, the relevance of this paradigm shift and its alignment to the values and beliefs of the continent's public servants has remained debatable (Vyas-Doorgapersad 2011:241). The perspective was credited for the introduction of result-oriented performance and the use of effective tools and techniques of management to promote responsiveness as well as state-society interaction (Thornhill & van Dijk 2010:104). It was presented as a politically neutral general framework, applicable to solve a range of administrative ills in different contexts and policy fields which enhanced its universal acceptance (Hood 1991:8). Therefore, with the perception of the citizen as clients and government as a company, its effects showed that NPM philosophy cannot be entirely applicable in the public sector to ensure that the needs of the contemporary state are met with its failure to reconcile the conflicting administrative values of equity and efficiency.

The interdependence between the two sectors has increasingly become important leading to a new development of Public-Private Partnership (PPP), where the private sector operations are dependent on public administration (Fourie 2008:563). Although the adoption of private sector principles such as treating citizens with democratic ownership of government like customers, Basheka (2012:55) maintains that the private sector lacks strong grounding within the field of public administration. Relatedly, Chakrabarty and Chand (2012:5) contend that the fundamental difference

where the major purpose of public administration is mainly providing non-profit-oriented service to the public as well as profit maximisation to the shareholder is for the private sector. Considering institutional values, while the key value in the private sector is profitability, van der Wal, De Graaf and Lasthuizen (2008:472) insist that it never features as a value in the public sector that emphasises accountability. On the contrary, Ferlie *et al.* (2007:80) argue that with public management, attempts have been made to investigate the implications of the differences across sectors in terms of effectiveness, efficiency, control, responsiveness and incentives. This can be done through the institutionalisation of evaluation.

2.5.8 The governance era and the sixth paradigm

Over time, the sixth paradigm of the New Public Governance (NPG) evolved around the dawn of the 20th Century out of the NPM dynamics with globalisation. The new trend of governing with partners called network governance impacted significantly on the Public Administration discipline as the state ceased to be the only player in the delivery of public services. Morgan and Cook (2014:3) argue NPM is criticised for lacking a common basis for building legitimacy and trust among the citizens referred to as customers. Consequently, NPG evolved as an independent regime based on five strands which are administrative governance, public policy governance, contract governance, network governance and socio-political governance (Osborne 2010:6). In general, the NPG emphasises a wide stakeholders' collaborative approach bringing together partners from across the public, private and voluntary sectors (Kimaro 2017:59).

Governance has increasingly been recognised as a prerequisite for development. It is presented as a more recent development in the public sector operations where the provision of services involve the interdependence of role players. Brynard (2015:22) states that "governance relates to the cooperative actions of the state and society structures to deliver services to the benefit of society". As a result, the state ceases to be the only player in public service delivery since the participation of the affected communities where the service is demanded must be involved through a decentralised system. The central goal of the paradigm is to realise values agreeable to all other partners involved in collaboration with the government, which enables it

to build an operational capacity characterised by legitimacy and trust in its service delivery function.

The application of this collaborative approach takes place through the implementation and evaluation of agreed policies based on tracking set indicators to establish the impact on citizens (Morgan & Cook 2014:41). As a result of this evaluation and reporting of government service delivery activities, all stakeholders including citizens can influence its values while government secures legitimacy and trust. Moreover, Thornhill (2014:23) emphasises that governance involves cooperative actions of the state and society structures in service delivery. He adds that, as a recent development, it introduces the idea of multi-level horizontal interactions of interdependent role players undertaking joint actions from policy-making to evaluation. This replaces the old traditional hierarchical mechanism of policy-making leading to a changing domain in the study of Public Administration.

Gradually, there was increasing recognition of the need to involve other stakeholders in the public service delivery chain in an inclusive and coordinated approach without a fully centralised hierarchical authority of the state alone (Bannink & Ossewaarde 2012:598). The new arrangement is said to have been informed by Hobbes & Lock's idea of the social contract, advocating for state-society interaction as a means of enhancing citizens' participation in policy processes. Ile *et al.* (2012:12) explain that evaluation systems are introduced for verification and validation, data generation and quality analysis, which act as early warning mechanisms, decision-making as well as effective reporting.

Consequently, more complex policy challenges motivated the establishment of in-house assessment institutional structures in the form of evaluation systems in government agencies as a regular practice for purposes of knowledge production in the form of evidence of efficient policy-making. In addition, was the commissioning of evaluation experts to undertake evaluations as well as support capacity building and establishment of an evaluation culture (Eldler *et al.* 2008:176). Ultimately, expert networks referred to as evaluation associations were established and supported at national and supranational levels to work very closely with policy makers. These include the American Evaluation Association (AEA), the European Evaluation Society (UES), the UK Evaluation Society (UES), and later the African Evaluation

Association (AEA) among others (Streicher 2017:10). This institutionalised evaluation prescribed legally binding standards to enhance effective evaluation functions of accountability and policy learning globally.

In terms of application, evaluation was emphasised as a control tool for public sector performance during the governance approach to ensure that public interest is realised. The intention was to promote accountability to stakeholders operating in policy processes (Brynard *et al.* 2015:17). In addition, Osborne (1993:349) observes that in the 1990s, the philosophy of evaluation within governance increasingly focused on facilitating empirical public policy, fundamental changes in responsiveness, efficient systems and improved performance in response to public frustration with governments' dysfunctional systems of service delivery. Furthermore, Stoker (1998:18) identified five prepositions of governance which include institutions from both public and private sector, and constituting networks involved in collective action to achieve social goals using certain tools and techniques. Such tools are intended to ensure efficiency and effectiveness in policy evaluation.

Through continuous interactions, the government as one of the actors facilitates through negotiated rules and coordinates self-organising networks without its full direct central control in the system. The public servant in this context facilitates a collaborative relationship with the citizen, through which networks policy evaluation takes place. Smith (2010:252) summarises the common elements in the governance model include multiple stakeholder cooperation, the centrality of both formal and informal rules and political context where public policy is dominated by networks advancing their interests. It emphasises the integration of evaluation as a control tool for promoting accountability in the key policy processes of interaction between the state and other actors on behalf of society.

In the 2000s, there was an increasingly strong emphasis on the importance of evaluation through multiple stakeholders' perspectives under the governance approach to public administration. This era marked the third wave when the evaluation was characterised by the ideas of evidence-based policy reforms which intended to establish what works through high-quality data as opposed to relying on ideology and values (Westbrook, Avellar & Seftor 2017). Since 2000, evaluation was emphasised by donor agencies to aid recipients for the purposes of ensuring aid

effectiveness as stressed in the Paris Declaration (OECD 2005; Basheka & Byamugisha 2015:81).

While studies on evaluation have been conducted since the 1960s, concerns of evaluation underuse, misuse and non-use by public sector officials have persisted (Alkin & Taut 2003:23). In an attempt to research policy evaluation, Head (2019) observes that initial evaluation studies gave considerable attention to impact assessment with a focus on methodology and use. However, recently in the late 2000s attention was paid to contextual factors and consequently influence. With growing interest in policy evaluation, some public policy scholars began arguing that evaluations do not take occur in a vacuum but a system (Leew & Fumbo 2008; William & Imam 2008; Vaessen & Leeuw 2010; Levi-ferun 2012). Evaluation researchers are increasingly presenting stakeholder participation as critical in enhancing the utilisation of evaluations through policy networks (Blanco *et al.* 2009; Johnson *et al.* 2009). Rhodes (2006:426) defines policy networks as sets of interdependence actors interacting in the form of “formal institutional and informal linkages between government and non-government actors structured around shared interests and negotiated beliefs”. According to Caracelli (2000:178), increasing attention is given to participatory approaches through networks due to associated advantages on the quality of evaluation data collected.

Emphasis is given to the characteristics of the actors as well as their roles, perceptions, interests, interactions and interdependencies as stakeholders in the policy pathways and processes of social construction (Lawrence *et al.* 2011:52; Coryn *et al.* 2011). In such networks, the core responsibilities of public administrators as stewards and facilitators reduced from the traditional functions to a network caretaker (Snow, Miles & Coleman 1992). They are expected to provide expertise to enhance the network's competitive capabilities and persuade them towards preferred policy alternatives. Over time, with political recognition of evaluation (Mofolo 2014:5), a range of evaluation methods have been adopted in public administration, including input output analysis, group comparison, cost-benefit analysis, network analysis and benchmarking. More emphasis is placed on participatory approaches like peer review. Of interest is a participatory design of peer review which is embedded within

the logic of intervention underlying the adopted policy measure (Ruegg & Jordan 2007; Ruegg & Feller 2003).

The increasingly complex nature of public policy issues has necessitated the institutionalisation of in-house evaluation units in the public sector of many countries. Focus has been on an investment in specialised knowledge and the use of evidence to inform policy makers in the development and improvement of policy measures (Lee & Kirkpatrick 2006; Dobrow & Goel 2004; Gottstein & Matz 2004). As a result, evidence-based policy was emphasised and several related concepts were developed and increasingly became popularly adopted such as facts-based policy and information-based policy (Head 2008, Nutley *et al.* 2007, Pawson 2006; Jacobson *et al.* 2005). As a result, was the increased adoption and popularisation of the term evidence-based policy concerning a process of identifying available evidence, undertaking systematic review by use of scientific techniques and methods, collaboration of data from both policy makers and researchers and scientifically disseminating findings to impact on the policy practitioners (Stone *et al.* 2001:31). Van der Meer and Edelenbos (2006:210) maintain that evaluation has attracted wide recognition within public administration and governance studies as a major source of strategic advice for improving public policies through policy learning. However, public administration literature on evaluation remains scanty but is steadily growing (Stephenson *et al.* 2019:665). In the public sector, the focus in most previous evaluation studies was on analysing the governance systems that set the context for evaluations and how they affect the level of utilisation (Leeuw & Fumbo 2008; Olejniczak 2013; Schoenefeld & Jordan 2017; Stephenson *et al.* 2019).

Consequently, research on utilisation of evaluation information has generated several insights since the 1970s, with emphasis put on factors associated with the implementation of evaluations, and more recently, context-related factors, especially the role of actors as stakeholders (Hughes 1981:527). It contributes towards addressing the knowledge gap in understanding the extent to which systemic factors affect the use of evaluation information to inform policy design. The major weakness in the existing literature on public sector evaluation is identified in the general logic that evaluation is inherently a rational process (Sanderson 2000; Schwandt 1997). According to Hojlund (2015:32), several underlying assumptions have been

advanced with regard to evaluation use and influence. The first assumption is that public organisations rationally use evaluation information to pursue public policy improvements. The second assumption is that public organisations objectively interpret evaluation feedback. The third assumption is that evaluation information is used to bring about improvements in public policies. Sanderson (2000:433) observes that from both an ontological and epistemological perspective, the above evaluation use assumptions are rooted in the positivist thinking found within the economic and rational choice theory which perceives policy makers as rational and objectively assesses the social world in a way comparable to the other people. Secondly, Streicher (2017:34) indicates that new perspectives in evaluation studies are indicating not only a shift in focus to the wider concept of evaluation influence from the narrower evaluation use, but also mechanisms and conditioning factors. In addition, most research attention has narrowed down to the actual influence of the evaluation activities or lack thereof. Literature on evaluation indicates that the adoption of evaluation influence towards understanding the impact of evaluation has been offered limited attention in the public administration areas associated with politics (Jann & Wegrich 2008:44; Blanco *et al.* 2009; Legorreta 2015:64; Stephenson & Leeuw 2019:664).

In conclusion of the paradigmatic approaches in the discipline, reflection is necessary on the integration of evaluation theory and practices as a key reform in enhancing public sector performance. Common to all of the above paradigms is the idea of a scientific approach to Public Administration to achieve maximum results from government operations. Although the evolution of Public Administration through various paradigms was intended to ensure maximum efficiency in government activities, evaluation theory and practice increasingly attracted the attention of various policy actors. Over time, developments in the discipline and practice continued with the institutionalisation of evaluation systems through various eras of public service reforms. This chapter, therefore, is intended to contribute to the scanty but growing literature of evaluation based on the theoretical foundation of public administration in the African context of the APRM system.

2.6 PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND ADOPTION OF POLICY EVALUATION IN AFRICA

Literature on the pre-colonial societies in Africa indicates that they were administratively organised along with decentralised traditional systems of chiefdoms based on loyalty to those who offered administrative and security services. The major administrative functions at the time included planning, law and order maintenance, tax collection distribution of resources, execution of wars, events management in society, negotiations, as well as judicial roles (Basheka 2012:31). While literature reflects no clear record of formal evaluation, certain control practices were integrated. With the establishment of colonial governments, recruitment and capacity building of Africans, the newly established western system of public administration was promoted for purposes of effective control and legitimacy.

After independence in the 1960s, the Africanisation of public services was mainly influenced by the type of the development ideology embraced. In many African countries, the state-led approach to development was adopted as informed by the ideology of African socialism (Batley & Larbi 2004:2). For many leaders, to meet the overwhelming expectations of a better life for the newly independent African people, there was a need to re-orient the service delivery function of public administration. According to Basheka (2012:53), the change was reflected in the shift from the capitalist ideology of the colonialists to a statist approach which was assumed to promote social justice, rapid agricultural transformation and infrastructural development.

In Africa, the first wave of evaluation was associated with public sector reforms in the 1970s, when an economic crisis had resulted in budgetary cuts (Basheka & Byamugisha 2015:80). This increasingly led to calls for controlled expenditure among African governments through effective and efficient policies (Kripper 2011). In the 1980s, the adoption of economic liberalism and consequent political reform redefined the public administration system in Africa, although the impact of these reforms is still debatable in many African countries. African bureaucracies were criticised for lack of capacity and legitimacy to enforce policies, being suppressors of entrepreneurial interests, and consequently anti-developmental (Bartly & Larbi 2004:3). Therefore, with the lack of technical and structural abilities to act as

development agents, public administration in many countries was characterised by massive corruption, abuse of rule of law, poor political governance, and military interventions among others. Most African countries were experiencing a sharp economic decline that drove their governments to revisit their role in the management of public services. The poor quality of public administration at the time led to the assumption that economic principles from the private sector would translate the public sector into a more accountable, responsive and quality service delivery. With emerging concerns of limited outcomes from increased public spending among African governments, reforms were adopted towards a managerial state approach. Consequently, the new approach of managerialism was adopted which emphasised the institutionalisation of evaluation in public administration.

Managerialism was intended to solve the challenges of delayed performance, and the NPM requirement of public officials to focus on obtaining results by discarding the rule-driven principle of traditional public administration (Thornhill 2018:20). The seven principles of New Public Management were adopted with streamlined performance standards and measures, as well as a greater emphasis on controlling output in the public sector functioning (De Kool & Vabnuren 2004:173). They laid the foundation for policy evaluation, which was later emphasised in the public sector governance era of co-partnership between public officials and recipients in service delivery (Vries *et al.* 2018:86). This approach emphasised the efficient and effective performance of the public sector organisations' leadership and individuals (Meyer & Stockmann 2016). In light of declining budgets but increasing expectations from the public, the philosophy of accountability and control was aimed at reducing public expenditure which had characterised the previous bureaucratic system of administration (Meyer *et al.* 2013).

However, the NPM approach also resulted in some negative effects in some contexts. In Africa for example, the relevance of this paradigm shift and its alignment to the values and beliefs of the continent's public servants have remained debatable (Vyas Doorgapersad 2011:241). It was therefore concluded that since NPM could not be fully applicable to the public sector to meet the contemporary needs of the contemporary state, alternative paradigms were considered. In South Africa, the

concept of New Public Administration Initiative (NPAI) emerged out of debates intended to critically review and redefine the public sector area of operation and the capacity of its institutions during the South African transformation towards a developmental state. According to Thornhill (2018:17), during the Mount Grace consultations, the debate was on NPAI as a transitional initiative and commitment to change towards a more responsive public sector institution. The paradigm shift necessitated a change in the professional practice from the traditional emphasis on administrative procedures and processes to the value-oriented nature of public management approach.

In 2000, the Mount Grace debates in the second conference focused on reevaluation and publication of theoretical and practical experiences within the public sector context (Mount Grace II 2000). As a result of the two conferences, academics were offered a bigger platform to contribute towards shaping the values informing the nature of public administration, leading to a development state in which evaluation was emphasised.

In the context of public policy evaluation, Ile (2014:196) explains that it involves the generation of evidence based on which policy implementers can verify whether the policy being implemented is in line with attaining the intended objectives, to what extent, and the impact registered. Initially, evaluation was driven largely by donors for purposes of ensuring aid effectiveness as stressed in the Paris Declaration (OECD, 2005; Basheka & Byamugisha 2015:81). However, as time went by, the pressure for accountability from African governments stimulated their adoption and institutionalisation of evaluation (Owen 2007). Consequently, the establishment of in-house evaluation units, capacity building, establishment of professional evaluation associations, and the commissioning of external evaluation and agencies became fashionable practices (Africa Evaluation Association 2007). It is this shift towards performance, acknowledging evaluation as a cornerstone in good governance, that laid the foundation for the institutionalisation of evaluation practice in national and supranational organisations (Streicher 2017:19).

The expansion of evaluation institutionalisation resulted in the establishment of evaluation systems in countries to generate relevant, timely and reliable information for policy design (Porter & Goldman 2013; Elkin 2006;1). Similarly, to address the increasing governance and public policy deficiencies on the African continent, the APRM was established in 2003, to serve as a home-grown governance framework to reinforce accountability principles among member states (Adele-Jinadu 2019:4). It operates through conducting periodic reviews, to identify and share best practices in governance structures, policies and processes as a control tool to establish the degree of compliance to the mutually agreed standards (Uzodike 2010:94). To achieve this, member states are expected to integrate key APRM evaluation findings into their national policy initiatives, but the observed trend of reported underuse, misuse, and non-use of APRM evaluation findings in Public Administration motivated this study. By making a theoretical contribution, this thesis adopts a multi-disciplinary approach by drawing insights from three bodies of knowledge, namely Public Administration, evaluation and governance theory as discussed in the following section.

2.7 THEORIES EXPLAINING EVALUATION INFLUENCE IN PUBLIC POLICY

This section explains in detail the three theoretical frameworks from which insights are drawn. To contribute towards addressing the challenges associated with evaluation influence in public policy in Africa, this study makes reference to three theoretical frameworks, namely the political systems theory, the schematic theory of evaluation influence, and the stakeholder theory to explain the role of context in influencing policy outcomes as discussed in the following sections.

2.7.1 The political systems theory (Easton 1953) and its application in the study

The political systems theory from the discipline of political science was developed by Easton (1953) for analysing political behaviour and how it influences public policy outcomes. Like any policy theories, the political systems theory offers insights for explaining policy processes and how the environment affects the likely outcomes. According to Ile (2009:65), the theory provides an excellent framework for

understanding evaluation influence by recognising the multi-faced nature of governance, in which public policy is influenced by interdependent environments. He explains that inputs into the government from evaluation information in the form of proposals, negotiations, adaptation, implementation review and feedback are converted by subjecting them to the opinion of actors within the political system into discernible outputs in the form of policy decisions (Anyebe 2018:12; Birkland 2011: 26; Carter 2009:01). What follows is the framework illustrating political systems theory.

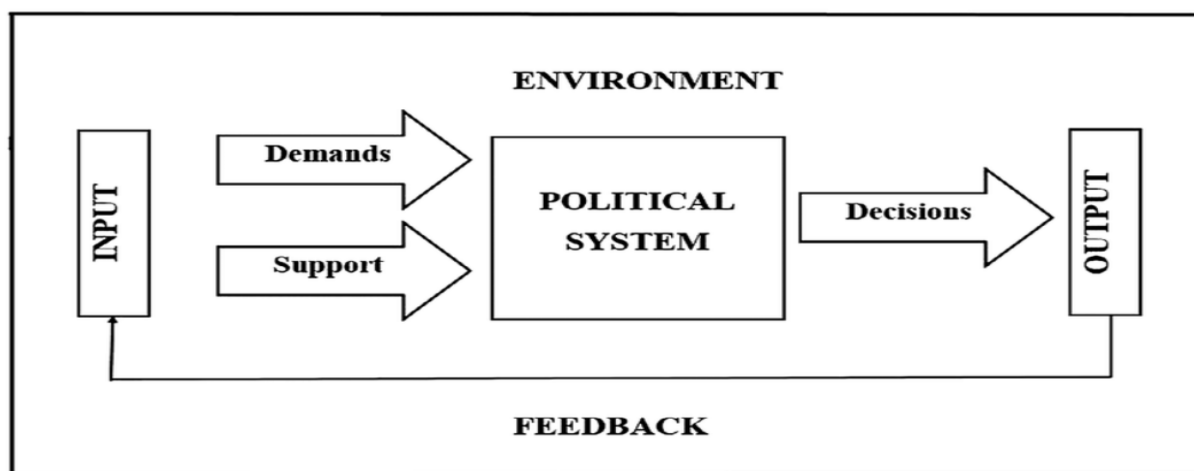


Figure 2.2: An illustration of the political systems model

Source: Easton (1953, 1957, 1965)

The model in Figure 2.2 suggests that policy processes do not take place within a vacuum but in social-political, legal and economic contexts that affect the policy outcome (Mokhaba 2005:129; Brynard 2005:659). According to Birkland (2011:28-32), the context of a political system is characterised by firstly the structural environment which includes a formal framework of legal structures that define the rules and the process of policy-making and facilitating accountability. Secondly, the social environment includes the demography changes in terms of the population structure and composition covering attributes such as gender, age, ethnicity, labour force participation, migration, income status and inequalities among others. Thirdly, the political environment occurs where political actors use opinion polls and related data to assess their likely policy options since they reflect policy agendas of public interest on issues such as the economy, security, health, education and

employment, among others. Fourthly, the economic environment includes the distribution of wealth, sectoral composition as a share of the total national GDP, growth rate of the economy, inflation, national debt, tax expenditure and income distribution among others. The strength of the approach lies in isolating the important elements of the policy environment that constitutes the inputs into the policy process.

In his analysis of the model, Birkland (2011:26) identifies such policy inputs into the system to include: expert information, public opinion, decision makers' experiences, election results, and issues covered in the media. The inputs from the contexts are absorbed into the government which is composed of different participants who are not neutral-free but weigh the costs and benefits of different policy alternatives. These may include interest groups, policy entrepreneurs, analysts and brokers, among others, based on their capacity, coalition and commitment to achieve effective policy processes (Brynard 2005:660). Consequently, the inputs are processed into systems' outputs such as laws, policy statements for allocation of goods and services, taxes and behaviour regulation (Birkland 2011:26).

However, as a major weakness, Birkland (2011:26) indicates that the model gives limited attention to the procedures and processes by which policy decisions are arrived at, leading to what is referred to as "black box" in the political system. He adds that it lacks explanations of the why and how that things happen and the general internal workings of how inputs translate into outputs. To overcome the challenge of the black box in the policy process identified in the model above, the study adopts the mechanistic view of thinking inside the box by integrating insights from the schematic theory of evaluation influence advanced by Mark and Henry (2004). The theory is aimed at identifying the "underlying entities, processes or structures which operate in particular contexts to generate outcomes of interest" (Gerring 2007:161). It helps in providing a better understanding of the causal mechanism and sequence of events for stakeholders to know who the policy works for, how it works, explanations for the variations and improvements. In the next section, the thesis discusses the adoption of the mechanism-based approach drawing insights from Henry and Mark's (2003) framework which identifies the underlying mechanisms, levels and processes, as pathways through which evaluation affects changes in the actions and attitudes of stakeholders to realise the desired policy outcomes as explained in the next section.

2.7.2 The schematic theory of evaluation influence by Mark & Henry (2004)

To explain evaluation influence on public policy using a mechanism-based approach, this study adopts insights from Mark & Henry (2004) who built on Kirkhart's (2000) integrated model to develop this framework of evaluation influence. In their article entitled "Beyond Use, Understanding the Evaluation's influence on Attitudes and Actions", Henry and Mark (2003:293) pointed out certain gaps to address the change processes within which evaluation affects actions, beliefs and attitudes. Consequently, Mark (2011) later emphasises that through this mechanism-based framework, evaluation influence reflects all efforts to cover the entire story of change in policy as the foundation of building evidence in evaluation research. The model is recognised for identifying possible influence pathways to enable researchers to come up with concrete predictions regarding relations among components constituting the logic of evaluation as illustrated below.

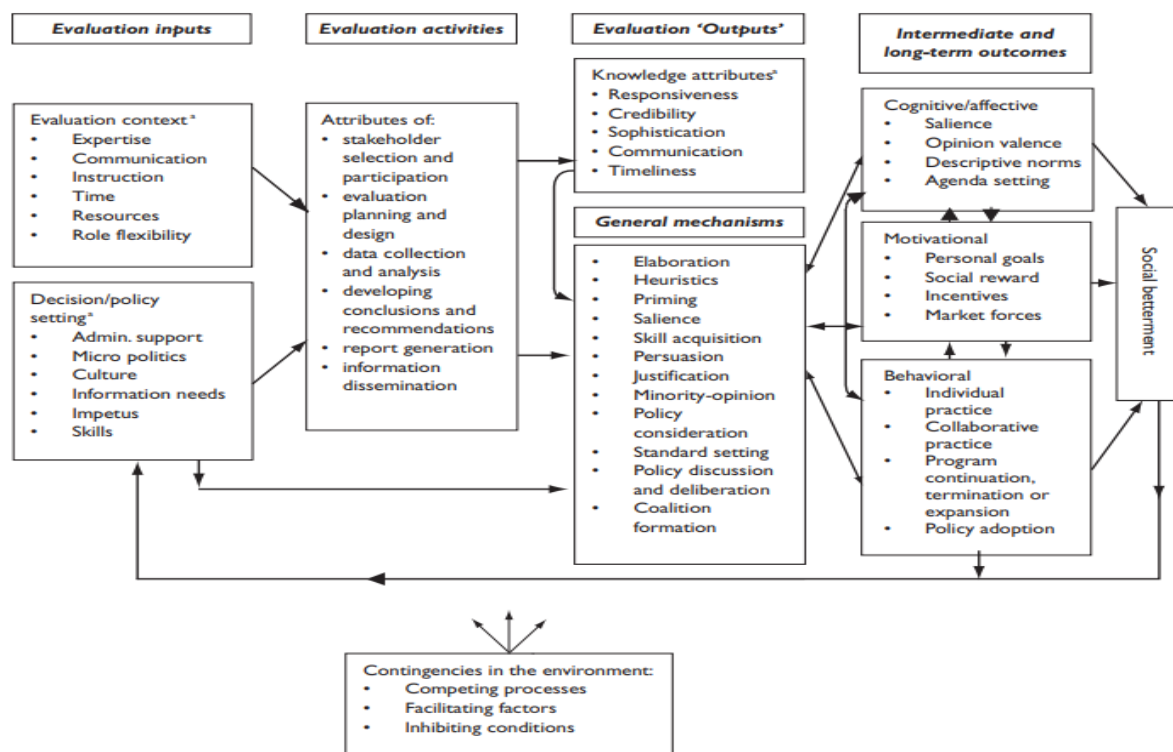


Figure 2.3: An illustration of the schematic theory of evaluation influence by Mark & Henry (2004)

Source: Mark & Henry (2004:46)

From Figure 2.3 above, evaluation influence is affected by several factors, directly and indirectly. The framework is presented in two parts: the first part reflects the pathways made up of the change processes and outcomes constituting patterns of

interactions, as well as communication about a specific evaluation and how it affects the policy process (Streitcher 2017:145). According to Mark & Henry (2004:43), the factors can be classified into firstly, inputs (which cover evaluation policy or decision setting and context). Secondly, are evaluation activities (including planning, selection of participating stakeholders, collection of data and analysis, development of recommendations, reporting and dissemination). Thirdly is evaluation knowledge (which constitutes credibility, sophistication, responsiveness, timeliness and sophistication). Fourthly, are contingencies within the evaluation environment (which include facilitating conditions, inhibiting factors and competing processes).

In addition, the framework reflects four different types of outcomes from the mechanism, namely general influence, motivational, behavioural as well as cognitive and affective. The different outcomes reflect the diverse forms of influence such as general, motivational, cognitive and effective, as well as behavioural levels. At each level, Mark and Henry (2011:115) indicate that there are a set of mechanisms in the form of change processes of relationships, events and structures into policy outcomes that may take place due to an evaluation. Herbert (2014:396) explains that the linkages constitute the influence mechanism that provides a comprehensive understanding of the various complex processes that lead to policy change or lack of change in a particular context.

Several benefits have been presented as inherent in adopting a framework of evaluation influence providing an effective way for understanding and providing a comprehensive view for studying the implicit mechanisms which affect change. Secondly, the schematic framework presents a cohesive way to theoretically organise and generate empirical knowledge on all of the likely consequences of evaluation. Thirdly, the framework is linked to developed constructs already existing in social sciences literature appearing under the general mechanism like skills acquisition, attitude change and persuasion, which are explained in existing literature in other fields. Fourthly, the framework enables one to study the different pathways of influence as well as the situations where evaluation may have failed to affect the desired changes. In addition, Appleton-Dyer, Clinton, Carswell and McNeil (2012:534) indicate that the framework enables a more effective analysis of complex interactions between public sector organisations. Relatedly, Herbert (2014:395) adds

that it represents a more nuanced and developed framework upon which a body of evaluation research can be built.

Despite its strength, its weakness has been summarised to include being “evaluation centric”, individualistic and externally focussed (Hojlund 2014:430). Firstly, it was largely informed by the western Eurocentric assumptions of evaluation as opposed to the communal ideology of the African context that emphasises the role of stakeholders. Secondly, the focus on ad hoc evaluation programmes rather than on institutionalised systems and context explanatory factors is a weakness, yet evaluations are embedded within organisations. Thirdly, the emphasis on the organisational learning function, relegating the accountability purpose which is synonymous with policy improvement in public organisations, relegates the role of actors and factors like power and politics to the peripheral (Dahler-Larsen 2012:56; Boven 2005:184; Stephenson *et al.* 2019:665). Lastly, is the wrong assumption of rational economic actors and organisations with a goal of using evaluations as a feedback mechanism to enhance public policy, yet may opt for political and symbolic preferences against organisational or national interests (Steven 2014:30). Therefore, mindful of the above weaknesses, in providing a sufficient explanation, this study adopts it alongside the stakeholder theory as explained below.

2.7.3 The stakeholder theory and analysis in the public policy context

This study observes that the mechanism within the implementation of the APRM process cannot be fully explained without recognition of the stakeholder philosophy which informed the thinking of the mechanism’s founding members, thereby drawing insights from it. The stakeholder theory was initially introduced by Freeman (1984) and consequently adopted in the public sector contexts as a tool for analysing complex policy situations involving people negotiating to meet their needs (Strojny 2018:374; Mathonsi 2012; Siering & Svensson 2012). Emerging evaluation literature suggests a strong and direct relationship between the stakeholders and public policy impact, since they drive the policy through power-interest influences (Arroyo 2013:4). Conceptually, a stakeholder is generally referred to as an individual, a group of individuals or organisations with interest in a specific policy issue for which their interests affect and are affected by changes, course or outcome in that particular policy (Stronjny & Jedrusik 2018:374; Freeman 2010:25; Studd 2002).

To ensure effective planning, resource allocation, implementation and outcomes, policy makers are expected to seek the input and provide incentives to motivate different stakeholders through active engagement and negotiations in utilisation of evaluations, especially when participatory evaluation methods like peer reviews are adopted (Streitcher 2017:15); Lemire *et al.* 2019:60; Herbert 2014:392; Patton 2011:404; Weible, Heikkla, deLeon & Sabatier 2012:1). Therefore, public managers involved in decision-making are expected to recognise and respond to claims of internal and external stakeholders who are affected or affect the policy by acknowledging that all stakeholders have legitimate claims, in determining policy plans, implementation and outcomes. According to Leung (2010), internal or primary stakeholders are individuals, groups or institutions having legal contracts in a policy under consideration, while external or secondary stakeholders are those entities without a contract but with interest in the policy. Such are primary stakeholders because their interests, powers and influence can be affected or directly affect the policy design and implementation. Greene (2005:397) categorises such stakeholders to include people with decision authority over the policy, with direct responsibility (as staff, administrators and implementers), intended beneficiaries, and those disadvantaged by the policy.

Furthermore, regarding policy positions, Stronjny and Jedrusik (2018:375) classify different stakeholders based on compatibility in terms of their expectations in comparison to the organisational objectives. These may include real strong allies, weak allies, real strong opponents, real weak opponents and neutral stakeholders. Internal stakeholders may include top management, linear managers, project managers, staff, ordinary workers as well as the project team. The secondary stakeholders are described as entities whose interests, power and influence do not directly or indirectly affect policy implementation (Murdock 2004; Svendsen 1999). Bryson (2011:2) recommends narrowing the focus to those stakeholders targeted by the evaluation as the primary intended users to influence policy. Therefore, the stakeholder theory is preferred in this study since peer review is informed by the African traditional and communal philosophy of Ubuntu that suggests stakeholders operating at various levels with diverse interests to influence collective policy goals.

2.7.3.1 The principles explaining stakeholder theory in public policy

The stakeholder theory presents three mutually supportive principles that inform the strategies for managing stakeholders' diverse interests in the context of public administration (Freeman 1984:46; Flak & Rose 2005:646). The researcher finds them very insightful since the APRM is built on the African philosophy of collective sharing and use of knowledge to address communal challenges. According to Flak and Rose (2012:657), stakeholder theory provides an important inclusive framework for developing cross-national policies by harmonising differences among stakeholders to align their perspectives. Flak and Rose (2005:643-6) explain that the theory is informed by three major principles, namely the normative argument, and the descriptive and instrumental dimensions.

The first principle is the normative argument which assumes the ethical duty and obligation of the managers to recognise their responsibilities to multiple relationships, and the shared interests of the different stakeholder groups. It suggests that due to public sector funding by taxpayers, ethical codes require that all stakeholders participate which necessitates balancing the interests of the public administrators and politicians with the interests of other stakeholder groups in the public interest (Hendy 2001:23). The second principle is the descriptive dimension which puts emphasis on organisation description in terms of stakeholder relationships. The organisation is presented as a complex web of governance stakeholders with varying interests, but whose relationship can be analysed in terms of power, urgency and legitimacy. The third principle is the instrumental dimension as a management tool which focuses on the instrumental tools and frameworks that support effective management. The principle is largely concerned with managers establishing which identities are likely to be recognised as powerful and legitimate to align their interests in the same direction to ensure organisational sustainability (Freeman *et al.* 2010; Jepsen & Eskerod 2009).

This study focuses on this instrumental function which involves the linkage between stakeholder management and achievement of organisational policy objectives at different levels (Rose 2012:657). Under this principle, Flak and Rose (2012:653-7) present four central stakeholder theory management propositions applicable to government agencies. Firstly, every agency of government has internal and external stakeholders with legitimate interests, and it is a manager's duty to respect those stakeholders' interests. Secondly, the different government agencies have an ethical

obligation to respect stakeholders' interests but may be conducted at varying levels. Thirdly, the interests of different stakeholders can be described and analysed and implemented using tools, relevant stakeholder strategies and policies for government initiatives. Fourthly, the respect of the interests of stakeholders can result in improved performance in governance policy initiatives, since the ethical response to the interest of stakeholders makes a government agency more trustworthy, reliable and hence leads to increased political credibility.

According to Lawrence and Weber (2011), there are three major ways through which stakeholders exercise influence on public policy: the information strategy where they influence policy makers' decisions through the kind of information; the financial incentive strategy through which stakeholders contribute to support the policy activities; and the constituency building strategy by stakeholders forming coalitions through which they enhance their influence upon government policy makers in a way that appears more favourable to them. Mayer (2006:13) insists that recognising the complex context of unequal power relations among stakeholders involved in the policy intervention would avoid the mistake of judging the policy outcomes based on successes for the institution while overlooking the processes in the policy system.

2.7.3.2 Stakeholder analysis

To ensure effective application of the stakeholder philosophy in the APRM, the study further adopts a stakeholder analytical framework. Literature presents different typologies of stakeholder analysis (Huatahaean 2017:462). In particular, this study adopts Yu *et al.*'s (2011:8718) public policy analytical model for systematic stakeholder identification, management and analysis to ensure representation, legitimacy value maximisation, and sustainability with minimal conflicts. The typology's analytical procedure involves two stages and two layers in which the four major element stakeholders are analysed, namely: stakeholder attitude, type and issue of concern. The analysis provides insights for mapping and understanding the stakeholders' interests, perceptions, power, positions, legitimacy roles, context and how they trigger the nature of stakeholder negotiations, changes in policy realities and consequent implementation outcomes.

What follows is the more recent, objective and comprehensive policy-oriented framework below.

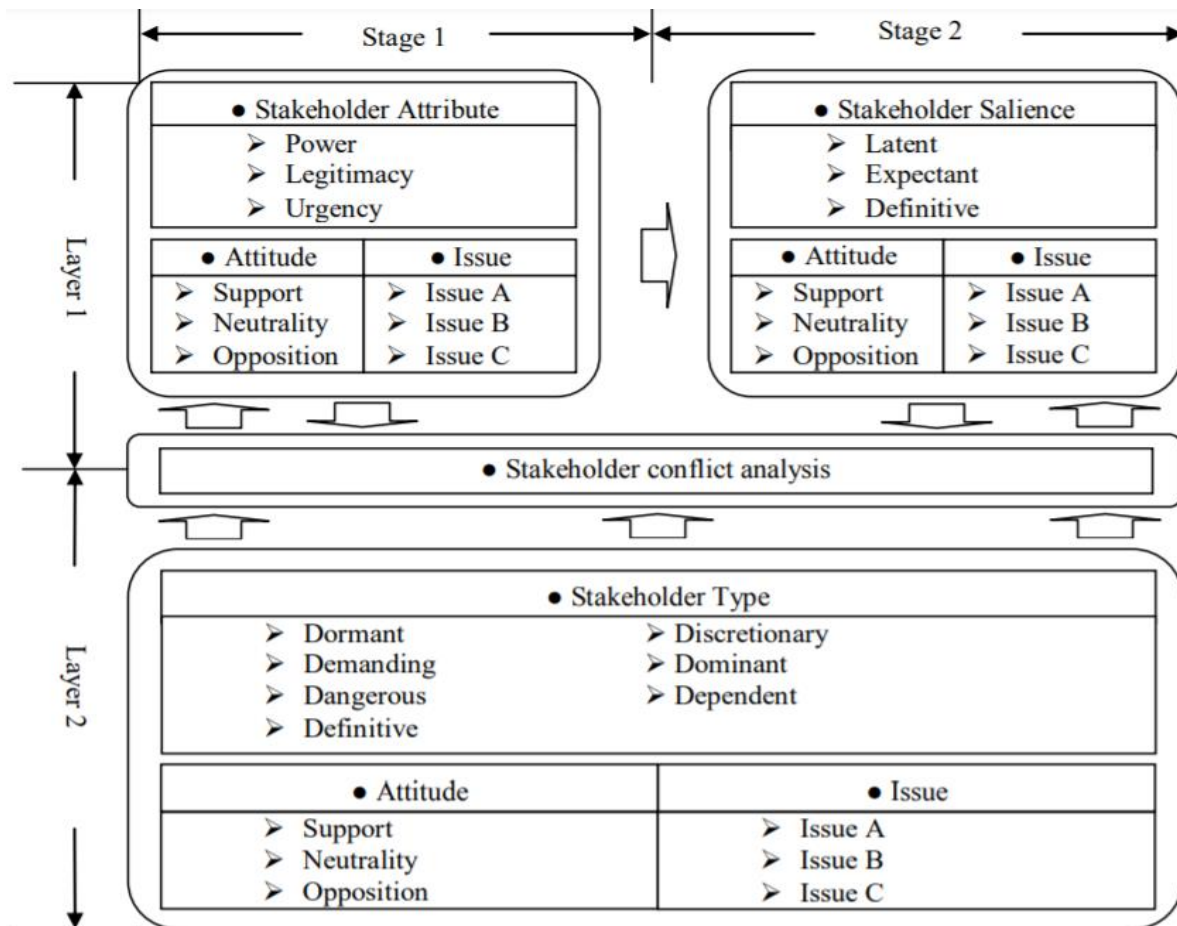


Figure 2.4: An illustration of the public policy analytical model for systematic stakeholder identification, management and analysis

Source: Policy analytical framework from Yu *et al.* (2011:8719)

As reflected in Figure 2.4, the first stage is assessment of stakeholder attitudes (support, opposition or neutrality) towards a policy. In addition, issues of interest to stakeholders in a public policy are also analysed based on the critical stakeholders' attributes of power, urgency or legitimacy in a specific context. The second stage involves the analysis of stakeholders' attitudes where the issue of concern is stakeholder saliency or importance (latent, definitive or expectant). In the second layer, possible conflict points are analysed among seven different types of stakeholders (dominant, dependant, dangerous, demanding, discretionary and definitive).

Furthermore, the three critical stakeholders' attributes and their roles in the first stage are explained. The first attribute is power and is considered central in identifying stakeholders (Parent & Deephouse 2007:17). It is the probability of a

particular actor in an existing social relationship to realise their will despite resistance and associated with control of critical resources that have no substitute yet are necessary for operational performance (Yu *et al.* 2011:8718). Different stakeholders may have varied influence and power, but endeavor to align their interest with policy objectives. Power is perceived in the context of a relationship in which it provokes or prevents a particular policy outcome (Dahr 1957:202). The established institutional framework provides different actors with spaces with varying configurations of power and privileges which enable them to shape the policy process by controlling what they may perceive as a threat to their desired agenda, or aid what appears to be in support of their interests.

The effects of power and politics on policy outcomes are well explained by Weiss (1973:94) in three major ways. Firstly, the analysed policies are products of political decisions. Secondly, evaluation output constitutes inputs into the political decision-making process. Thirdly, analysis presents a political stance by deciding on the policy issue as a problem and the legitimacy of what is considered as the most appropriate policy intervention option. This perspective challenges the conventional assumptions of a rational and technical policy process without considering other factors such as power and influence of stakeholders that characterise political bargains (Mulyaningrum *et al.* 2013:158).

Stakeholder analysis explains that where there are strong allies among stakeholders characterised by compatibility of their expectations with the policy goals, there is maximum support for a policy. However, where there are weak allies due to limited compatibility of stakeholder expectations with policy objectives, limited or lack of support for a policy will occur (Flak & Rose 2012:657). Finally, the neutral stakeholders are characterised by weak divergence or convergence of their expectations with policy objectives with little or no clear roles to play in ensuring policy implementation.

The second element is salience. In explaining this element, Mitchell *et al.* (1997) argue that stakeholder types in possession of more attributes such as a definitive stakeholder with three attributes are also rated with higher levels of importance compared to latent stakeholder types with low attributes. The third element of stakeholder attitude is understood as the person's opinions regarding a particular

policy issue which may be in the form of support (positive attitude), opposition (negative attitude) or neutrality (without approval or disapproval of a public policy). Therefore, to ensure policy support, focus is put on stakeholders with power, salience and agency. However, Bryson (2011:3) observes that the political sensitivities and power sources have been less appreciated, yet they are key for the use of evaluation and adaptation of the policy initiative.

2.7.3.3 Application of Stakeholder Analysis in understanding the influence of the APRM evaluation system.

The study acknowledges that the APRM evaluation system is intended to be an indigenous approach rooted within the African philosophical assumptions and communal practice values and cultures, based on the relational African ontology as opposed to the western ontology based on one reality and individual interests (Gaothobogwe *et al.* 2018:51; Chilisa 2012:33; Chilisa *et al.* 2017; Cloete 2016:63).

Using this stakeholder perspective, the study aims at generating an enhanced APRM African evaluation framework. This integrates principles from the universalistic evaluation frameworks, with the African elements that emphasise multiple actors' interests from "Ubuntu", to inform context sensitive policies as opposed to reliance on only western ontology and conceptual frameworks. Chilisa *et al.* (2016:35) identify key ingredients of evaluation frameworks informed by African philosophies. Firstly, they need to be culturally sensitive, based on African world views and inclusive of local stakeholders. Secondly, an indigenised approach which involves making data collection instruments context relevant. Thirdly, informed by an African logic in different ways of knowledge, sources of knowledge such as cultural value systems, and social and historical context through dialogue. Fourthly, a culturally interactive framework based on local and cultural adaptations as opposed to imported cultural elements of co-production of knowledge. These provide insights towards understanding the adoption of peer review as an African innovative evaluation approach informed by the African traditional ideology of "Ubuntu". The philosophy was adopted as a result of the increased concerns that Eurocentric evaluation approaches imposed by the global north have for long failed to solve African governance and under development challenges. Calls towards decolonising the evaluation practice in Africa increased in a way that acknowledges that African

epistemologies, ontologies and world views need to be integrated by developing home-grown culturally sensitive Afro-centric evaluation system (Basheka & Byamugisha 2015:15; Gaynor 2010:802). The study aims at contributing towards the decolonising evaluation literature intended to culturally establish context sensitive African indigenous evaluation frameworks as opposed to the one size fits all eurocentric lenses for purposes of mutual policy improvement, accountability and empowerment (Cloete, Gaothobogwe, *et al.* 2018:52; Chilisa 2012:33). Therefore, by adopting the stakeholder theory as the major theory, the study emphasises that understanding stakeholder constellations within the policy processes constitutes an important component of designing an enhanced APRM framework for improved evaluation influence on public policy.

2.8 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter presented the theory of Public Administration to ensure its alignment with the study's objectives and key concepts. It explained public policy as a sub-field that plays a functional role in Public Administration and presented the study's contribution to expanding the body of knowledge of the discipline. It reflected a review of the literature, showing the theoretical framework of the study topic, connecting the key concepts in public policy within the discipline of Public Administration. The chapter discussed the conceptualisation of Public Administration and its functions, as well as the various paradigms reflecting its evolution from public administration to managerialism. It detailed the functions performed by managers with emphasis on accountability for results which laid the foundation for introduction of policy evaluation in the public sector. Finally, the chapter discussed the evaluation theory and practice within the public sector administration in Africa, highlighting the new direction and emerging trend in evaluation utilisation research. The next chapter discusses that APRM evaluation system. It examines the three major elements of the system through which peer review of AU member states is conducted namely: the process, the actors and the context. Based on the APRM continental guidelines, reports and the review of literature about its performance, an analysis of the evaluative effect of the APRM system on national policies is presented.

CHAPTER THREE: THE APRM EVALUATION SYSTEM

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter Three presents the different elements constituting the institutionalised APRM evaluation system, analysing their evaluative effect as mandated by the African Union (AU). It follows Chapter Two which provided a conceptual framework for the evaluation influence and its various types of use and non-use in public policy. The chapter goes beyond the description of the outcome, to an examination of the APRM mechanism that has been given limited scholarly attention in most of the studies on the APRM. The chapter establishes the degree of compliance to the implementation standards in response to the research questions regarding the degree of evaluation influenced by the process and outcome. The key guidelines informing the APRM implementation process are provided for the APRM base documents (2003), the APRM Statute (2016), and the APRM Guidelines (2016), among others. They define the standards, structure and stakeholders that constitute the APRM evaluation system to which countries are expected to comply and the influence of national policies.

The chapter's discussion comprises four major sections. The first section presents the conceptualisation of the APRM as an innovative form of the Made in Africa Evaluation (MAE) approach towards Agenda 2063. The conceptualisation of peer review is explained as a preferred form of evaluation, informed by the inclusive communal ideology of the African culture. The second section presents the background to the establishment of the APRM in AU member states with two components, namely (i) the growth and institutionalisation of evaluation in Africa pushed by development agencies to assess aid impact in the 1990s, and (ii) the governance challenges in transforming the continent to a more democratic and good governance oriented African Union (AU). The AU established the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) and consequently the APRM as a catalyst towards realisation of the good governance aspirations inform of the AU Agenda 2063. The third section provides the APRM continental framework, the key stages in its development, and the efforts to enhance influence are analysed. They include: the initial stage of institutionalisation and base reviews (2003-2013), the revitalisation

phase (2016-2020) and the renewal phase of (2020-2024). The fourth section analyses the degree of influence of the evaluation inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes and contextual factors on national policies, highlighting efforts to address the refugee challenge in Africa.

3.2 CONCEPTUAL UNDERSTANDING OF PEER REVIEW AS A FORM OF EVALUATION

The APRM is an intergovernmental African governance framework, based on peer review as a form of evaluation. This practice of peer and self-assessment has been previously associated with the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) as the most notable institution known globally for conducting peer reviews of its member states (Jahed & Kithatu 2008:109). In Africa, its adoption was informed by the continent's traditional ideology of communalism for society's development.

While there is no universally accepted definition of peer review, the APRM (2009:33) defines it as “the systematic examination and assessment of the performance of a state by other states with the ultimate goal of helping the reviewed state improve its policy-making, adopt best practices and comply with established standards and principles”. It is described as a voluntary self-monitoring mechanism intended to “institutionalise and consolidate democratic governance” (Motlosa 2008:17). It involves the use of peer pressure to assess a member country's progress towards attaining mutually agreed governance goals (Ranker *et al.* 2007:9). The approach assumes the supreme importance of supporting equal stakeholders' interests for the purposes of collective improvement by taking the form of a non-adversarial learning process among peers (Khupe 2014:74). Based on the key principles of mutual trust, confidence and dialogue, countries share one another's best governance practices, policies and their applications for purposes of improving state capacity and changing the attitude of actors (Pagani 2002:15). Furthermore, Tawfic (2004:13) adds that the mutual learning process is facilitated through systematic information exchange involving expert committees, interactive dialogue on collegial assessment of progress and application of formal recommendations for policy improvement.

The common structural elements of peer review are identified by the OECD (2011:13) to include the standards and associated criteria upon which a member state's performance is assessed, agreed-upon principles, actors designated to conduct the review, as well as the procedure to be followed. Tawfic (2004:13) argues that while the forms of assessments may differ in terms of areas, frequency, cost, and comprehensiveness, all peer reviews are characterised by three aspects. Firstly, there are expert committees examining the proposals. Secondly, they represent a peer pressure exerted through formal recommendations and informal dialogue based on results from collegial assessment of compliance and progress of reviewed countries. Thirdly, peer reviews are characterised by interactive dialogue and investigations. Micheal (2003:7) maintains that the objectives to assess accomplishments, identify shortfalls, share advice on certain policy dilemmas, and recommend actions through soft reputational pressure and peer scrutiny are important. Literature maintains that the degree of influence in peer review largely depends on the peer's level of influence and power to the reviewed country, through persuasive engagements and dialogues (Grimm *et al.* 2009:23; Grimm, Triebel & Utz 2009:23). The next section discusses the background to the introduction of peer review in Africa, highlighting the motivations and forces behind its institutionalisation as a multi-level governance evaluation framework on the continent.

3.2.1 Peer reviewing governance in Africa

At the beginning of the 21st Century, Africa witnessed the dawn of a new wave of democratic governance sweeping across the continent. Since independence, it was characterised by numerous challenges associated with insufficient institutional establishment for promoting democratic governance (Fombad 2006:9). In the context of this study, governance is conceptualised as “the exercise of power through public institutions like rules and routines, formal laws and informal norms” (Grimm *et al.* 2009:17). This definition emphasises the use of political power to manage the affairs of a nation through political, economic, administrative, social mechanisms, institutions and resources for decision-making and implementation. Likewise, Fukuyama (2013:3) equates governance to: “government's ability to make and enforce rules and to deliver services” which was found to be lacking in Africa. Basing on his analysis, Wani (2004:5) attributes this context to the continent's colonial

history, vicious cycles of armed conflicts, corruption and disregard of rule of law leading to the continent's underdevelopment and poverty.

Similarly, Nganja (2015:5) associates Africa's governance challenges with the weak and dysfunctional institutions, while Ottaway (1997:5) emphasises over centralised authority resulting in conflicts. Kuye and Tshiyoyo (2015:66) observe that most of the existing state institutions responsible for promoting good governance in Africa were designed by former colonisers implying the urgent need for transformation into a more people-centered system. To bring about this transformation, the African leaders embarked on a process of establishing institutional frameworks for promoting governance among AU member states.

In the 1990s, there was growing acknowledgement that governance matters as a major precondition for the realisation of sustainable development across the world, and its evaluation was agreed as critical for the development. In Africa, a new breed of leaders became intent on addressing the continent's challenges. Matlosa (2008:14-17) explains that their commitment was demonstrated through transforming the OAU, whose mandate was more about protecting Africa's independence, into the African Union (AU). Leaders like Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria, Thabo Mbeki of South Africa and Abdelaziz Bouteflika of Algeria among others emphasised the AU's mandate of reversing Africa's under-development and responding to the 21st-Century governance challenges (Shalk 2005:503; Southall 2006:222; Schoeman 2006:251). The African leaders embraced evaluation in governance and recognised the five programme evaluation criteria by the OECD 's Development Assistance Committee as appropriateness, relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability and impact" (Chianca 2008:41). However, even with the advent of multi-party democracy, Ibrahim and Cheri (2013:59) argue that many regimes did not adopt the accompanying changes like reforms in constitutional frameworks. They add that some regimes used the same state institutions to violate their constitutions, manipulate the electoral process, and undermine representation and accountability in policy-making process, while suffocating opposition parties.

In line with the Bretton Woods institutions which prescribed good governance principles as a conditionality for the political system to attain development objectives

(Mangu 2014:62), efforts were then directed to people empowerment and participation through bottom-up public policy processes (APRM 2016:19). In line with the above argument, the explanation for the necessity of democratic governance is provided by Ibrahim and Cheri (2013:61), who advance three major reasons. Firstly, that political participation in public decision-making is not just one of the fundamental human rights, but also essential for human development. Secondly, nationalised democracy facilitates dialogue on solving political and economic catastrophism for the common good to avoid conflicts. Thirdly, that democratic governance promotes political freedoms, which contribute towards empowerment of the masses to demand for formulation as well as implementation of development oriented public policies.

In the 2000s, the Constitutive Act of the African Union was signed with a codified framework detailing the commitment of the African leaders and the conduct of the AU in addressing the prevailing challenges by generating home-grown solutions. In 2002, it was inaugurated with the key objectives which included defending the territorial integrity of member states, promoting democratic institutions, principles of good governance, peace, unity and stability, as well as protecting human and peoples' rights (Motlasi 2008:16; Schoeman 2006:251; Southall 2006:232).

Consequently, the AU adopted the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) as an innovative vehicle for the continent's development programme (Southall 2006:220). According to Melber (2006:6), the NEPAD's declaration on Political, Economic and Corporate Governance was intended to encourage "partnership between and among African Peoples, acceleration of regional and continental integration, building the competitiveness of African countries and the continent, and forging a new international partnership that changes the unequal relationship between Africa and the developed world". Democracy and Political, Economic and Corporate Governance became the key thematic areas of the APRM further buttressing this commitment (Matlosa 2008; AU 2007; APRM Base Document 2003:349; NEPAD-MOU 2003:8).

3.2.2 The institutionalisation of evaluation systems in Africa

During the same period of the 2000s, the imperativeness of evaluation was emphasised in all development programmes if any consistent and meaningful impact

was to be realised (OECD 2013:23). Since then, most development approaches in the different parts of the world have increasingly been shaped by evaluation frameworks (Chianca 2008:23). Different regions pursuing a common development agenda adopted certain standardised evaluation frameworks, customised to the region's socio-economic environments by implementing a joint evaluation framework, and sharing experience, information and knowledge. Shaffer (2012:38) maintains that there was an emerging consensus that an effective implementation of any development agenda requires an innovative, appropriate and rigorously designed evaluation framework to support its efforts of poverty reduction and economic growth.

In Africa, Basheka and Byamugisha (2015:77) explain that the growth of evaluation in the 2000s was part of the New Public Management, to measure the efficiency, effectiveness and impact of policy interventions by governments undertaking reforms within the public sector policies. Evaluation practice was initially stimulated by the international development agencies through the 1998 conference that called for its institutionalisation and capacity building (Basheka & Byamugisha 2015:80). After the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness in 2005, the emphasis was placed on establishing and tracking strategies and linkages between the poverty eradication plans and the national development plans to ensure value for money among recipients of development assistance (World Bank 2004:4).

Over time, with the growing demand for evaluation as a means to ensure evidence-based policy-making, Porter and Goldman (2013:5) explain that individual countries embarked on establishing evaluation policies, such as Ghana, Kenya, Senegal, South Africa and Benin among others, but with institutional challenges. However, they argue that the countries lacked a shared vision on the role of evaluation. With institutional challenges in several countries (Cloete *et al.*, 2014:388), African governments realised the need for a more context sensitive continental-wide approach intended to generate home grown solutions to African problems as opposed to adoption of externally donor driven models. Consequently, the APRM was embraced as an intercontinental framework that suits the African context (Preskil & Beer 2012).

In March 2003 out of NEPAD, the initiative of the APRM was launched as an autonomous body of the AU (Grudz 2009:5). This took place through a series of decisions by the then NEPAD Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee (HSGIC) which include Assembly Decision 198 (XI), Decision Ext/Assembly /AU/Dec.1-4(XI) and Decision 527 (XXIII). A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on the APRM was signed by six countries during the HSGIC meeting and announced the first seven-member panel to ensure integrity of the review processes (NEPAD/HSGIC/03-2003/APRM/MOU). The countries were Kenya, Algeria, Congo, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia and Ghana (APRM-MOU 2003:7-9)

The APRM has since been embraced as an African home-grown and led evaluation framework for peer learning, experience sharing and self-assessment, with a focus on public policies and governance practices for replication across the continent and acceleration of Africa's integration. The mechanism is informed by the standards and codes covered in the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (ACDEG) and the Declaration on Democracy, Political, Economic and Corporate Governance (APRM-MOU 2003:9). Over time, the APRM initiatives embarked on transforming Africa's governance scenery by influencing people centered policy formulation and implementation among AU member states. Grudz (2007:5) explains the key features that characterise the APRM to include: being a voluntary self-monitoring initiative for enhancing better governance, its application covering a continental-wide scope, being a home-grown African driven enterprise, and supervision by broadly drawn representative National Governance Councils. The mechanism was adopted as an independent organ in the AU at the time when monitoring and evaluation gained political recognition as central to promoting the effectiveness of development cooperation towards poverty reduction.

3.2.3 APRM: A home-grown type of Made in Africa Evaluation (MAE) system

The Made in Africa Evaluation (MAE) is a home-grown approach to development that goes beyond beneficiary participation to emphasise ownership and commitment from initiation throughout the policy-making process (Goldman *et al.* 2019:6). The approach was initiated following concerns about the continued failure by western-oriented evaluation approaches to bring about the desired development impact, after the endorsement of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness in 2005, requiring

established commitments for developing countries to improve the developmental impact of the aid by changing their way of doing business (OECD 2008:4). Western donor agencies emphasised their one size fits all western evaluation approach to aid recipient countries in Africa as a means of enhancing aid effectiveness (Basheka & Byamugisha 2015:15).

However, with culturally numerous and varied policy contexts in Africa, compared to the western world (Gaynor 2010:802), persistent questions were raised about the efficacy of the Eurocentric interventions in solving Africa's governance challenges. Cloete (2016:58) explains that efforts have been made to replace the linear approach of dispensing policies to developing a home-grown culturally sensitive evaluation system based on networks. Unlike donor agencies whose practice is informed by the western ontology of evaluation approach which emphasises external pressure (Basheka & Byamugisha 2015:16), the APRM which involves a more participatory approach of using soft scrutiny and accountability among member states was adopted.

In the late 2000s, evaluation practice was increasingly gaining political recognition as an important control tool and a function of good governance in Africa (Malefetsane, Lungepi & Tembile 2014:5). Considering the weaknesses associated with romanticisation of the western idea of participation, evaluation researchers started calling for the development of Afrocentric evaluation frameworks which meet the imperatives of the African cultural contexts (Chilisa & Mertens 2021; Chilisa 2015). To ensure effective evaluation methodology in an African context, Gaothobogwe *et al.* (2018:52) emphasise the need for development of context sensitive evaluation frameworks based on locally informed constructs that can be adapted to local methods of data collection.

In 2007, the Africa Evaluation Association (AFrEA) Conference that took place in Niamey introduced the concept Made in Africa Evaluation (MAE). This approach to public policy evaluation was built on the philosophy of multiple stakeholders' engagement to promote a form of governance that empowers citizens in decision-making processes as opposed to the asymmetrical and hierarchical command and control structures (Bevir 2006:427). The home-grown approach was in response to

the calls for decolonising the evaluation practice in Africa in a way that acknowledges African epistemologies, ontologies and world views. Insisting that Euro-Western approaches have for a long time failed to address the challenges of underdevelopment on the African continent, the AfrEA resolved that the cultures and values in the context of Africa need to be evidently infused in the current evaluation knowledge system (Mbava & Chapman 2020:3).

The MAE approach to evaluation questions the contextual and cultural relevance of evaluation methods which are imposed on Africans by the global north. It is shaped by the common African relational philosophy of “Ubuntu” characterised by the African world views, values and ways of knowing with the aim of developing an evaluation practice that is informed by local cultures and indigenous knowledge (Chilisa & Mertens 2021:23). With emphasis on promoting the wellbeing of others, the values of Ubuntu are presented to include cooperation, relationship caring, reciprocity, compassion and empathy that constitute interdependency among African people (Tshivhase 2018:23)

In addition, Chilisa *et al.* (2016:35) identify four indicators of evaluation frameworks informed by African philosophies which include: (i) being culturally sensitive, based on African world views, (ii) the indigenised approach which involves data collection instruments translated into local languages, (iii) a framework informed by African logic, ways of knowledge, value systems and social and historical context, and (iv) culturally interactive frameworks based on local and cultural adaptations. To realise those characteristics towards home-grown approaches, Rice (2016:223), recommends that emphasis is put on changing the rules, authorities and powers by which engagements take place, towards a collective and communal decision-making relevant in the African context.

More recently, as a means of promoting the decolonisation of the evaluation theory and practice, the AfrEA presents five major principles that inform evaluation from the perspective of MAE (AfrEA 2021:4). These are: firstly, evaluation that empowers Africans through mutual accountability, reciprocity and learning as well as strengthening domestic capacities and values. Secondly, an evaluation which is technically robust in a sense that it is analytical, systematic, transparent, efficient,

feasible, culturally responsive and aware of dispositions. Thirdly, an evaluation which is ethically sound by being sensitive to stakeholders and their relationships which protect the rights of people against vested interests, inequalities and power asymmetries while considering trade-offs and promoting inclusion.

Fourthly, an evaluation rooted within Africa (Afro-centric), but also open to draw from across the world by engaging with the key issues that matter most in Africa, adapting and learning from indigenous communities and other African contexts, while giving consideration to framings and methods from Africa. Fifthly, evaluation recognises the connectedness of the world, calls for new knowledge and ideas for transformation by fostering the evaluation of sustainability and observing international agreements/standards, contributing towards transformative change in a way that acknowledges the interdependence of the world. To ensure enhanced evaluation influence through effective stakeholder participation, the above principles require changes in institutional structures, processes and frameworks.

As a point of departure from the western oriented evaluation approaches, the APRM as a home-grown model has been described by Cloete (2016:58) as an African rooted evaluation approach informed by the contextually collective ideology of communalism. This collaborates with Chilisa et al. (2016:324) who state that “The APRM is a good example of an adaptive evaluation approach, contextualised to culturally relevant and inclusive of stakeholders. In addition, Banda (2022:33) describes it as “a post-colonial indigenous evaluation paradigm intended to address the limitations of the traditional western paradigms”. The African ownership of the APRM is mainly guaranteed on two grounds, namely the wide stakeholder participation and funding from within the African AU member states. Firstly, the supplementary document to the APRM Country Guidelines (2003:2) maintains that, in conducting the APRM implementation process, diverse stakeholders’ participation shall be recognised as a central element in improving a country’s governance through empowerment and building trust among stakeholders. The APRM Guidelines (2016: 22) describe the participatory nature of the APRM methodology, and demand a broad, participatory and wide stakeholder representative assessment process involving consultation, validation and dissemination. Similarly, the APRM Base Document (2003:18) identifies such stakeholders to include government

officials, parliamentarians, academia, the media, trade unions, political parties, the private sector and professional bodies.

The elaborate provisions on stakeholder participation are intended to “ensure that the review process goes beyond the government and involves other non-state actors, thereby creating state-ownership as against government ownership of the review” (Gboyega 2019:24). The APRM inclusive process of multiple stakeholders at various levels of government in the evaluation process is advanced by the AU as a major building block towards the success of Agenda 2063 (AUC 2017:23). As a result, peer review was considered a more relevant approach since it involves multi-stakeholder engagement of the state and the non-state actors in decision-making as a form of downward accountability. Besides, it is characterised by peer learning and enforced through soft reputational peer pressure as opposed to strong external pressure and sanctions against non-compliant actors. In addition, Adele-Jinadu (2013:23) explains that what makes the APRM different from other external governance reviews undertaken by development partners including the OECD, the IMF, the World Bank and governance assessment organisations like the Mo Ibrahim Foundation Index on African Governance, the Afro barometer, is largely the participatory and inclusive methodology. Khupe (2014:74) indicates that the APRM idea represents a relational African axiology which emphasises the philosophy of “Ubuntu” and the fundamental importance of stakeholder needs, interests, reciprocity and a harmonious co-existence with nature as values upheld by the African people.

Secondly, full African ownership and control of the APRM process is ensured through funding from within the continent. The communiqué from the thirty-fifth session convened in October 2002 emphasised that implementation of the APRM would be conducted “with resources to come predominantly from Africa”. Furthermore, the APRM Base Document (2003:26) states that the funding of the APRM activities shall be generated from member states acceding to participate in the mechanism based on the estimates reflected in the APRM Business Plan. According to the NEPAD/APRM Guidelines/O&P (2003:17), it was resolved that funding from external partners would only be welcomed in the implementation of the NPoA, as long as they respect African ownership of the mechanism.

Moreover, to guarantee this independence, Chapter 11 of the APRM Statute (2016:23) emphasises that “the APRM shall be funded from member states’ contributions as determined from time to time by the APR Forum. Member states shall also endeavour where possible to make special contributions on a voluntary basis to the APRM, beyond their regular annual contributions” Further, it elaborates that “.... the APRM may also receive donations including from African and international institutions and the private sector, on criteria to be adopted by the APR Forum, provided such support shall not compromise the autonomy, independence, integrity and African ownership of the APRM and all of its processes”. All provisions are intended to guarantee full ownership of the APRM as an indigenous Made in Africa Evaluation (MAE) tool.

Over time, the APRM has attracted international scholarly recognition as an innovative governance evaluation framework for Africa. Morkel and Sibanda (2022:1) indicate that “...the nature of states and state institutions, in particular postcolonial African states, requires an awareness of the need for contextually relevant and perhaps Africa-specific forms of evaluation systems which can take into consideration the historical legacies of colonial and postcolonial institutions and the foundations that these have created for the establishment of effective systems of evidence production and use.”

Therefore, the APRM methodology is presented as a more African context-sensitive framework in the spirit of collective learning to improve the continent’s governance, which is appropriate to the culturally cooperative African governance context (Benington & Moore 2010:23). However, while assessing the methodology in implementing the APRM framework to influence public policies as a MAE, this study contributes towards refining, adapting and customising western evaluation paradigms into culturally competent frameworks that suit local conditions and values. This thesis builds on the works of Cloete, Rabie and De Coning (2014), Cloete (2016:61) and Gaothobogwe, Major, Koloi-Keaikitse and Chilisa (2018:52), who call for the promotion of customised African evaluation methodologies which serve African relational needs.

3.2.4 Purpose, mandate and principles of the APRM

The base documents (2003:1-3) which established the APRM explain that each country's performance is assessed in the four governance thematic areas of Democracy, Economic, Corporate and Political Governance". The APRM Memorandum of Understanding (2003:341-352) indicates that in implementing the above mandate, the purpose of the APRM is primarily "of fostering the adoption of policies, standards and practices that lead to political stability, high economic growth, sustainable and inclusive development, as well as accelerated regional and continental economic integration, through sharing of experiences and reinforcing of successful and best practices".

In terms of its operations, Article Four of the APRM Statute (2016:7) spells out the mandate of the APRM, being to "facilitate self-monitoring by participating states and to ensure that their policies and practices conform to the agreed political, economic, corporate governance and socio-economic values, codes and standards contained in the Declaration on Democracy; Political, Economic and Corporate Governance; and the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance, as well as other relevant treaties, conventions and instruments adopted by participating states, whether through the African Union or through other international platforms". Therefore, the APRM plays the role of a catalyst for promoting democratic and good governance principles on the continent.

In addition, Article Five of the APRM Statute (2016:8) highlights the functions and the principles guiding APRM operations. The APRM functions include (i) Facilitation and promotion of self-monitoring and governance evaluation of participating AU member states. (ii) Tracking and evaluating the implementation of key governance areas of the AU Agenda 2063 and the SDGs Agenda 2030 on the African continent, and preparation of the African Governance Reports (AGRs) for presentation to the Assembly every two years. (iii) Serving the function of a platform for national, regional and continental sharing of the identified best practices, encouraging of reviewed states to implement their developed NPoAs, and ensuring integration of APRM objectives in the plans of regional development bodies. (iv) Supporting member states in international credit rating agencies, contributing towards early warning systems for conflict prevention on the continent, promotion of democracy and good governance. (v) Encouraging member states to implement the governance

instruments as per the African Charter and the Declaration on Democracy, Economic, Political and Corporate Governance. Realisation of all of the above depends on the ability of the APRM framework to influence national policies.

Considering its inclusive implementation process of multiple stakeholders, in June 2014, the Heads of State and Governments in their 23rd AU Assembly held in Equatorial Guinea adopted a resolution to integrate the APRM as an autonomous agency in the AU System. In January 2017, the 28th AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government expanded its mandate by two decisions from the Kagame reforms which included Resolution (Assembly/AU/Dec 631:XXVIII), for tracking the implementation and evaluation of key governance areas on the African continent and providing support to AU member states in rating agencies (APRM 2017:4). As a sign of confidence by the AU, the APRM was invited to be integrated within the African Union and its mandate extended to critically assess the African countries' realisation of the SDGs (UN Vision 2030) for enhancing the wellbeing of humanity and the AU Agenda 2063 as an African master plan. Other important resolutions included: positioning the APRM as a major African early warning tool for preventing conflicts on the continent in 2018 as stipulated in Resolution (Assembly/AU/Dec.686:XXVIII), and the requirement for the APRM to produce an African Governance Report every two years and providing support production of national governance reports as presented in Resolution (Assembly/AU/Dec:XXXII).

The new developments meant that the APRM should strive to oversee evaluation the key governance areas on the African continent including participating country's adherence to continental and international commitment in the area of governance. To effectively undertake its expanded mandate, the continental Result-Based Monitoring Evaluation and Reporting (MER) System was introduced to support the principal purpose of assessing the extent to which country policies and plans of action are designed in line with Agenda 2063.

While making a case for the APRM as a natural and innovative evaluation instrument for tracking the implementation of the AU Agenda 2063 and the SDGs 2030, Maloka (2019:6) identifies five major factors. Firstly, it is based on a peer review approach, as a self-monitoring evaluation system that directly reports to the Assembly of the

African Union, constituting the Heads of State and Government. The information generated from the system is presented to the APR Forum in the form of a summary of results and analysis from the different stakeholders at the national level of the APRM evaluation system. Secondly, is the long-term vision of the APRM since the mechanism is designed in a way that each participating member state is reviewed in five successive year phases. According to the Base Document (2003:4), the long-term vision of Agenda 2063 which is 50 years is subdivided into 10-year phases to make the five-year successive phases for each country review. Thirdly, is the APRM's favourably wide scope in evaluating the continent's development. The cross-cutting nature of its activities in the different thematic areas of governance range from issues concerning democracy and political governance, socio-economic development, economic management and governance, and corporate governance. Such a field of competence enables it to cover a wide scope of the continent's development in its totality.

Fourthly, is the methodology of the APRM, which makes it stand out globally among the known evaluation frameworks. Grimm *et al.* (2009:22) explain that peer review involves interaction of equal actors at the same horizontal level of power for mutual evaluation on a non-adversarial basis which guarantees feedback and access in understandable forms. Key among the mechanism's unique attributes lies the fact that the evaluation of implemented actions reported in the National Plan of Action is characterised by wide stakeholder participation and inclusion. The different players include: the three organs of government, the legislature, judiciary, and executive as well as the different technical departments, political parties, the private sector and civil society constituting the different national segments.

Fifthly, are the well institutionalised structures of the APRM within the AU member states with already existing recognition at both continental and national levels. In terms of membership, Article 6(2) of the APRM Statute (2016) indicates that an AU member state by acceding to the APRM voluntarily commits to being reviewed. This study emphasises that attaining the above mandate and compliance to the continental governance standards depends on designing an appropriate framework to inform the APRM methodology and processes, a contribution which this study set out to make.

3.3 THE AU AGENDA 2063

The APRM as a Pan-African governance evaluation framework is guided by the AU Declaration on the Shared Values adopted at the 14th Session of the AU Assembly in 2011. The AU Agenda 2063 comprises of the vision highlighting the continent's governance priorities and transformation plan for the coming 50 years for the continent's renaissance and the Common African Position (CAP) on the SDGs (APRM 2016:14). While it also tracks countries' progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030, the major focus for the APRM has been on the AU Agenda 2063, which is an African master plan for transforming the continent. Maloka (2019:5) maintains that the key areas of intersection between the two agenda include: the recognition of good governance as a fundamental prerequisite in fostering the continent's development, accountability and democracy through inclusive wide stakeholder participation in public policy and governance matters across state and non-state actors. In addition, Tshiyoyo (2018:179) explains that as a catalyst in implementing Agenda 2063, the APRM aims at ensuring that African states observe a meaningful social contract with the citizenry in their countries through good governance and revitalising public service delivery. Relatedly, the African Union Commission (2015:2) emphasises that the agenda which builds on previous efforts to strengthen African integration, is driven by the desire for a self-sustaining continent that generates solutions for its public governance inefficiencies.

Described by Dlamini-Zuma (2014:32) as “our endogenous plan for transformation”, Agenda 2063, the comprehensive home-grown plan, aims at harnessing Africa's comparative advantages in terms of its human, historical and natural resources to eradicate poverty and attain technological, socio-economic and people centred transformation. Also known as ‘The Africa we want’, the continental vision constitutes the blueprint that covers resolutions and commitments of founder member states to both action and results, through prioritising and observing the stipulated goals, strategies and targets for all stakeholders (African Union Commission 2015:3). Currently it is operationalised through an ongoing first 10-year Implementation Plan 2013-2023. The structure below provides a summary with explanations for each of the aspirations contained in Agenda 2063.

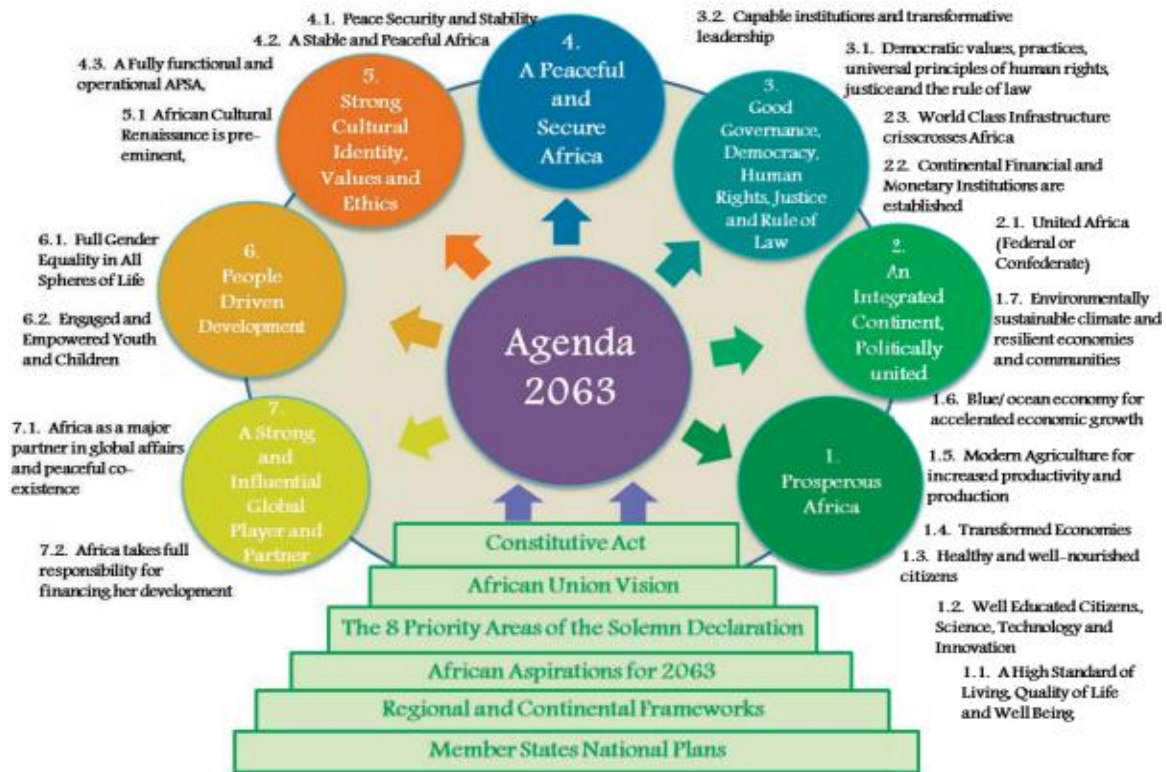


Figure 3.1: The aspirations for the AU Agenda 2063

Source: African Union Commission (2015:8)

The plan in Figure 3.1 reflects the AU vision as the “50th Anniversary solemn declaration” constituting the priority areas expected to inform the national, regional and continental frameworks to facilitate their realisation. To explain this agenda, the African Union Commission (AUC 2015:23) Background Note 01 for Agenda 2063 presents a set of seven aspirations that were compiled to constitute the desires that African citizens want to be pursued and attained by 2063. Firstly, there is need for a prosperous Africa which manages its own inclusive and sustained transformation. Secondly, there is need for an integrated, sovereign and self-reliant continent politically and economically. Thirdly, there is need for an Africa with deepened culture of democratic values and good governance. Fourthly, there is the need for a peaceful and conflict free continent. Fifthly, there is the need for an Africa with a strong cultural identity, and values respected globally. Sixthly, there is need for an

Africa with people-driven development through inclusive decision-making of all citizens. Seventhly, there is need for a strong and united Africa playing a more influential role in global affairs. The three layers of execution as well as monitoring and evaluation of a results framework among member states includes: the AU organs at the continental level, the Regional Economic Corporations (RECs) at the regional level, and the National APRM Secretariat at the country level. The following section presents the detailed explanation of the structure of the continental APRM evaluation system.

3.4 THE APRM EVALUATION SYSTEM

From 2003, the APRM has been praised as a noble initiative for its unique and unprecedented approach of extensive governance assessment. However, policy evaluations are not conducted in a vacuum but in a public organisational system (Schoenfeld & Jordan 2017:275). Any evaluation system is composed of a set of tools, processes, actors, plans, organisations and procedures within which it operates. Theletsane (2014:52) explains that such elements constitute the different kinds of environments that directly and indirectly influence its outcome.

In the case of the APRM, its continental institutional framework is presented in Article 5(2) of the AU Constitutive Act 2000 (AU 2000), as a multi-level institutionalised governance evaluation framework operating as an autonomous specialised agency within the AU system, but in collaboration with the different AU organs, to fulfil its oversight mandate. It operates through data collection on objectives, questions and indicators of various thematic dimensions of governance. The four original thematic areas include: Democracy and Political Governance, Economic Governance and Management, Socio-economic Development, and Corporate Governance.

The structure of the APRM evaluation system is explained in Chapter Seven of the APRM Statute (2016:15) as involving interdependence and accountability to multiple stakeholders, networks and institutions. The mechanism is structured on two levels, the continental and the country level secretariats (APRM Statute 2016:10). Although highlights of the former are given, this study focuses its analysis mainly on the APRM system at the national level structure. The justification advanced is that while the peer review among leaders is perceived to ultimately take place at the heads of

state and government summit, the degree of influence is largely shaped by the evaluation process, structures, actors and activities at the national level.

Similarly, Adele-Jinadu (2013:23) highlights the unique characteristics embedded within the APRM evaluation structure over the years. First is the nature of its wide scope which constitutes cross-cutting thematic areas for evaluation. Second is the participatory and inclusive evaluation process which takes a bottom-up approach with the purpose of broadening and enriching the diversity of actors and voices involved in national governance matters and debate. Third is the empirical data generated out of an inclusive review process at different levels including consideration of the progress reports periodically submitted to the APR Forum long after the actual country review. Fourth is the nature of the symbiotic relationship between the peer review process and the outcome, with strong emphasis on getting the process right since it shapes the outcome.

The APRM structure serves a major purpose of a catalytical role towards the realisation of the AU Agenda 2063 amidst what Tshiyoyo (2017:173) calls “Africa’s traditional weaknesses” of limited resources, poor implementation and skills capacity. This is realised through states’ sharing of experiences, identify capacity building needs, and reinforcing best practices that lead to accelerated continental economic integration and sustainable development. To explain its logic, a member of the panel of eminent persons explains that “the APRM acts like a mirror, so when you look at yourself in the mirror and you see you have a pimple, you do not break the mirror but you go and fix that pimple.” (Transcription cited in APRM Revitalisation Journey 2022). Over time, the APRM has emerged as a voluntary tool that “takes a leading role in the implementation and monitoring of regional and international development frameworks including “repositioning the APRM to play a monitoring and evaluation role for the African Union Agenda 2063 and United Nations Sustainable Development Goals” (APRM 2016:14). In so doing, the mechanism enables the identification of areas of deficiency and capacity building to facilitate achievement of sustainable development (Kebong & Fombad 2006:39).

To operationalise the mechanism, a number of institutions are established at the national level. The APRM Guidelines (2017:4) require that preparations for base

review are conducted which involve establishing the necessary structures for participation. They include designating the national APRM Focal Point reporting to the head of state, putting in place the secretariat for technical and administrative support, a representative, diverse and autonomous National Governing Council/Commission, as well as selecting the technical research institute which in turn leads the assessment. The MOU spells out the modalities of relationship between the APRM and different institutions at the continental and the national levels. Figure 3.2 shows the APRM structure and it's functioning.

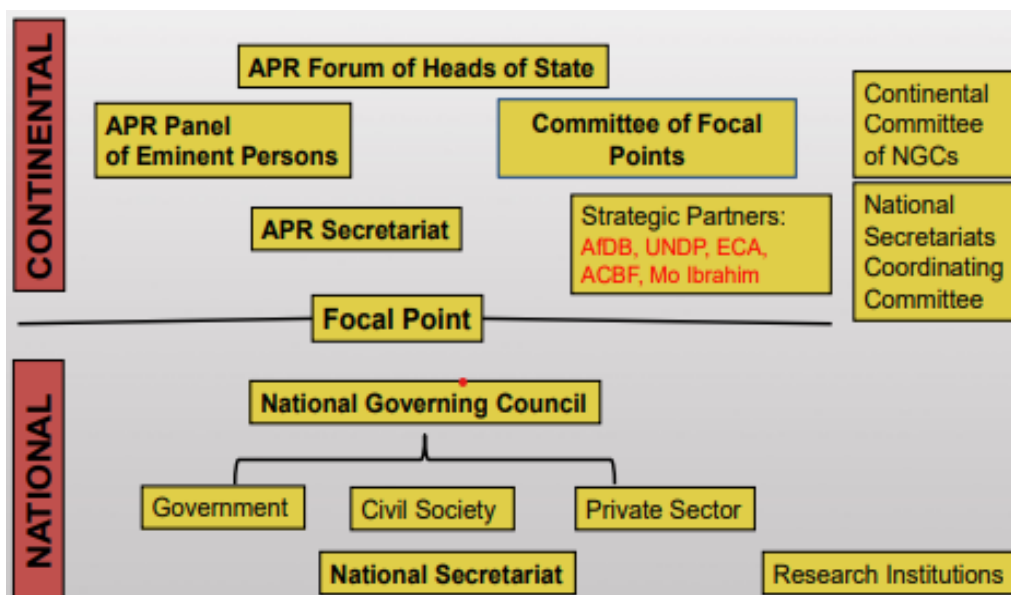


Figure 3.2: An illustration of the APRM structure

Source: APRM (2017:13)

The structure in Figure 3.2 was endorsed in the APRM Base Document (AHG/235:XXXVIII) approved by the Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee in 2002 reflecting the structure of each organisational component. To enhance the APRM influence, the APRM Statute (2016:15) emphasises the above structures on the two major levels. At the continental level are the APR Forum, the APR Panel of Eminent Persons, the Focal Points Committee and their responsibilities through which the evaluation is conducted.

At the continental level, the first structure at the top is the APR Forum, a committee constituting heads of member states. The forum of heads of state is identified as the

highest decision-making authority responsible for exercising mutual learning, and peer dialogue for a credible and effective peer review (APRM Statute 2016:14). This is followed by the APR panel of 5-7 eminent persons which is responsible for establishing rules and procedures, and providing financial and technical assistance. Its mandate is oversight in ensuring professionalism, independence, integrity, ownership and credibility of the APR process, and make recommendations to the APR Forum (APRM Statute 2016:14). The Continental Secretariat houses the independent experts and the APRM continental institutions. However, the focus of this thesis is the national level structures where influence on country policies takes place.

At the country level, the national institutional framework of structures administers the peer review. The supplementary documents of the APRM Guidelines for Country Review (2003:4), detail the APRM national structures including the Focal Point, the NGC, the secretariat, and the Technical Research Institute (TRI). The APRM Statute (2016:15) identifies the functions of each structure. The first structure at the top is the focal point person who is at the level of a minister or senior advisor. The supplementary document to the APRM Country Guidelines (2003:2) however indicates that “the practice has been divergent in many countries with some appointing the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as this is the ministry that has traditionally handled Trade Regional Integration and by extension NEPAD/APRM issues”. It is also reported that other governments “appoint officials in the presidency, as the APRM is a key initiative and commitment of the head of state or government is required. For some, it is the Ministry of Finance, Planning, Public Service or other ministry concerned with social and developmental issues”. Of major emphasis is for the participating country to ensure that the functioning of the APR Focal Point coordinates the APRM functioning between the continental and the national APRM structures.

The second structure is the NGC, a body composed of citizens that command respect from the public. The APRM Statute (2016:22) indicates that it is probably the most critical structure in the process, expected to be representative of society and inclusive membership of all key governance stakeholders within government, the civil society, the private sector and academia. To promote broad based participation, its

membership must be representative and diverse, while autonomous from government, with a non-state factionary chair. The supplementary documents to the APRM Guidelines for Country Review (2003:4) explain that at the country level, the NGC is responsible for leading the process by providing strategic policy direction to the APRM implementation, to ensure its credibility, independence, professionalism and that it is technically free from political manipulation. To create national ownership of the peer review process, the NGC is expected to conduct country wide sensitisation for participation of all stakeholders in the APR process.

The third structure is the national secretariat, which is responsible for providing administrative and technical support to the NGC. According to the supplementary document of the APRM Guidelines for Country Review (2003:6), it must be headed by an Executive Director or CEO, it consists of the staff responsible for providing the day-to-day support services to the NGC, and organising local and national level sensitisation programmes. The APRM Operating Procedures (2012:16) state that “the APRM secretariat will provide the secretarial, technical, coordination and administrative support services for the APRM”. Such responsibility requires both administrative and technical capacity to undertake budgetary and resource mobilisation, study of the governance environment, preparation and updates of the documentation of the country to be reviewed, must issue standards, tools, and work plans to the APR team, as well as an issue paper on country challenges (APRM Statute 2016:16). Other functions include facilitating the activities of the Technical Research Institute in developing the country self-assessment report, and providing coordination as liaison between the Continental Secretariat and reporting to the NGC.

The fourth structure is the Technical Research Institute (TRI) which is responsible for the execution of the APRM questionnaire. The APRM Guidelines (2016:23) explain that it is appointed by the NGC for technical competence and capability in undertaking research on the four thematic areas of the APRM. Its responsibility includes comprehensive collecting and analysing data in the form of public views which are validated for compilation of the Country Self-Assessment Report. While the APRM (2016:3-5) Guidelines detail its operational functions, Aketch (2019:11) emphasises that the effectiveness of those structures depends on the genuine stakeholder participation which should be facilitated by the government. The next

section provides a series of the major stages in the development of the APRM evaluation system.

3.4.1 The functioning of the APRM evaluation system

The system has evolved since its establishment in 2003 from the phase of institutionalisation and base reviews (2003-2014), the revitalisation and second-generation review phase (2015-2020), to the current renewal (2021-2024). What follows is the detailed analysis of the phases and the efforts made to enhance its influence policies in participating countries.

3.4.1.1 Phase 1: Base review and institutionalisation (2003-2014)

Since its inauguration in 2003, the APRM registered significant progress especially in the first decade. Its beginnings have been described by Kojo-Busia (2006:33) as characterised by a “mixture of euphoria, scepticism and perhaps cynicism”. This was due to previous African development initiatives which have not succeeded in the continent’s history. Upon institutionalisation in the first six participating countries, the mechanism gradually conducted several base reviews which increasingly attracted continental recognition as a governance evaluation framework for Africa. The institutionalisation was gradually entrenched through successive summits of Heads of States and Governments from 2003 in Abuja, 2007 in Algiers and 2008 in Sharm El-Sheikh. According to Change (2008:17), the APRM is described as the “centre piece of the good governance initiative of NEPAD” and the “crown jewel of the policy framework for the African renaissance”. This suggests the high hopes which Africans had in the APRM contributing towards the continent’s transformation.

After 2008 it started experiencing a period of stagnation coupled with emerging functional challenges, especially between 2010 and 2015. This was an indicator that Africa was coming up with its own development agenda as a continent, and is moving towards its own self-definition by engaging in a rigorous evaluation process to arrive at its own organic understanding of the governance challenges and collectively agreed upon measures to address them. Over time, several reports have been published highlighting best practices that are worth being disseminated for adoption across AU member states, with recommendations providing immediate frameworks for policy reforms. By 2013, the APRM manual entitled “Best practices in

Good Governance” identified 107 good practices from the first 13 country peer review reports. Out of those were 42 best practices from the Democracy and Political Governance, 25 within Socio-economic Development, 25 from Economic Governance and Management, and 15 from Corporate Governance (APRM 2013:2). In addition, stakeholder engagement in the process improved and some actions were taken towards implementation of the NPoA’s of participating countries (APRM 2016:12).

During this first phase, the APRM’s influence on national policies from the beginning has been documented in some countries despite the challenges faced. Cudjoe (2008) explains the process effect of the first APRM base review in Ghana (2007). He argues that “the APRM is not only changing attitudes or orientations of the government and stakeholders towards their roles in development; it yields substantive benefits where it is effectively implemented”. He further demonstrated this effect, by stating that “Ghana is a good example of the potential impact of the APRM on public policy prioritisation, where some key legislation for promoting the wellbeing of vulnerable people has been implemented. These are the Disability Act, the Domestic Violence Act and social intervention programmes on Maternal Health Care and the Livelihood Enhancement and Empowerment Programme (LEAP) which have been attributed directly to the APRM implementation”. In addition, the information generated through evaluation reports has influenced decisions and practice of policy makers in participating states.

However, in June 2015, the APR Mechanism which in the past had promoted a culture of dialogue in which citizens assessed governance deficiencies among their leaders on the continent was in a poor state (APRM 2013:2). The mechanism also experienced challenges of waning political support, financial challenges, management deficiencies, a low level of compliance with the standard process and the recommendations made in the NPoA (APRM 2016:12). Table 3.1 presents the state of APRM functioning by the end of 2015.

Table 3.1: A SWOT analysis of the APRM between 2003 and 2015.

Strengths	- Renewed determination of the leadership all the way from the APRM Forum down - Clarity and precision of mandate - Strong record of success, especially in the early days, to build on - Positive reception of its work among African citizens, civil society and opinion makers around the world
Weaknesses	- Uncertain or variable levels of political support - Poor state of finances and unpredictability of APRM contributions - Limited staff capacity and adverse impact of financial uncertainty to attract and retain high calibre experts - Irregular attendance of meetings by some Focal Points - Poor coordination with relevant AU institutions - Inadequate follow-up, monitoring and evaluation mechanism - High cost of country reviews - Cumbersome country self-assessment questionnaire - Poorly designed NPoAs that make implementation difficult
Opportunities	- A sense of renewed political commitment from the APR Forum down - Appointment of new and fully-fledged CEO - Decision for APRM integration into the AU structures and processes - Ever-growing emphasis, within Africa and globally, on the essential role of good governance for sustainable development - A sense of good will and intuitive appeal for the APRM mission and the resulting legitimacy and reputational dividend for its work - Increasing interest in APRM playing a role as a monitoring mechanism for Agenda 2063 and SDGs - Development of new tools and knowledge products to enhance APRM's standing as the authoritative think tank on African governance - Universal membership aspirations - Availability of a pool of relevant expertise in the continent that can be deployed at relatively short notice
Threats	- Lack of sustainable financing - Potential erosion of autonomy and independence after integration - Potentially growing gap between expectations and actual impact of APRM review reports and recommendations on the ground - Non-participation of existing members in the review process and potential withdrawal of others

Source: APRM (2016:13)

The above situational analysis for the first 13 years reported that the 17 reviews conducted had identified the common challenges to include: inadequate structural transformation, youth unemployment, violent conflicts from disputed elections, security radicalisation and gender inequality among others (APRM 2016:13). This study observes that despite the challenges, the mechanism demonstrated resilience while expanding in scope, recognition and numbers of participating countries. The next section analyses the revitalisation phase.

3.4.2. 2 Phase 2: Revitalisation (2015-2020)

This was the second phase intended to enhance the influence of the APRM. The situational analysis for the first 13 years reported that in the 17 reviews conducted, the mechanism that had started with great enthusiasm and ambitions began to lose its momentum and direction after its existence for over a decade which necessitated revitalisation through the 2016-2020 Strategic Plan (APRM 2016:13). Consequently, by 2015 enthusiasm was waning, and several member states were not only not

coming to the summit, but were also not remitting much financial support in the form of their subscription for the mechanism.

The APRM (2016:17) identifies the challenges that necessitated the APRM revitalisation to include noncompliance on country financial obligations, waning political support, poor coordination of different organs, management failure, a cumbersome questionnaire, excessively lengthy review processes and reports among others. Furthermore, with limited awareness, countries were no longer being reviewed, few countries were joining and there was no intervention. There was a lack of effective leadership to drive the mechanism and to motivate political will. This called for managerial skill starting with the Continental APR Secretariat to achieve its objectives.

In 2016, upon assuming the Chairmanship of the APRM Forum of the Head of State and Government, President Uhuru Kenyatta of Kenya held a special summit dedicated to revitalisation of the APRM which was waning. This was due to its great potential to uplift the continent (APRM 2018:3). As an indicator of confidence in the APRM's extended network of stakeholders across the continent, the APR Forum of Heads of State and Government in a special summit in Addis Ababa resolved to rejuvenate the APRM. Informed by the six points on the revitalisation agenda, a base line survey on the state of the APRM was conducted through the process of improving methodologies for the APRM review process, taking into account the emerging realities affecting continental governance. The final documents, with integrated feedback, were reviewed by the Committee of Focal Points and the APR Forum for adoption. This became a turning point in the history of the mechanism to align it with the APRM philosophy, the emerging challenges and realities within the African governance context.

Informed by the feedback from a SWOT analysis from the baseline survey, the concept revitalisation was adopted to mean remaking, bringing back what was lost, and putting energy into the organisational institution to make sure that it delivers on its mandate (APRM 2018:3). A three-pronged revitalisation programme for restoration, reinvigoration and renewal was adopted (APRM 2016:2). The reinvigoration pillar involves intensifying and re-energising the AU member states' commitment to the mandate of the APRM and democratic values. The restoration

pillars intended to address the immediate challenges, included initiating and implementing a 2016 work plan, enhancing compliance with the APRM principles, and strengthening resource mobilisation and integration of the mechanism into the AU system in a way that guarantees its autonomy. Finally, the renewal pillar consists of continued reviewing, refining and developing of APRM processes and tools for conducting country self-assessment and reporting.

The three-year initial programme of restoration was later extended into the turnaround strategy through the APRM Strategic Plan (2016-2020). The focus of the revitalisation for the first 10 years for Agenda 2063 is promotion of democracy, human rights and rule of law and effective institutions, as well as transformative leadership. It was a short-term goal for the first two transitional years which involved re-staffing the APRM secretariat; and ensuring that the APRM is known to be more relevant and impactful to conduct reviews again in AU member states, than before when it was perceived to be an elite club. The revitalisation agenda was composed of six points identified by the APRM Technical Task Force on Deepening the Review as the key priority areas (APRM 2018:2-4). These included: Revisiting the APRM philosophy, reviewing the methodology of the APRM, ensuring compliance with the principles of the APRM, enhancing resource mobilisation, integrating the APRM into the AU system, and clarification of the APRM's role in monitoring the AU Agenda 2063 as well as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The plan was intended to serve as a major authoritative point of reference on governance on the continent (APRM 2016:13).

To follow up in ensuring effective implementation of the set agenda, a revitalisation committee was established composed of six member states, the Chairperson of the APR Panel, the AU Commission, the APRM strategic partners and the CEO. Their mandate and instructions from the summit were to oversee the three-year initial programme of restoration, taking into account the new challenges faced by the continent.

During the strategy formulation period, the Special Summit of African leaders in January 2016, the meeting of expert groups in March 2016, the Revitalisation Committee in May 2016, and the APR Panel in May 2016 identified 16 issue areas of

focus by the strategy. These were summarised into eight key areas of priority (AU 2018:2). They are: reviewing and implementing the core mandate, focus on the shared values, advocacy and communication, human resources and capacity development, mobilisation of resources and financial management, investing in the development of evaluation frameworks as well as systems, and research enhancement for improvement of operational tools and capacity development. Others were the integration of the APRM into the AU, promoting universal accession, as well as ensuring improved relevance of the APRM to the continental integration agenda. In an effort to enhance its evaluation influence, the APRM through its Strategic Plan (2016-2020), committed to “undertake a comprehensive review of all of the review documents, including the country self-assessment questionnaire and the accompanying process” (AU 2018:2). This constituted part of the additional reforms undertaken towards deepening the APRM influence on policies among participating member states.

In 2017, with increased recognition of the mechanism as a unique diagnostic tool that deals candidly with the continent’s complex governance issues, such as corruption, xenophobia, election violence, ethnicity and land issues, more countries were coming on board. The CEO explained that: “Initially the APRM started with 6 countries, grew to 25 and now we are talking 41, and obviously this was because it was demonstrated that there were benefits and gains and so countries would come forward and accept to be reviewed. It is also clear and studies have shown around the world that countries that acknowledged those challenges embark and bring on board all segments of the society and they do much better. You see more stable and more sustainable development in the country” (Transcription cited in APRM revitalisation journey 2022). This was an indicator of the progressive influence that the APRM was beginning to cultivate among AU member states.

As the number of country reviews and targeted reviews increased, the AU Reforms 2017 were introduced towards deepening the review. In January 2017, during the AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government at its 28th Summit, the AU adopted new reforms to address the increased demands for the APRM impact. Going by the recommendations of the report submitted by His Exellecy. Paul Kagame and his expert team entitled “*Proposed Recommendations for the Institutional Reforms of the*

African Union”, the assembly resolved to extend the APRM’s mandate. In his recommendation which was supported and adopted by the Heads of States Summit, President Paul Kagame as the Chair stated that “The APRM could be strengthened to track implementation and oversee M&E in key governance areas in the continent” (APRM 2017:4). This was a major indicator of recognition of the APRM work by the Heads of States and Government, as a result of which it was given additional mandates beyond the original mandate of governance improvement.

Consequently, “the AU Assembly welcomed the resolution to reposition the APRM to play a monitoring and evaluation role for the African Union Agenda 2063 and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals 2030” (APRM 2017:1). The endorsed decision was based on a considerable congruence between the APRM objectives and two continental and global agendas. The AU Agenda (2063) is the blueprint reflecting the continent’s resolutions, commitments and strategies of member states towards political and socio-economic transformation for the next 50 years, while the UN SDGs are global development targets set to be realised by all countries under the UN system by the year 2030, and act as major indicators of Africa’s development in comparison to other regions. Maloka (2019:5) maintains that the key areas of intersection between the two agendas include: the recognition of good governance as a prerequisite in fostering the continent’s development, accountability and democracy through inclusive wide stakeholder participation in public policy and governance matters across state and non-state actors.

The expanded mandate was vested in the APRM by the AU Ordinary Session Assembly decisions in both January 2017 and January 2018 (AU 2018:1-2). The resolutions positioned the mechanism to play a central role in monitoring African as well as global development initiatives and frameworks encompassing the Common African Position (CAP) on the post-2015 Development Agenda. As a major landmark, a more comprehensive Continental Result-Based Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting (MER) System was embraced, for effective tracking of implementation progress of the National Plans of Action in line with Agenda 2063. In the same session, Maloka (2019:5) indicates that the APRM which had been established in 2003 as a specialised agency of the AU within the NEPAD framework was integrated into the AU structures. This was evidenced when the AU Assembly of January 2018

resolved “to position the APRM as an early warning tool for conflict prevention on the continent....” (Assembly/AUDec.631/2018:1-2). Therefore, based on its progressive performance towards influencing policies of participating countries, the APRM was recognised with additional mandate in the AU system.

This study observes that while a report by the AU Reforms Unit (2018:23) argues that “the quality of peer review could be improved”, the methodological attempts made towards enhancing the influence of the APRM have been limited to revising the questionnaire as the major data collection tool. As researchers like Tungwarara (2010:23) attribute the persistent challenges to weak leadership, priority is now given to revisiting the APRM philosophy, enhancing the methodology and the question of ownership methodology, financing to address the question of ownership, and gradually translate this into political will.

3.4.3.3 Phase 3: The APRM renewal (2020-2024)

This current plan under implementation is aimed at consolidating the previous gains made under revitalisation and promoting APRM renewal for collective governance. Approved in February 2020, the current Strategic Plan of 2020-2024 focuses on “Good governance as a tool for regional integration within the African Union”. The 2020 to 2023 Strategic Plan is premised on theme governance as a tool for Africa’s integration. This strategy builds on the achievements made under the strategic plan and focuses on positioning the APRM Secretariat as the AU reference point on governance. “Over the years, the APRM process has been imbedded and improved to better serve the whole as a tool for good governance on the continent” (Transcription cited in APRM revitalisation journey 2022).

The major priority areas include promoting governance reviews and assessment, and conducting research as part of the APRM mandate to complete governance reviews. Other areas are: monitoring and evaluation, developing institutional and human capacity and ensuring improved communication and advocacy to stakeholders across AU member states as enablers for improving the APRM’s performance. This pillar covers further research as well as the review, refinement and continued development of the tools for information gathering in the country self-assessment processes. In addition is re-imagining the original philosophy that

informed the APRM to ensure that it remains relevant within the changing governance challenges in the African context.

The APRM Report 2020 indicates achievements registered under the current strategic plan which include: firstly, successfully completing more full reviews and targeted reviews. Secondly, launching the governance assessment of existing policy responses implemented by the AU member states to mitigate the Covid-19 pandemic. Thirdly, developing guidelines for virtual country and targeted reviews conducted during and after the pandemic, as well as tabling of the Africa Governance Report (2021) for the AU Assembly's consideration.

3.4.3.4 Phase 4: The thirteen bottlenecks hindering Africa's development

At the 25th Summit of the 23rd APR Forum on 25th June 2015 and the 26th in August 2016, Uganda's President H.E Yoweri Museveni presented a statement in which he initially proposed eleven bottlenecks hindering the socio-economic transformation of Africa (GoU 2019:xviii). He argued that while monitoring the existing APRM thematic areas were relevant in promoting governance, it was necessary to focus more on the factors that undermine the continent's ability to take maximum advantage of its resources and opportunities available. The eleven bottlenecks to the continent's progress were discussed in the Uganda CRR (2017:223) as follows:

- (a) Interference by governments with the private sector operations
- (b) The under-developed infrastructure
- (c) Weak state institutions such as the military and the police
- (d) Fragmented markets characterised by limited access and expansion
- (e) Under-developed human resources
- (f) Under-development of the agricultural sector
- (g) Under-developed service sector
- (h) The attacks on democracy and governance institutions and processes
- (i) Non-responsive countries' civil service
- (j) Ineffective domestic resource mobilisation

To justify the adoption of his proposal, President Museveni emphasised the need for the APRM to annually review them with the purpose of using the reported recommendations to eliminate them. The same idea of monitoring bottlenecks was

also supported by other African leaders among whom was President Macky Sall of the Republic of Senegal, who proposed another bottleneck of inadequate resource mobilisation, while the Forum added the structural inequalities in countries' access to opportunities at the 25th Summit of the APRM Forum that took place on the 26th of August in 2016 in Nairobi (APRM 2019:3). Since then, attention has been directed to the debate of how best to integrate the bottlenecks within the original bottlenecks and improve their monitoring.

In 2019, the APRM commissioned a study to establish a framework and indicators for monitoring the 13 bottlenecks faced in the APRM reviewed countries and it was validated in Uganda. In 2021, the APRM started undertaking targeted reviews on these bottlenecks in Uganda starting with a non-responsive civil service and under-development of agriculture (APRM 2022:2). Similarly, other processes for evaluating different bottlenecks in other countries are underway. While some countries have gone ahead to undertake targeted reviews of particular sectors covered by the bottlenecks, limited scholarly attention has been given to analysis of this integration phase, monitoring and the contribution of its reporting towards influencing national policies.

In the following section is a highlight of the bottlenecks, their integration with corresponding AU 2063 aspirations and SDG principles for monitoring purposes. The first bottleneck is the ideological disorientation characterised by discrimination based on the three major aspects of religious beliefs, ethnicity, as well as gender chauvinism. The bottleneck is linked to Aspiration Five of the AU Agenda 2063 that calls for "An Africa with a strong cultural identity, common heritage, values and ethics," and SDG Five, which is intended to "achieve empowerment and equality of all genders" (APRM 2019:2). The second bottleneck is the "interference with the private sector" where the state regulates a part of the country's economy. Addressing it is intended to attain one of the AU Agenda 2063 aspirations which is "A Prosperous Africa based on Inclusive and Sustainable Development" as well as SDG 8, that focuses on promoting an all-inclusive and sustainable economic growth. The third bottleneck is the under-developed infrastructure which is critical for any country's development. It is in line with Aspiration Two of "An integrated continent, politically united, based on the ideals of Pan Africanism and the vision of Africa's

renaissance”. The bottleneck is also linked to SDG Nine that aims at “building a resilient infrastructure, promoting inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and fostering innovation”.

The fourth bottleneck is weak states characterised by a weak army and police, as opposed to a robust state capacity necessary to resolve conflicts, promote democracy, security and law and order, as well as national policy. The bottleneck is aligned to Aspiration Three which is “An Africa of good governance, respect for human rights, democracy, rule of law and justice. Similarly, it is mapped to SDG 16 which is about promoting a peaceful, just and inclusive society. The fifth bottle neck is fragmented markets, with limited access and expansion to cover the region and the continent for production to be stimulated and absorbed. The bottleneck is in line with Aspiration Two of the AU Agenda 2063, which focuses on “An integrated continent, politically united based on ideals of Pan-Africanism and the vision of Africa’s Renaissance”. It is also linked to SDG 10 which is about reducing inequality among countries. The sixth bottleneck is lack of industrialisation which is characterised by insufficient industrial infrastructure and inability to make use of the available natural resources to add value to our products, in order to compete in regional and global markets. The bottleneck is mapped to Aspiration One of the AU Agenda 2063 which focuses on “A Prosperous Africa Based on Inclusive Growth and Sustainable Development” and SDG 10, which is about reducing inequality among and within countries.

The seventh bottleneck is under-development of human resources as a result of the low quality of education and a poorly skilled workforce. This bottleneck is mapped to Aspiration One of the AU Agenda 2063 and SDG Three which focus on ensuring healthy lives and promoting the wellbeing of all people. Bottleneck Eight is underdeveloped agriculture which is largely subsistence and characterised by inadequate funding, limited access to credit, modern technology, land and skilled farming practices. The bottleneck is aligned to Aspiration One which is about a prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth, and SDG Ten which is about promotion of sustainable agriculture, improved nutrition and food security. Bottleneck Nine is under-development of the service sector such as tourism, insurance, banking and entertainment, which are in high demand in the modern

economy, yet require more human than natural capital. This bottleneck is linked to Aspiration Two and SDG Two that aim at building resilient infrastructure, promoting sustainable and inclusive industrialisation to promote employment, decent work and industrial growth. Bottleneck Ten is attacks on democracy and governance which enables the local people to be citizens as opposed to subjects. The bottleneck is aligned to Aspiration Three of Agenda 2063 as well as SDG 16, which are about promoting peaceful, just and inclusive societies. Bottleneck 11 is about “A non-responsive civil service”, characterised by corrupt officials, low ethical standards and ineffective structures which undermine effective governance. The bottleneck is linked to Aspiration One of Agenda 2063 and SDG Eight, which are about promoting sustainable and inclusive economic growth. In addressing those bottlenecks, President Museveni of Uganda explained to his peers how each remains Africa’s challenge to transformation. Consequently, he recommended that it is important for the APRM to establish how far countries being reviewed have been able to eliminate such bottlenecks.

Besides the above, the President of Senegal His Excellency Macky Sall, added a Bottleneck 12 that is about inadequate domestic resource mobilisation which does not support governments with the necessary funds to provide public services, alleviate poverty and overcome the aid dependence. This bottleneck is mapped to Aspiration Seven of the AU Agenda 2063, of “Africa as a strong, united, resilient and influential global player and partner”, and SDG 10 that is aimed at reducing inequality among countries. In addition, the APRM Secretariat included a thirteenth bottleneck that is about “structural inequalities in access to opportunities”. This is reflected through unequal relations in functions, roles, decisions, opportunities and rights to participate equally in their countries’ development agenda institutions. This bottleneck is linked to Aspiration 6 of the AU Agenda 2063 and SDGs Four, Five and 10, which are about promoting inclusive education, gender equality and empowerment of all and reducing inequality within countries respectively. Therefore, having identified the phases in the development and institutionalisation of the APRM, the next section unpacks and discusses the major elements of the APRM evaluation system.

3.5 ANALYSIS OF THE KEY ELEMENTS OF THE APRM EVALUATION MECHANISM

To provide better explanations for understanding the internal workings of complex policy evaluations, the study argues that evaluation influence, which is being investigated in this thesis, manifests through a series of elements as informed by Mark and Henry's schematic framework of evaluation influence.

The mechanism as presented in Chapter Three runs through components of the logic of evaluation which include evaluation inputs characterised by context and policy setting, evaluation activities, outputs, outcomes, contingencies from the policy environment, all of which finally link to policy change (Mark & Henry 2004:43). This set of elements forms the change processes of relationships, events and structures into policy outcomes that may take place due to evaluation (Mark & Henry 2011:115). In addition, Herbert (2014:396) indicates that such linkages which constitute the influence mechanism provide a comprehensive understanding of the various complex processes that lead to policy change or lack of change in a particular context. Appleton-Dyer, Clinton, Carswell and McNeil (2012:534) explain that this approach enables a more effective analysis of complex interactions within the evaluation system. In this section, each of the elements is analysed to establish the extent of its effect in bringing about the desired policy change in the national policies of participating countries.

3.5.1 Evaluation inputs into the APRM and their influence on national policies

This study recognises that contextual factors and policy setting play a central role as inputs of an evaluation system in defining the degree of APRM influence in national policies. Mark and Henry (2004:43) identify the evaluation context to include expertise, instruction, communication, resources, time and role of flexibility, while policy setting covers factors like micro-politics, administrative support, culture, skills, impetus and information needs. This sub-section analyses the inputs which inform of documents, philosophy, tools, plans and methods adopted. It is followed by sub-sections on the other components of the APRM evaluation system which include the activities, the stakeholder participation, the outputs and the environment in which the APRM system operates and the evaluative effect of each is analysed.

To inform the operationalisation of the mechanism and its inputs, activities and outputs, the study established that the system is informed by a number of founding documents that were adopted as guides by the NEPAD Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee (HSGIC) in 2003. These information and communication inputs include among others the following instruction documents:

- (a) The APRM Base Document (AHG/235XXXVIII). This is the founding document which spells out the purpose for establishing the APRM, its mandate, scope, membership and associated rights and obligations.
- (b) The Memorandum of Understanding on Technical Assessments and the Country Review Visit (NEPAD/HSGIC/2003/APRM/Guideline). This is another document signed between the Continental Secretariat and the participating country intending to undergo voluntary review. It details the expectations from both the Continental Secretariat and the member state in ensuring a smooth review process.
- (c) The Objectives, Standards, Criteria and Indicators for the APRM (NEPAD/HSGIC/03-2003/APRM Guidelines). This document provides operational guidelines for data collection, validation and reporting.
- (d) The Declaration on Democracy, Political, Economic and Corporate Governance (AHG 235XXXVIII). The document spells out the major governance areas to be monitored under each of the thematic areas.
- (e) The APRM Organisation and Processes (NEPAD/HSGIC/2003/APRM Guidelines). This document presents the standard structures at both the continental and national levels, and how they relate to one another in the implementation of the review process.
- (f) The APRM base questionnaire which has been revised (2003), (2017) and (2021). This is the major tool for data collection, which reflects the different thematic areas, objectives, questions and indicators. The standard tool from the Continental Secretariat is reformulated and domesticated to ensure that the data captured is relevant to the local context.
- (g) The Statute of the African Peer Review Mechanism 2016. This document was adopted as part of the revitalisation agenda of the APRM to provide detailed guidance on structures of the actors, as well as roles and responsibilities in the implementation process at the different levels.

However, the study observes that, while the above instruction documents are in place, the challenge is usually compliance within the varying evaluation context of different countries. Besides the documents the major tool is the base questionnaire which is used to capture data.

3.5.1.1 The Master Questionnaire

While all of the above documents guide the review process, key among them is the questionnaire. As a major input, this tool serves the purpose of collecting data during the country self-assessment which is used in all of the consequent processes and decisions. It covers major elements and sections for each thematic area with corresponding evaluation questions, objectives and indicators. The APRM Base Document (2002:349) guides that the review process begins when the questionnaire from the Continental Secretariat under the guidance of the APR Panel is sent to the member country to be reviewed.

Following the APRM Guidelines and the APRM Statute (2016:22), the questionnaire as the major tool for capturing national data for simultaneous evaluation in five-governance thematic pillars is used to guide the self-assessment of the country under review. Each of the thematic areas covers the objectives, codes and standards, questions as well as indicators for assessing the governance issue of focus. The objectives state the essential elements to be achieved, and the standards and codes are the legal frameworks signed or ratified by member states individually or collectively as guiding tools informing their way of governance. In addition, the questions assess what has been done by a participating member state with regard to the objectives and standards, while indicators are the measures of performance that constitute the evidence of progress made towards a particular objective or standard (APRM 2017:10).

The content covered in the questionnaire is presented under the different governance pillars. The first is the thematic area of Democracy and Political Governance (DPG). This pillar assesses progress made by countries in signing, ratification and enactment of standards, as well as formulating and implementing policies aimed at promoting an inclusive process of decision-making as well as constitutionalism, where restraints imposed by the national constitution are

respected. These are considered to be major ingredients for attainment of inclusive development as informed by key instruments like the NEPAD Charter, the African Union Charter on Human Rights, the African Constitutive Act and the African Union Charter on Human Rights. Under this area, the major objectives on which data was collected are the basis of which structural, process and outcome indicators are considered for data collection. The objectives include to: (i) Entrench democracy, rule of law and constitutionalism, (ii) Manage and prevent inter and intra-state conflicts, (iii) Uphold the separation and balance of powers, (iv) Promote human rights, (v) Ensure effective public participation in governance, and (vii) Ensure effective public service delivery. Furthermore, the pillar recognises the legitimacy of the different political systems in Africa as informed by the various cultural contexts.

The second area is Economic Governance and Management (EGM). This pillar assesses progress made by countries in the signing, ratification and enactment of standards, as well as formulating and implementing policies aimed at reducing poverty and promoting economic growth, as well as the welfare of citizens. The objectives under this thematic area include: (i) To implement economic policies which promote sustainable development, (ii) To facilitate ownership and participation of major stakeholders in the design of economic policies, (iii) To promote sound financial management in the public sector, (iv) To combat illicit financial outflows and money laundering, and (v) To deepen and accelerate regional economic integration in investment and trade. The overall goal is to achieve well-defined and coordinated economic policies to be implemented by effective economic actors and systems for inclusive economic growth, efficient functioning of the market and sustainable development, that are highly needed in Africa.

The third thematic area is Corporate Governance (CG) which refers to the mechanism by which different organisations are controlled and directed to ensure effective engagement of stakeholders for better performance in meeting their interests (Claessens 2003:92). Such stakeholders include the government, customers, employees, consumers and the public among others. It is about the standards, structures and processes regulating relationships between the board, management, shareholders and other stakeholders in their pursuit of organisational goals. This pillar assesses progress made by countries in signing, ratification and enactment of standards, as well as formulating and implementing policies aimed at

promoting efficient organisational performance, transparency, increased stakeholder confidence, responsiveness, access to capital, and mitigates risks and mismanagement. The objectives covered under this thematic area include to: (i) Establish a regulatory framework that is effective for conduct of business, (ii) Promote accountability, transparency and disclosure of information in organisation, (iii) Promote ethical conduct and leadership in organisations, (iv) Ensure equity and fair treatment of stakeholders in organisations, (v) Promote good corporate citizenship in organisations, and (vi) Facilitate innovations in technology among organisations. The ultimate goal of this thematic area is improved economic growth and development.

The fourth thematic area is Broad-Based Sustainable Socio-Economic Development (SED). The pillar assesses progress made by countries in signing, ratification and enactment of standards, as well as formulating and implementing policies aimed at realising consistent improvement in standards of living among their people. It covers objectives like to: (i) Accelerate the implementation of inclusive socio-economic development, (ii) Ensure increased production and value addition from agricultural and natural resources, (iii) Alleviate poverty, inequality and unemployment while promoting social security, (iv) Promote accelerated human capital development through financing access to inclusive quality education, health care and ICT, (v) Ensure access to affordable land, energy and water services, and (vi) Promote climate resilience and environmentally sustainable communities.

The fifth thematic area introduced after the Covid-19 pandemic is State Resilience to Shocks and Disasters (SRSD). This pillar assesses progress made by countries in signing, ratification and enactment of standards, as well as formulating and implementing policies aimed at enabling the state to bounce back from disaster impacts. It involves assessing capacity of structures, resources, mechanisms and processes to ensure disaster preparedness, risk reduction, mitigation response, adaptation and recovery. This is reflected through the promotion of social capital, gender-inclusive community interventions to needs of vulnerable categories of the population, and establishing responsive systems to natural hazards, vulnerability and exposure to regional as well as global risks. The objectives under this thematic area include to: (i) Establish existing frameworks for enhancing state capacity to respond to shocks, disasters and infectious diseases, (ii) Develop an early warning system for

national recovery and reconstruction after shocks, (iii) Promote resource mobilisation and adaptive capabilities to shocks and disasters, and (iv) Establish self-sufficiency and sustainability measures against shocks and disasters. Therefore, the pillar assesses the existence of a well-coordinated and sustainable state system for disaster mitigation, response, adaptation and rehabilitation.

This questionnaire serves two major purposes. Firstly, it provides the format and checklist used by participating countries to establish whether the different stakeholders have been engaged and have also responded to their concerns. Secondly, it provides a summary of the self-assessment results.

The APRM Guidelines (2003) stipulate the procedure for execution of the country self-assessment questionnaire in a way that ensures that technical soundness as an underpinning principle of the mechanism is ensured. The APRM Research Protocol (2017:11) requires that a pre-test of the tool is conducted to establish whether there are any challenges with its concepts, coverage, presentation, administration or even translation into local languages. The research protocol instrument annexed to the questionnaire indicates the common APRM tools. It is recommended that some issues may require secondary data generated through desk research, while others may require primary data generated through field surveys, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and Expert Panels. The APRM Base Documents (2002:349) indicate that the results generated using the questionnaire are summarised and analysed to formulate the draft programme of action which is consequently submitted to the Continental Secretariat to guide the process of country review.

Although the tool has been appreciated for high quality data collection, it was resolved that its reappraisal after many years since 2003 was timely (APRM 2018:23). Concern has been raised over the length of the questionnaire, indicators and issues tackled. This study observes that most of the country review data has been of a qualitative nature only. To address the emerging gaps, Maloka (2019:7) indicates that “sound and reliable quantitative techniques should be employed to measure key governance objectives and indicators in the two agendas, a pathway that has been taken by the mechanism in its three-year strategic plan (2019-2021)”. Therefore, the extensive national review processes involve triangulation by collection of both qualitative and qualitative data for the purpose of ensuring high validity

levels. This was intended to improve the tracking of governance in a more measurable and sustainable way. Furthermore, calls for review of the APRM questionnaire have been directed to widening its current “*narrow minded scope*” to cover the indigenous and home-grown knowledge embedded in the African culture. This requires reengineering of the APRM spirit to ensure more comprehensive reviews and revisiting the APRM original vision.

Efforts to undertake questionnaire review towards enhancing its influence have been going on since 2007 through NEPAD dialogues in 2009, 2010, 2012 and 2015. The final review was concluded in 2021 with integration of emerging cross-cutting issues like elections, natural resource management, xenophobia and diversity management among others. Other challenges were addressed in the implementation of the 2016-2020 Strategic Plan (APRM 2016:17). These included simplifying the tool, reducing its scope of coverage per thematic area, and going beyond qualitative and secondary data to consider integration of quantitative and primary field data. The most outstanding addition after the deep impact of the Covid-19 pandemic was the inclusion of the fifth thematic area which assesses existing state legal and policy frameworks for state resilience, adaptability, warning and response systems against shocks, diseases and disasters. The next set of inputs is the human resource expertise as discussed below.

3.5.1.2 The human resources expertise

The APRM Statute (2016:9) stipulates the core actors as key inputs into the APRM system. These include the Heads of States and Government who constitute the APR Forum, the panel of eminent persons, the CEO, the staff of the APRM Secretariat, the members of the National Governing Council (NGC), Focal Point Persons and their responsibilities. Besides the internal core actors are external stakeholders who include the strategic partners.

At the continental level, the central input to the operations of the APR Secretariat is the human resource capacity headed by the CEO. To address the earlier challenges, the APRM (2018:3) recognises that the APRM Continental Secretariat for some time did not have a CEO creating a gap in leadership with a lot of the activities stuck in

sort of a limbo with little or no implementation at the different levels. The CEO was mandated to run the secretariat and offer direction although some have persisted. This decision not only marked a turning point in the implementation of the APRM, but also reflected a significant level of political commitment to embrace a good governance agenda by the heads of participating states (APRM 2016:12).

Consequently, more financial resources and human resource capacity of new ideas were directed towards the revitalisation strategy including appointing a full time CEO for the APRM Continental Secretariat as a priority. Furthermore, the report indicates that after his appointment as CEO to head the APRM Continental Secretariat, Prof. Eddie Maloka spear-headed the implementation of the revitalisation of the strategies “for restoration, reinvigoration and the renewal of the APRM, guided by the instructions from the Summit” (APRM 2018:3). With support from the AU Commission, he embarked on several engagements with APRM stakeholders for strategic planning, developing necessary statutes and terms of engagement for the different actors starting with the panel of eminent persons (APRM 2016:12). He further focused on reorganising the management of the secretariat, recruiting technical staff, as well ensuring revitalising the peer review processes by 2022. While reflecting on that process, the new CEO explained that:

“When I arrived in APRM of course, I thought we needed to do great things and the people came with the idea we need to revitalise it, re-energise all the things, but I came up with this idea of restoration just getting the organisation to function at optimum level. So, when I arrived there was a review for Chad, a review for Senegal, but there wasn’t much progress so when I arrived there I made sure we did the reviews and I worked with the panel very well. I didn’t remember most of the panel very well but I said let us focus on the reviews, I gave them the findings of the resources and then submitted the reports.....” (Transcription cited in APRM revitalization journey 2022). The recruitment of the new CEO led to recruitment of more expertise at the APRM Continental Secretariat.

Consequently in addition, improved engagement of various stakeholders by the CEO resulted in increased political will translating into financial contribution and therefore influence on the behaviour and decisions of leaders in member states.

To further the mechanism's influence, there have been efforts towards the development of the human resources capacity by staffing the secretariats to ensure quality APRM operational tools, processes, frameworks and systems (APRM 2016:20). A new structure approved in 2012 required 45 full time staff positions advertised and filled instead of the earlier less than 20 whose short-term contracts ran out before they could do much. It was resolved in the 2016 Strategic Plan to stabilise the working environment by first giving one-year contracts, reviewing the organisational structure, developing a human resource strategy and streamlining the competitive recruitment process (APRM 2016:21). Emphasis was also put on a merit-based selection of the panel of eminent persons, as opposed to basing it entirely on political consideration.

At the national level of the participating countries are several human resource inputs identified in the NEPAD/APRM Guidelines (2003:20) to include the Focal Point person, the NGC members, the staff of the national secretariat headed by a CEO or executive director, and the TRI consultants. The Focal Point oversight of the National Secretariat's being at ministerial level keeps them too busy, resulting in continued delegation of their mandate to junior officers who don't exercise effective oversight. According to the supplementary document of the APRM Guidelines for Country Review (2003:6), the secretariat should consist of technical and administrative staff responsible for providing the day to day support services to the NGC, and organising local and national level sensitisation programmes. However, in different countries, the secretariat is organised differently. In some countries, it is directly funded with its budget under a government ministry, agency or presidency, while in others it runs an independent budget as required in the guidelines. Such differences in location within the governance structures have implications of power relations and consequently influence on national policies.

Another human resource input is the Technical Research Institute (TRI). A national TRI is appointed by an established NGC at least for each thematic area who identify appropriate data collection techniques for the different issues in undertaking the review exercise. The NEPAD/APRM Guidelines (2003:20) provide for technical expertise drawn from a pool of African consultants to support the minimal capacity of the APR Panel and Secretariat in conducting the assessment, dissemination of

findings to different stakeholders and consequently influence use of outcomes. The national Technical Research Institute (TRIs) spearheads the development of a draft Country Self-Assessment Report (CSAR). This activity starts with data collection through the APRM questionnaire as the major tool to collect data from across the four pillars covered by the mechanism (APRM Statute 2016:21). Preparation involves generating up to date background documentation by the APRM Secretariat using materials from international, regional and national institutions. According to Maloka (2019:4), the review is strengthened by respected African technical expertise working in collaboration with other relevant advisory capacities at the national level of the country conducting self-assessment. It has been recognised that this capacity at the country level sometimes falls short of expectation. The national TRIs are also expected to build capacity to observe the guidance notes provided below each assessment area and be objective as one of the ways of ensuring national ownership.

However, Gruzd and Turianskyi (2018) state in their assessment of the APRM at 15 years, that the challenge associated with the stakeholders includes “the poor attendance of the heads of states at the APR Forum, non-remittance of financial contributions by participating countries, diminishing funding of the APRM system by development partners, and declining frankness of the review at the APR Forum”. This suggests that stakeholders’ commitment especially that of the political leaders, plays a critical role for the APRM to drive policy reforms in governments of member states, harmonisation of continental objectives with national policies and addressing compliance gaps. In addition, some key agencies involved in funding the mechanism are strategic partners such as the Mo Ibrahim Foundation and the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF). Their MOU with the APRM provides for additional functions which include providing advice, data access, supporting NPoA preparation, and building national capacity (APRM 2016:11). Other agencies which have greatly supported the report publication stage include AfriMAP, which has published several critical reviews of the APRM in Ghana, Nigeria, South Africa, Rwanda, Benin, Algeria, Mauritius and Benin since 2010. Also, the Open Society Institute for Southern Africa which has over time published several compiled studies and reports about Uganda, Mozambique, Mali and Ethiopia, among others since 2011 (APRM 2016:11).

Other participating stakeholders include the international development partners whose role is to support with necessary resources the peer review process, capacity building, technical assistance as well as the implementation of the National Programme of Action (NEPAD/APRM Guidelines 2003:20). Stakeholders from other countries participating in the APRM are expected to engage in peer learning through experience sharing and reinforcing of best and successful practices. To achieve this, the APR Secretariat is expected to organise and support networks of focal points as a means of promoting peer learning. According to the NEPAD APRM Guidelines O&P (2003:13), the findings from the different stakeholder consultations constitute the APR's team recommendations on the needed improvements in the final NPoA. The outcome of such a wide stakeholder consultative process has objectively validated findings that justify ownership for utilisation. However, to many researchers, the missing link in APRM evaluation lies in consistently inadequate commitment by the key stakeholders in the leadership. This is manifested in the lack of an effective and accountable leadership that goes beyond demonstrating political will at the top to domesticate, utilise APRM data, integrate recommendations and enforce harmonised policy objectives (Jiboku 2016:270; Hansungule 2014:35-36ECA:2011:5; Tungwarara 2010; Okhonmina 2009:93-94; Gibb 2009:715-718; Jordan 2007:341).

In addition is the limited and active participation of empowered stakeholders outside government (Jiboku 2016:278). This calls for a motivation strategy within the existing framework to influence the leadership towards sustained commitment. A member of the Continental Secretariat explains that “the African leadership that will get us there is a leadership that believes in integrity, ensures that basic social needs of the people are addressed, involving all the different stakeholders in coming to a conscious decision on how to attain Agenda 2063” (Transcription cited in APRM revitalisation journey 2022). While the founding leaders were deeply committed, consistency even with the regular changes of leadership among participating countries requires an enhanced framework in which leaders appreciate the benefits of their countries' participation.

3.5.1.3 The financial resources as input for African ownership

By 2016, each member state was obliged to pay USD 100,000, but a number of countries were in arrears for years owing the APRM about USD 12 million. Despite the proposal from the revitalisation committee to increase the figure to USD 300,000, covering the whole budget necessitates support from strategic partners and other sources to cover the funding gap for the mechanism to be fully reliant on funding from Africa.

This subscription payment was intended to avoid the challenge of unsustainable funding and excessive reliance on external funding faced by the AU Commission which had 96 percent of its programmes funded by external partners (AU Strategic Plan 2014-2017:93). The Base Document (2003:27) indicates that this kind of ownership is conditioned to funding in the form of assessed contribution for each participating AU member state. The internally generated funding is intended to avoid reliance on external sources which could attract conditions. The declining financial contributions not only slow down the review process, but also compromise Africa's ownership of the APRM (APRM 2016:18). However, the APRM Guidelines (2003:9) clarify that external partners can be welcomed, provided that they respect the APRM African ownership and its processes. This study argues that the decision to prioritise budgetary allocations towards country subscription and the APRM country review processes is political. It can be observed that during the base peer review processes between 2005 and 2008, the funding condition was burdensome to participating countries and considered a major emerging challenge to the APRM participatory methodology. In 2006, during the sixth African Governance Forum (AGF) organised to reflect on the challenges and opportunities for implementing the APRM, it was reported that "the highly consultative nature of the APRM process has been quite expensive for relatively weaker economies" (Kigali 2006:37).

Similarly, in a study of the Kenya APRM Base Review between 2007/2008, it was noted that the country's Focal Point and Minister for National Planning at the time, Peter Anyang' Nyong'o, expressed this concern after Kenya spent USD 1 million estimated at about 5.9% share of the country's GDP (Akoth 2007:14). He wondered how Ghana, Rwanda and Mauritius handled the financial aspect of the APRM, stating that it should be a subject of greater analysis and debate than it had been. In another study of seven countries, Bing-Pappoe (2010:8) indicated that Benin spent

13% of the country's GDP as the cost of the NPoA after peer review. Some countries after their costly base reviews started arguing that supplementary donor funding was inevitable in the form of a basket fund brokered through the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

In addition, there are costs of running the national APRM secretariats, and payments to consultants engaged in preparing CSARs. While countries are each expected to contribute a minimum of USD 100,000, a number of countries end up defaulting. This works against the inherent ownership principle which is intended to ensure that the continent generates its own solutions to its development challenges without relying on external support. Aspiration Seven of Agenda 2063, which is about a strong and influential global player and partner, emphasises the need for Africa to take full responsibility for financing her development (AUC 2015:8). Therefore, persistence in defaulting countries affects the sustainability of the mechanism and attainment of Aspiration One. Attempts to save the situation have occurred in some countries, where there have been calls for supporting the implementation of NPoAs from donor agencies like the Africa Development Bank (ADB), the United Nations' Development Programme (UNDP), and the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), to be supported in countries like Rwanda, Ghana and Kenya (Kigali 2006:38). Therefore, there is still a need for an enhanced, robust and broad based resource mobilisation campaign to be launched for generating secretariats' finances and their function. Political will is manifested through the willingness of member states to guarantee sustainable financing of APRM activities, which in turn must be responsive to the interests of the African people (APRM 2016:21).

In analysing the ownership principle, Adeke-Jinadu (2019:31) identifies more challenges to the African ownership associated with reliance on basket funding. Firstly, a country's funding of the APRM process reflects the degree of prioritisation given to the mechanism in comparison to other competing budgetary demands from the different public ministries, departments and agencies. Secondly, when member states feel burdened with funding the APRM process, it raises sustainability questions. Thirdly, involving development partners in funding APRM country review processes may compromise the principle of African ownership. A possible solution to the principle of African ownership and funding is a constitutional provision for

establishment of the national NGCs with an independent budget being allocated as a sub-item within the supervising ministry's budget. Therefore, the study emphasises that the decision for a country's prioritisation of budgetary allocations to the APRM process is a major political issue at the centre of the APRM, yet politics is not given adequate consideration in enhancing the mechanism and ensuring promotion of African ownership. This commitment to financial contributions calls for political will to sustain the mechanism.

Fourthly, is the concern around integration of the APRM in the AU and its role as an African supranational accountability framework. This study observes that while an African governance evaluation system is a great idea since unity is strength, to some AU member states, the supranational oversight function of the APRM suggests a political institution. This presents significant political implications since it is perceived as encroaching on the sovereignty and independence of member states. Some scholars like Adeke-Jinadu (2019:35), insist that with the expanded mandate, the APRM is perceived as "the emergent governance framework towards a supranational state". It reflects confidence from the continent's leadership. Relatedly, the idea of shifting from voluntary to universal accession to membership by 2023 is also interpreted politically to suggest a forced political collective commitment. However, there are some national governments and regional economic communities which may not be willing to transfer their full autonomy to the new Union Government for Africa. Consequently, a choice can be made on the logic of integration in terms of whether to adopt an African supranational state or consider Regional Economic Communities as building blocks for the African Integration. Due to the above factors, the APRM Strategic Plan (2016-2020) itself identified its major challenge of variable and uncertain political support.

3.5.2 Policy setting

This is a major attribute among the evaluation inputs. Mark and Henry (2004:46) present such elements to include micro-politics, administrative support, skills and culture, which may support or inhibit influence on national policies. The mechanism-based approach ensuring a more positive influence, as prescribed in the APRM Revitalisation Strategy, calls for scanning the framework and dealing with such factors. The evaluation environment is always cognisant of that factor, and the

APRM Statute (2016:15) states in the core guiding principles of the APRM that “every review of the exercise carried out under the authority of the mechanism must be technically competent, credible and free of political manipulation”. This is intended to minimise the influence of contextual factors that cause deviance from the standard. The major contextual factors responsible for the compliance gap are political in nature. Adele-Jinadu (2019:24) argues that the gap may take three forms. Firstly, a complex combination of opposition actors and factors related to the APRM idea. Secondly, a combination of divergent or competing interpretations of what should be done to implement the APRM idea into evaluation action by the stakeholders. Thirdly, is the lack of or limited will and/or capacity by stakeholders to undertake the required action towards actualising the APRM idea into policy evaluation action.

The major key arguments from the previous reports indicate that there has been a general tendency of deliberate political control of the APRM country review process by the executive branch of government (APRM 2017:23). In the context of the APRM, non-compliance to the guidelines in several member states has been manifested through bureaucratisation and executive political control of the APRM process. This executive control is facilitated by several provisions within the guiding documents. Firstly, the powers to appoint members constituting the National Governing Council/Commission (NGC), the Focal Point Minister, and the panel of eminent persons are all granted to the executive.

Even though the Base Document (2003, Paragraph 10) allocates the oversight function to ensure integrity of the review process to the APRM panel of eminent persons, they tend to perform this function as routine. Concerns arose that by raising matters of a political nature, the founding panel had gone beyond their mandate (Adeke Jinadu 2019:25). It was then interpreted that dealing with political matters was considered to be limited to the APR Forum. This study however maintains that the politics do not start with the APR Forum, but run through the entire review process. Sore (2014:23) in his reflection on ‘who audits the auditors, scandals at the heart of the APRM’, insists that “the APRM is fundamentally a political process”. Unfortunately, the existing framework ignores the political factor and the partisan political environment.

As a result of varying interpretations by different stakeholders, Adeke Jinadu (2019:25) explains that for some actors “...the external accountability role can become inquisitorial, or confrontational, perhaps manipulated by the regime opponents to discredit or ridicule the government.” Therefore, efforts to guard against negative evaluation reporting influences affect a regime’s resistance to total compliance, insisting on control and manipulation of the APRM evaluation process. Secondly, the Focal Point person who controls the budget approvals and releases is appointed by the President and is expected to be at the level of a cabinet minister or a presidential advisor. Thirdly, is the alienation of the NGC powers to the executive branch by locating the national APRM secretariat offices directly under the Focal Point which directly serves the executive interests.

Adele-Janadu (2019:29) identifies three observed trends on the effect of politics on the role of both the panel of eminent persons and the Focal Points in the APRM process. Firstly, is the concern of how to limit the politics of the panel of eminent persons to save it from inflicting wounds on itself by clashing with the interest of the higher powers in the APR Forum. This was observed in the 2007-2012 panels when they were accused of going beyond their mandate by engaging in matters of political governance which were considered a preserve of the APR Forum. Secondly, there is a concern on ensuring effective application of the recommended criteria for appointment of the members to the panel of eminent persons in a way that would guarantee confidence from all stakeholders, as was enjoyed by the first panel. Thirdly, is the unfolding role of the Focal Point persons beyond the country review process to participating in the higher continental decision-making structures (APRM Statute 2016: Articles 8-10). In playing this role, Focal Points tend to work towards saving their governments from being censured, which results in reducing the oversight powers of the eminent persons over the peer review process (Sore 2014:24). This situation results in conflicts of interest as well as declining perception of the APRM process’ integrity as an external accountability mechanism. Consequently, the politics inherent in the mechanism explains the varying degrees of compliance to the APR standards, as well as the other forms of conceptual and symbolic use, which is demonstrated through limited implementation of the NPoA content.

To address the challenge of bureaucratic capture by the regime, ECA (2018:72-73) calls for integration of safeguards to save APRM evaluation processes from becoming bureaucratic routines and an extension of the state-driven policy devoid of meaningful popular participation. Among other solutions, the UNECA/Pan African Parliament Workshop in Bagamoyo Tanzania that took place in 2008 emphasised putting parliament at the heart of the APRM process and made certain recommendations (ECA 2018:72). Firstly, was to have the National Governing Councils/Commissions (NGCs) established by legislation or constitutional provisions as a means of minimising executive control over their appointment and operations. Secondly, was providing free spaces for locating the NGCs secretariats outside the ministries which are under direct control of the executive branch. Thirdly, was ensuring financial and administrative independence of the NGCs similar to that enjoyed by the legislature and judiciary in almost all member states. Fourthly, was establishment of APRM standing committees within the national legislatures of member states to support the NGC in strengthening the intended oversight of the APRM evaluation process. Fifthly, was facilitating the capacity building of the civil society organisations to enable them to play a more effective and sustainable role with the APRM country review processes.

However, this study emphasises that in the existing framework, ignoring the role of politics and political context in the review processes largely explains the mixed findings on the influence of the APRM among member states. So, out of concern for the APRM future, the founding panel at the end of their term of office cautioned against what they called “an overly qualitative approach to the peer review process”, emphasising that “it was important not to lose sight of the fact that the APRM is above all and fundamentally a political process” (Busia 2006:70). The adoption of a rational approach to evaluation pays limited attention to the politics manifested in the stakeholders’ interests and interactions in the peer review process and its effect on the country policies. This study observes that the initial framework suggests a technical APR process, generating objective data, while ignoring the inherent political factor in the APRM routinised activities. Busia (2006:34) attributes it to the assumption that “issues of political governance would come under the purview of the APRM but would be handled by the AU structures” at the higher level of the APR

Forum. Similarly, the ECA (2011:73) captures this challenge by indicating that for some time since the APRM launch, the heads of state had not understood what their mandate was in the APRM process. Some of them desired to participate in the APRM and use their political power and the reports to their advantage against all of the other stakeholders.

Therefore, the study argues that acknowledging the central role of politics by examining the process, actors and context within the APRM framework helps to contribute towards resolving a number of emerging concerns that were not previously envisaged. Adele-Jinadu (2019:24) therefore proposes that bridging the gap should involve ways to minimise the limitations, a call that this study responds to by proposing an enhanced framework.

3.5.3 The evaluation activities in the APRM process

Another major element of the logic of evaluation influence is the set of activities that take place in the process. This covers attributes such as selection and participation of stakeholders, the planning and design of evaluation, the data collection and analysis, report generation, conclusion and recommendations.

Among the activities, the APRM Base Document (2002:3) identifies four distinct types of reviews, namely base reviews, periodic reviews, targeted reviews and special reviews. First, is the base review which the initial assessment undertakes in a country upon its accession and signing of an MOU with the APRM. It is based on the recognition that the AU member states are at different levels of development and hence the need to establish the level at which each is, the best practices, capacity and areas where they can be supported for improvement. The APRM Statute (2016:9) stipulates the core guiding principles, objectives, standards, criteria, indicators, and actors which the APRM system operates through periodic evaluations and dialogue processes to build responsible leadership that conforms to shared policies, values, standards and practices (McMahon & Mangu 2014:64; Busia & Ascherio 2013:271). Chapter Six of the APRM Statute (2016:9) highlights that participation is open to all AU member states which intend to voluntarily accede to it by notifying the APR Forum Chairperson, committing to undertake periodic reviews and implement associated recommendations.

The process begins with a participating country's voluntary accent and commitment through signing an MOU with the APRM. Being a voluntary undertaking, Maloka (2022) explains that such a decision to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the APRM from African leaders is considered to be a major indicator of the highest level of commitment towards good governance, readiness to do self-assessment, as well as observing the principles governing peer review (Transcription cited in APRM revitalisation journey 2022). In addition, signing the MOU confirms the country's readiness to contribute voluntary funding and logistical support for the review in addition to any bilateral and other donors (NEPAD/HSGIC/03/APRM/MOU 2003:20-23). Ghana provided a good example of such commitment explained by the CEO of the Continental Secretariat. "It entered the APRM at the very beginning; one of the first twelve countries to sign the MOU, we went through the peer review processes as the very first in Africa to do so and the President at that time had a strong commitment to getting Ghana to be looked at by his peers in order to ensure that he was on the right path" (Transcription cited in APRM Revitalization Journey 2022). What follows is an illustration of the APR process and activities at the different stages.

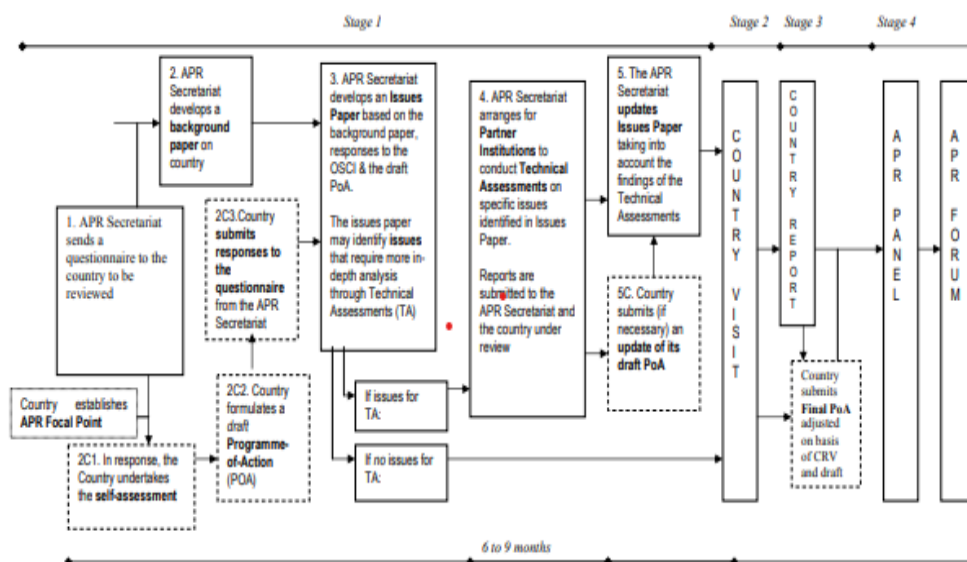


Figure 3.3: An illustration of the African peer review process

Source: NEPAD/APRM (2003:5)

As reflected in Figure 3.3 above, the four major stages in the APR process are spelt out in the APRM Base Documents (2002:349). They include conducting the country

self-assessment guided by the questionnaire from the APR Continental Secretariat to generate a report and the NPoA, the country review visit and consultation, generation of a report and finally peer review by the APR Forum. The APRM Statute (2016:22) indicates the rules of procedure which constitute the mechanism for internal regulation of APRM structures as provided for in the APRM operating procedures adopted in 2012 by the APR Forum.

In the selection of participating stakeholders, the founding documents for the APRM present a robust participatory review process involving selection of multiple stakeholder representatives to objectively establish the progress made towards realisation of mutually agreed standards. The participating country is expected to generate participation and ensure an inclusive national review process of the different stakeholders from government, the private sector and civil society in the process (NEPAD/HSGIC/03-2003/APRM/MOU 2003:20-23). The idea of a participatory approach is based on the argument that countries that bring on board all segments of society to identify challenges end up more stable with more sustainable development. It is argued that participation enables a country to develop a realistic and consensus-oriented plan of action and report annually on the NPoA implementation progress (APRM 2016:16).

However, the peer review tends to focus more on the outcome than the process and compliance to the APRM standards, especially in the selection of participants and their ability to influence policy outcomes. As a result, some stakeholders in the legislature, the judiciary, the civil society, the private sector, and influential opinion leaders in member states experience a sense of apathy and worrisome indifference about the process (Adeke-Jinadu 2019:26). This perception has resulted in an emerging trend of the weakening function of the panel of eminent persons who are mandated "...to exercise oversight function over the review process, in particular to ensure integrity of the process..." (Base Document 2003:10). Furthermore, compliance with these guidelines remains a challenge because the oversight responsibility rests on the APR Forum which was characterised by reduced attendance of its bi-annual summits coupled with inadequate country commitment towards meeting country financial obligations. The first stage of the review is the country-self assessment explained in the following section.

3.5.3.1 The Country Self-Assessment process

At the national level, this is the first stage in the country review process. According to Aketch (2019:13), the country level structures undertake the activities undertaken in that process and include stakeholder sensitisation of the APRM, fieldwork, consultation and validation with stakeholders, engaging with government, review and publication of the report. In this section emphasis is placed on how and the extent to which each of the elements in the process influences national policies. This study observes that while the APRM methodology suggests that peer review is ultimately conducted at the APRM Forum at which the CRR and the NPoA are discussed for adoption, the other levels of peer review before the forum are critical in defining what is tabled at the forum. It is that process that the study focuses on using a mechanism-based approach to examine the degree of influence. This is intended to address the gap between the APRM idea and the peer review outcomes.

The recommended best practices for countries preparing to participate in the APRM are summarised in the NEPAD/APRM Guidelines (2003:19). The country self-assessment stage starts with the establishment of a Focal Point for the APRM who is responsible for managing the review process at the national level. Since he/she reports directly to the Head of State, and they are expected to be at the level of a minister or the equivalent. Under the guidance of the NGC, the self-assessment team is expected to conduct research, and wide stakeholder consultations to capture the views of government officials, parliamentarians, NGOs, academia, the media, trade unions, political parties, the private sector and professional bodies (APRM Base Document 2003:18-20). These activities are followed by review of the submitted draft CSAR by any other technical review institutes or national institutions and consequently validation by stakeholders in the different regions of the reviewed country. This stage is concluded with sharing of feedback between the self-assessment team and the relevant stakeholders in the form of validation meetings organised at national and regional levels to compile a CSAR (Maloka 2019:4). It is from such meetings that stakeholders contribute heavily to identifying gaps which feedback is used to generate the National Program of Action (NPoA) which contains viable solutions for addressing the identified governance challenges as reflected in figure 3.4 below.

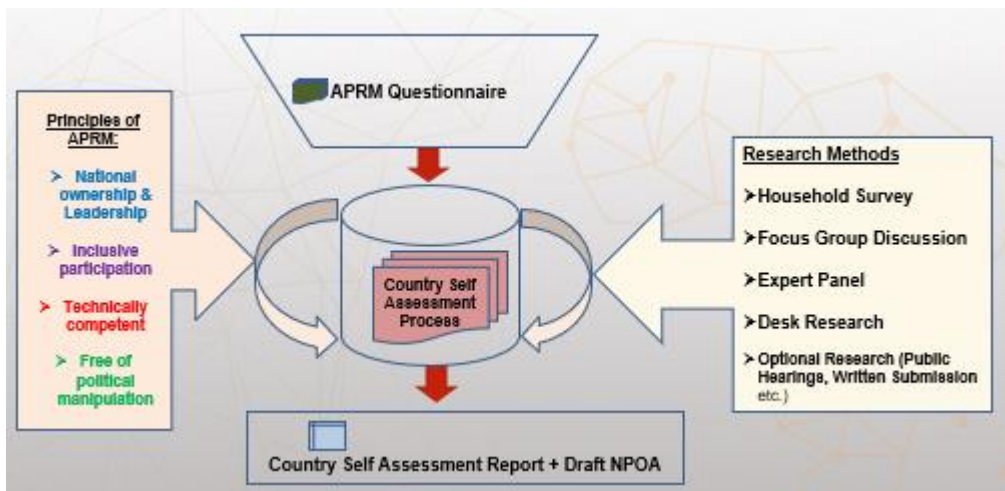


Figure 3.4: The APRM Country Self-Assessment Process

Source: APRM (2017:13)

The framework in Figure 3.4 above reflects the guiding principles for the APRM at the national level. It suggests that the APRM questionnaire is a major input for data collection, a range of research methods adopted in conducting the Self-Assessment Process that produces the CSAR and the draft National Plan of Action (NPOA).

The second stage at the national level is the APRM country review visit to generate a Country Review Report (CRR). It involves a mission by experts deployed by the APR Continental Secretariat to the member state being reviewed and is facilitated to ensure access to all stakeholders and information sources (APRM Base Document 2003:18-19). This stage may involve an additional round of reviewing the CSAR through wide-ranging interactions and consultations with various stakeholders by the APRM country review mission traversing the country to brief them on the APRM process and guiding principles. According to Maloka (2019:4), participating stakeholders consulted by the APR team include: Government officials, legislators, civil society organisations' representatives from academia, the political parties, media, business, professional bodies and trade unions, representatives of community based organisations (CBOs) as well as international organisations. This activity may last for about 2 weeks, resulting in compilation of the APRM Country Review Report.

Consequently, the NEPAD/APRM Guidelines (2003:20) indicate that a carefully balanced and professionally appointed country review team annually evaluates the progress of the participating country's National Plan of Action (NPoA). The recommended team membership includes: a team leader who is normally an APR panel member, Continental Secretariat officers, experts approved by the APR panel, observers from partner institutions and other two participating countries for peer learning.

The NEPAD/APRM/Guidelines (2003:20) highlight the purpose of the APR country review to include: firstly, assessing the extent to which the participatory process is ensured in a way that meets stakeholder's expectations. Secondly, to promote interaction of the APR team with the major stakeholders for generating feedback on the spirit and extent to which the APR guiding principles and process are observed. Thirdly, to provide an opportunity for verifying background information with the stakeholders as presented in the issue paper which is generated by the APR Secretariat. Fourthly, it enables discussion of the draft NPoA presented by the participating country to improve its governance while providing positive reinforcement on sound aspects as well as best ways for addressing identified weaknesses. Fifthly, the review serves the purpose of building consensus among key stakeholders on the best steps toward addressing the identified governance challenges.

The generated data with integration of cross-cutting areas is compiled into draft technical reports for each thematic area by the TRI, which are consequently collated into a comprehensive CSAR, highlighting the key governance challenges and best practices in each thematic area to be prioritised. According to the APRM Research Protocol (2017:12), the process is concluded with validation of the report to ensure that the different stakeholders agree on the content of the report as a reflection of the questions sought to answer, and whether the instructions were followed.

The third stage in the review process involves preparation of the review team's report and concerns based on both the materials presented by the APRM National Secretariat in the briefing and the in-country findings from the wide range of consultations, sources and interactions, summarising their implications on the

country's governance. The major activity includes writing the country review draft report and editing by the review team, panel validation through panel meetings, as well as engagement with government for a period of about 21 days (APRM Base Document 2003:19). The outcome of the process is the Country Review Report (CRR) which is measured against the mutually agreed governance standards and commitments made in the country's National Programme of Action (NPoA).

The fourth stage starts with the submission of the Self-Assessment Report together with the Country Review Report, its recommendations to the APR Forum, and the preliminary NPoA to the APRM Continental Secretariat. The documents are then peer reviewed by the APRM Panel of Eminent Persons. At that point, the Continental Secretariat has already compiled all of the necessary information on the country's governance situation in the form of a background document, for the purposes of comparative analysis awaiting review by the APR Forum (APRM Base Document 2003:18). Based on the information generated from the Self-Assessment Report, the Background Document and the Preliminary Programme of Action, an issue paper is developed by the APR Secretariat as a lead agency to guide the process of country review (NEPAD/HGSIC-3-2003/APRM/Guidelines/O&P 2003:12). The secretariat relying on the data available determines whether there could be any other issues that may necessitate more in-depth investigation before the Country Review visit commences. The activities at this stage involve various APRM advance missions for field support and follow up on the process for a period of about 9-12 months at the end of which a preliminary programme of action is formulated building on the existing policies (NEPAD/APRM 2003:3-6).

The fifth stage involves the publication of the final country review report together with a detailed NPoA. Consequently, there is annual reporting on the country's implementation progress of the NPoA to the APR Forum. The country progress reporting reflects the new policies designed and reforms conducted in the reviewed member state. The final report, which contains all of the necessary elements, the CRR and the proceedings from the APR Forum's peer review discussions is formally tabled and made public (APRM Base Document 2003:18). The documents are also submitted to other sub-regional and regional structures to which the country being reviewed has membership. They are also published and shared with strategic

partners, Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and other member countries for experience sharing. According to Maloka (2019:4), this publication is shared widely with the major regional structures which may include: the summit of the African Union, the Pan-African Parliament, the African Commission on Human and People's Rights, the Social and Economic Council (ECOSOC) as well as the Peace and Security Council of the African Union. The same report is also shared with the Regional Economic Community to which the reviewed country belongs as a member (APRM Base Document 2003:18-25).

Finally, the reviewed country is expected to modify its NPoA and annually report its progress registered towards implementation of the NPoA in preparation for the subsequent reviews. Maloka (2019:4) indicates that this stage is concluded with the CRR, and the NPoA presented to the Heads of State and Governments for consideration and consequent adoption by the APR Forum. The APR Secretariat is expected to support with resource mobilisation and capacity building through workshops to facilitate a country's networking, technical assistance and experience sharing of best practices for effective realisation of the targets set in the NPoA. The challenge is normally associated with technical and financial capacity to perform this mandate. The process ends with the follow up reviews on progress of the reviewed country.

3.5.3.2 Other types of review activities

Besides the base review are other types of reviews provided for in the Base Document (2003:3) to include the periodic reviews and targeted reviews. The APRM Statute (2016:3) indicates that periodic reviews should be conducted after two to four years. However, this is never observed due to the limited technical and financial capacity at the Continental Secretariat and the political will by member states to voluntarily initiate and welcome the evaluation practice. These kinds of reviews have so far been conducted in three countries, namely Kenya, Uganda and Mozambique. However, the mandated period of two years has never been observed. For example, Uganda's second generation review took place in 2017, nine years after a base review that was undertaken in 2008.

The targeted review is another type which is conducted upon a country's request outside the stated time frame of the periodically mandated reviews. These reviews have attracted more interest among countries where the evaluation focuses specifically on certain critical governance areas (APRM 2021:23). Increasingly undertaken by more countries, such reviews are considered more beneficial since a country is able to specifically focus on particular challenges they are facing, considering their greatest impact on a country's development. Besides the advantages of being less costly and bulky, the country is able to address particular governance issues in a specific country, learn best practices in the sector and ask for necessary expertise.

The preference of targeted reviews in comparison to other types is well explained by a member of the continental panel of eminent persons in his observation about Zambia and Namibia's experience. He stated that "Zambia is really happy to be the second country to undergo a targeted review mechanism after Djibouti. We selected the mining sector and the tourism sector for two reasons: first, the mining sector is the main contributor to our GDP and we have had a lot of challenges in extracting wealth from the mineral sector to go to the development of the country, particularly for uplifting the standard of living of the people. The tourism sector was selected because that is a growth potential sector for us, and we think that it has greater potential for creating employment wealth" (Transcription cited in APRM revitalisation journey 2022). This implies that reviews normally aim at the core sectors in supporting the country's economy.

Similarly, he explained the case of Namibia's choice of reviewing youth unemployment. He said "We went to Namibia because the Namibian Government wanted to do a targeted review on youth and unemployment, so we indeed found out that the problem of youth and unemployment is very high in Namibia. So, when we talked to the employers in the private sector, they raised this matter that a lot of these young people come from our education system and don't have quite the skills we want. So again, that's an area which needs attention, not only in Namibia but across the African Continent" (Transcription cited in APRM revitalisation journey 2022).

Finally, there are the special reviews which are commissioned by the APR Forum upon observation of early warning signs that may suggest an impending social, economic or political crisis. They are conducted in the spirit of showing solidarity and extending assistance to the affected member state. However, this study observes that the influence of the above review activities and processes is affected by certain factors. Firstly, Gboyega (2019:23) identifies the major challenges in the CSAR to include limited technical and resource capacity, time and a cumbersome questionnaire. It is however noted that continuous efforts to rationalise the APRM methodology have been made over time, as will be explained later in the section of methodological changes. Secondly, another challenge is the lack of harmonisation between the APRM recommendations and the other national development strategies.

The implementation of the NPoAs after the reviews was not well explained in the founding documents. Among the major gaps identified is the relationship between the NPoA and other ongoing development plans and strategies. Kigali (2006:38) maintains that attempts to ensure their coordination were initiated in 2006 by strategic partners like the UNDP, the UNECA and the ADB in their support towards the NPoA implementations in Rwanda, Kenya and Ghana. Thirdly is the challenge of bureaucratisation of the APRM process in member countries. Over time the APRM reports have attributed persistent challenges in its processes to include: the political control by the existing regime and bureaucratisation of the APRM implementation process and the executive branch control, the question of African ownership, and the diverse cultural and social psychological factors (APRM 2017:23).

3.5.3.3 Reforms towards improving evaluation activities: Revisiting the APRM philosophy, methodology and tools

The Revitalisation Strategy (2016 to 2020) focused on the goal of making the APRM more relevant, effective and impactful than before. In 2017, the Forum of Heads of States and Governments advanced the need to revisit the APRM philosophy, methodology and tools through the revitalisation strategy to ensure that its mandate as conferred by the founding fathers is fulfilled (APRM 2018:8). In some countries, the participatory approach would go a long way in collecting views on their preferred mode of governance and policies while giving feedback on the adopted and

implemented one. A member of the Panel of Eminent Persons emphasised this by saying: “I remembered that time I worked on the country review project here in Kenya and we would go around with the APRM Office here in the country taking the views of the people and the individuals at the local level, which was like we remember seeing the AU come to us. So, for me that was a restoration of the mechanism.” The enthusiasm was because the mechanism was perceived by the stakeholders as a new platform with new ideas and energy.

Among the major challenges recognised in the APRM methodology, are weaknesses in tracking measurable progress of governance over a period of time. Major concerns were being raised over some elements of the review methodology. Therefore, the APRM (2018:8) reports and maintains the resolution that the methodology is revised to ensure greater relevance, cost-effectiveness and efficiency. Maloka (2019:7) explains the ongoing efforts towards a more integrated approach which are associated with certain advantages in strengthening the APRM evaluation system. Firstly, it allows the presentation of more complex data to be summarised in a way that reflects the multi-dimensional issues on the situation in each reviewed country in a simpler and representative form for policy makers.

Secondly, it is argued that the regular production and update of the quantitative governance measures would go a long way in facilitating APRM stakeholder’s communication with the citizens of member states on matters of governance. Thirdly, it is argued that such quantitative measures provide a critical source of quick data for starting and promoting governance debates and advocacy activities. Consequently, more detailed information can be generated from the more qualitative-based self-assessment and country review reports as complementary sources for validation. It is also argued that the introduction of new indices for tracking measurable progress in governance across member states will go a long way toward improving the APRM evaluation system. Maloka (2019:6-8) maintains that more efforts towards improvement during the country’s self-assessment reviews have resulted in the incorporation of primary data gathering, especially in the more recent cases of Ghana, Kenya, Algeria and Uganda.

To address the challenges associated with the APRM philosophy, the APRM (2018:23) identified the following interventions. First, that all member states should commit to the principles and ideals of the APRM intended to deal with the key governance deficiencies identified in the APRM process. Second, mandatory attendance of the APR Forum by all member states as a statutory obligation to promote collaborative efforts for implementing the continent's development agenda. Third, promoting deeper integration, trade and social interaction that promotes peaceful coexistence. Consequently, the APRM was expected to be a mechanism that rewards member states by incentivising them to demonstrate improvements and sustained efforts for championing governance reforms of the continent. All of the above were aimed at a methodological renewal aimed at increasing the impact of the APRM, but with challenges since emphasis was put on some individual components as opposed to enriching of the entire system.

3.5.4 Evaluation outputs from the review process

From the evaluation inputs and activities are outputs in the form of knowledge attributes and general mechanisms. Mark and Henry (2004:46) identify knowledge attributes to include credibility, responsiveness, communication, sophistication and timeliness. This section assesses the extent to which APR outputs meets the above attributes. According to the Base Document (2003:18-22), the APRM process results into three major documents through which evidence is generated to influence public policies among participating countries. The NEPAD/APRM Guidelines O&P (2003:14) maintain that the team's report should detail specific measures by the country for improvement indicating the time bounds, capacity and estimated resource requirements to address the identified weaknesses. According to Maloka (2019:4), the recommendations detail the specific strategies and measures to be included in the country's NPoA indicating the estimated time, resources and capacity requirements.

The first key document is the Country Self-Assessment Report (CSAR). Controlled by the NGC as opposed to the government, the report is generated through a highly participatory dialogue-based process guided by the questionnaire. Through national consultations and consensus of major governance challenges faced, ongoing efforts, future priorities, and time bound commitments for addressing them in the short and

long-term are indicated. In addition is establishing a clear feedback mechanism and dissemination efforts for participating stakeholders. A final report is compiled after the draft report is validated through different stakeholder meetings in which comments are solicited on the findings and recommendations.

The second key document is the draft NPOA, which provides time bound governance commitments and development priorities to improve existing policies for the next 3-5 years. The NPOA should include the estimated budgetary implications for the commitments made, the allocations by government, and the major stakeholders responsible for their implementation. In line with its mandate, the APR panel reviews the report and forwards its recommended actions to the APR Forum. The NPOA which is submitted to the continental APR Secretariat also reflects the challenges identified in the CSAR and details in a logical framework the strategies the government intends to adapt to deal with them, the cost and how they are prioritised. It is the duty of the secretariats to ensure that the report content is not simply a wish list, but that the recommendations are included in the budgets as national priorities. As a case in point, Jinedu (2019:1) states that “the APRM provides a theoretical-practical and normative applied policy framework and a political campus for reconfiguring, monitoring and evaluation of the nexus connecting the state, society and citizenship and that connecting politics and public policy on national and continental African politics”. The thesis argues that the consideration of political context as proposed in the new framework will go a long way in contributing towards addressing them.

The third document is the Country Review Report (CRR). This report contains information collected by members of the country review team on mission, issue papers and expert inputs, on matters presented in the CSAR. A country review team lead by the APR panel visits the country and conducts consultations with a range of stakeholders, and compiles a report which assesses the progress registered by the reviewed country towards the mutually agreed governance standards and commitments. The report identifies the best practices and the pending weaknesses to be included in the recommended actions of the final programme of action. The draft report is presented to the government for its comments which are also annexed and forwarded for the APR Forum’s approval. The stage is concluded with the

communication of the Chairperson of the APR Forum's decision to the country being reviewed (NEPAD/APRM Guidelines O&P 2003:15). The last stage is when the final report is submitted and tabled to the Forum of Heads of State and Government for review (NEPAD/APRM 2003:19).

For all of the above reports, the credibility, responsiveness and timeliness have implications in determining a country's extent of use and non-use in influencing national policies. Mark and Henry (2004:46) highlight the different mechanisms through which the above outputs translate into the desired outcomes to include persuasion, standard setting, justification, policy deliberation and discussion, coalition formation, salience, elaboration and skill acquisition among others.

To ensure accuracy of the report, the draft is first discussed with the government of the reviewed country to verify the findings and integrate their views which are appended to the report. However, the final reports are largely a responsibility of the technical people in the governments, leaving out the input of other stakeholders. Another challenge is that while participating countries are required to submit an implementation progress report for APR Forum meetings, the reports are mostly prepared solely by technical officers in government MDAs with minimal involvement of the civil society actors (Maloka 2019:4). Besides late submissions, the Continental Secretariat also lacks for independent verification of the content presented. Maloka (2019:4) indicates that it is such reports that are presented to the Heads of State and Governments for consideration and adoption by the APR Forum.

3.5.4.1 Intermediate and long-term outcomes

The above outputs are expected to translate into outcomes through the different mechanisms identified above. The intermediate and long-term outcomes presented by Mark and Henry (2004:46) include cognitive information of salience and agenda setting, motivational information of incentives, personal goals and social rewards and behavioural outcomes reflected in individual or group practice, policy adoption, continuation or termination. In the context of the APRM, mixed outcomes have been registered in fulfilling its mandate of influencing national policies of member states.

The study emphasises that the mechanism has registered successes towards influencing policies of participating countries, even though it needs adjustments in its framework in order to address these key emerging issues that confront the current African continent. Achievements identified in the AU Reform (2018:23) include the resumption of the base and secondary reviews after a quiet period, progress towards universal accession of AU member states to the APRM by 2023, strengthened south-south networks and cooperation, a database of APRM generated country review reports as well as the policy and legislative reforms in countries like Kenya, Ghana and Nigeria. Others include guaranteed ownership through membership contributions, although with delays in payment, the launch of the African Governance Report from periodic assessment of member states, and the recognition of the APRM's role as an early warning system for likely impending crises as reflected in South Africa and Kenya.

The APRM process generated data and recommendations have enabled some countries to improve their national policies. This is reflected in the statement by the APRM Coordinator of Ghana. He explains that “we take the APRM process very importantly. We go through our five-year national development plan circles; the country always ensures that whatever comes out of the peer reviews is also incorporated into the next national development plan. What Ghana has tried to do is to follow the recommendations of the APRM country review reports to ensure that the paths we are actually taking are straight and shortcomings in those segments of the economy are addressed” (Transcription cited in APRM revitalisation journey 2022). Therefore, the data compiled through APRM reports adds value to the country planning process by informing the changes in the National Development Plan. Peer review benefits a country to exchange experiences of good practices in governance areas where it is leading, and through information sharing interest in similar practices is promoted in other countries on the continent.

Another APRM success has been the increased membership of different countries acceding to it followed by accelerated implementation of the country reviews. In 2003, the mechanism started with six participating countries, which increased to 35 by May 2016 with 20 member states reviewed (APRM 2016). Consequently, as of February 2019, the APRM had a total membership of 38 AU member states

participating, 22 base peer reviews completed including base reviews of Senegal, Djibouti, South Sudan and their reports all tabled among others (APRM 2017:4). Country membership further grew to 41 member countries as of 2020, constituting 74% of all of the African Union member states (APRM 2022). By the beginning of 2022, membership had risen up to 41 out of 54 AU member countries constituting 78% (APRM 22:23). This takes the APRM closer to the ultimate goal of the revitalisation, which is the universal ascension of all AU member states to the APRM in order to strengthen the African unity and ensure collective commitment to the good governance agenda. By 2022, out of the 45 participating countries, 21 had undergone first base country reviews, while three countries had undergone the second generation peer review. These include Kenya, Mozambique and Uganda, which is the case of interest in this study. Below is the distribution of APRM member states on the continent by region.

Table 3.5: APRM membership distribution by region on the continent

AU REGIONS	COUNTRIES
North Africa (4)	Algeria, Egypt, Mauritania, Tunisia
West Africa (12)	Ghana, Nigeria, Benin, Burkina Faso, Mali, Sierra Leone, Senegal, Cote d'Ivoire, Liberia, Niger, Togo, the Gambia
Southern Africa (9)	Mozambique, South Africa, Lesotho, Zambia, Angola, Botswana, Malawi, Namibia and Zimbabwe
East Africa (9)	Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Mauritius, Tanzania, Sudan and Seychelles
Central Africa (6)	Chad, Cameroon, Congo Republic, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, Sao Tome and Principe
Total AU (40)	40 member states + 1 (DRC, scheduled accession at 30 th APR Forum on 25 March 2021) 23 countries completed first generation peer reviews 3 countries completed second generation peer reviews

Source: APRM (2016:12)

From Table 3.5 above, the membership distribution reflects coverage of all of the African regions which suggests that the mechanism is reaching maturity with ascension of 41 countries, 24 countries having undergone first assessment and four (4) second generation peer reviews including Uganda as the case of interest.

This study however argues that despite the increased membership of participating countries as reflected, the limited awareness of the APRM to many of the African people especially in local governments has affected the extent of stakeholder participation for improved service delivery. Under the current renewal strategy (2020-2024), the AU Summit prioritised universal accession and set the deadline of 2023 for attaining full membership of 54 AU countries to participate in peer reviews. This is intended to realise the January 2018 resolution adopted at the AU Assembly at its 30th Ordinary Session calling for accelerated membership of the remaining countries to attain a target of universal accession to the APRM by 2023. Therefore, it can be observed that while the deadline of 2023 is closing in, 13 countries are yet to undergo base reviews while among those reviewed, compliance to the process and implementing recommendations made in the NPoAs are still a challenge. In light of the emerging issues on the continent, the study observes that the APRM not only needs to enhance its framework, but also how the member states are prepared to adopt the digital economy in terms of resilience and adaptation to the post Covid-19 emerging world. The existing APRM guidelines pay limited attention to the political context in the review process, fails to capture the symbolic and conceptual use of the APRM, as well as their potential to translate into direct and intended use. An enhanced framework provides a more holistic approach towards understanding the APRM influence; and to establish what works and what doesn't in the African context as well as how it can be improved.

3.5.5 Contingencies in the APRM environment

The contingencies in any evaluation environment are presented by Mark and Henry (2004:46) to include facilitating conditions, inhibiting factors and competing processes. Key among the facilitating factors favouring the APRM's influence of national policies of member countries is the personal involvement and secured buy in by Heads of States and Governments at the national level of their country peer review processes, which offers the APRM the necessary right to access, collect and analyse sensitive information across all governance areas. In addition, there is the improved organisational capacity of the APRM to deliver on its mandates over time, which has been growing over the years with more reviews conducted and reports tabled in comparison to the previous years. Among the most critical achievements is the ability of the continent to establish the mechanism as a home-grown solution to

its governance problems. Tshiyoyo (2017:175) indicates that the establishment of the APRM by the AU is a major indicator of the African leaders' commitment to promote Africa's own agenda. This is in line with the decision of the Special Summit of 2016 which emphasised that "democracy, good governance and socio-economic transformation cannot be contracted to external parties", hence it is entrusted to an African institution. Although criticised by scholars like Gruzd (2010:6) for a weak enforcement mechanism of its recommendations, the mechanism has for the last 19 years grown to attract confidence through increased membership and acceptance, as well as international recognition as an African innovative governance evaluation framework.

3.5.5.1 Inhibiting factors

Inhibiting factors are those conditions working against the evaluation influence of the APRM on policies of member states. The compliance gap affecting the APRM's influence have been attributed largely to political and socio-cultural factors (Bosman & Clifford 2021:36). Regarding political factors, the oversight and objectivity in the review process are affected by the weak democracy promoting institutions such as the regulatory capacity of the judiciary and the legislative branch that remain ineffective in checking the strong presidential powers to ensure compliance (Adele-Jinadu (2019:21). In many cases, stakeholders aligned to the regime use their power to manipulate the process in their favour, while in other cases, those in opposition use it as an opportunity to present anti-government propaganda and allegations of power abuse (Jiboki & Okeke-Uzodike 2016:62). The executive dominance is attributed to the wider political culture in many member states where constitutional provisions for separation of powers are established to ensure that checks and balances are not observed in practice (Sore 2014:24).

With reference to the socio-cultural factors, Africa is not a single country but 54 countries at different levels of development, over 1.4 billion people, 3000 ethnic groupings, located in almost 7 different time zones, 7 climatic conditions, all of which make it challenging for effective domestication (Bosman & Clifford (2021:36) . The diversity in socio-cultural factors require going the extra mile to establish what works under what circumstances as opposed to the one size fits all imported policy

interventions conditioned by the western world. The APRM Statute 2016 (Article 4) provides for “full participation of all stakeholders” in the review process, but its implementation is yet to be observed. Due to the open nature of the policy process, such differences in socio-cultural factors allow the political stakeholders much more power to drive the APRM process in comparison with other stakeholders. Therefore, there is a need to reappraise the values and ideals of the mechanism as originally intended for the African context. Further challenges can be seen in the limited awareness of the APRM to many of the African people, especially in local governments. In addition, language translation of documents has affected the extent of stakeholder participation for improved service delivery (Gboyega 2019:24). In so doing, they determine the extent to which external accountability mechanisms can be enforced within participating states. This study argues that in light of the above context of the APRM evaluation system, generating better explanations for understanding the internal workings of complex evaluations system will go a long way in enhancing its mandate to influence policies.

3.6 APRM EFFORTS TOWARDS MANAGING THE REFUGEE CHALLENGE IN AFRICA

Africa is increasingly characterised by millions of refugees, making it one of the topmost challenges of the continent. In Africa, despite the enormous but largely emergency efforts towards refugees’ assistance, it is increasingly becoming a norm for such refugees to reside in exile for protracted periods (Ramadan 2010; Hunter 2009). According to Kaiser (2005:351), many of these are refugees in a protracted situation and there are those who have spent over five years without returning to their countries of origin due to internal conflicts and lack of immediate prospects, while efforts such as repatriation as a solution have not yielded the desired impact.

In the analysis of the APRM and refugee trends in Africa, Mongae (2016:7) emphasises the APRM’s concern for refugees as one the continent’s top challenges. According to Mongae (2016:7), Africa is the continent with the highest numbers of refugees, having tripled in just a decade from 2.2 to 6.3 million in 2019. This constitutes about 27% of the world refugees, and the AU declared 2019 a year of

refugees, along side the returnees and displaced persons on the continent. The UNHCR (2004a:1) indicates that there is a growing trend that many refugees' rights and essential economic, psychological and social needs stay unfulfilled over years while in exile. The impact has been manifested in reduced willingness of host governments to provide long-term asylum and resorting to refugees' encampment, and a decline in international donors' funding towards prolonged care and maintenance activities. Therefore, such a situation has raised challenges to all actors involved, including the UNCHR, humanitarian donors and host governments requiring the intervention of the African Union to influence favourable policies through its agencies like the APRM.

Following the ideology of Pan-Africanism, the OAU Convention of 1969 spells out the protocol and the expected hospitality of African states towards the refugees on the continent. According to the UNHCR (2001), "the OAU Convention is the only legally binding regional refugee treaty" complementing the 1951 Refugee Convention as a universal instrument regarding the status of refugees. Under Article 1(2) of the 1969 OAU Convention, the definition of a refugee is broadened by providing that "the term refugee shall also apply to every person who, owing to external aggression, occupation, foreign domination or events seriously disturbing public order in either part or whole of his country of origin or nationality, is compelled to leave his place of habitual residence in order to seek refuge in another place outside his country of origin or nationality". This implies that since then, governments in Africa have the obligation under Article 2(1) of the said convention to receive and offer refuge or grant asylum to all those who fit into the above status as defined by the convention. The same article provides that "Member states of the OAU shall use their best endeavours consistent with their respective legislation to receive refugees and to secure the settlement of those refugees who, for well-founded reasons, are unable or willing to return to their country of origin or nationality". Therefore, the African countries which are signatories to the convention and now members of the AU are under obligation not only to receive refugees running away from insecurity and persecution from their home countries, but also to offer them appropriate sanctuary with deserving entitlements and rights.

Since 2003, the APRM's concern for the refugees' problem has been reflected in its efforts to evaluate member countries' refugee policies. Under the first APRM thematic area of democracy and political governance, national policies and practices for refugee management are evaluated in two objectives. The first objective is constructive management of inter-state conflicts and protecting the rights of refugees, while Objective Nine is about managing diversity in which refugees are included as vulnerable persons (APRM Base Document 2003:349). Considering the AU's commitment to managing the refugee crisis as a top continental challenge, (AU ECHO 2019), the study takes a case of one of the most widely recognised best practices of the model refugee policy implementation in Uganda where refugee programs have been integrated in the National Development Plans as a learning experience for other African Countries. The United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR 2019:18), ranks Africa as the most affected continent by the refugee crisis in the world, while Uganda is ranked the largest refugee-hosting country on the continent.

3.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter presented the background and analysed the different elements constituting the methodology of the APRM evaluation system as a contextually and culturally adaptive home-grown framework. In the context of this study, the significance of this chapter lies in showing the continental standards that constitute the basis on which the extent to which compliance and influence to national policies can be assessed. It began with conceptualisation of the term peer review, followed by a discussion of the background to the APRM as a home-grown type of Made in Africa Evaluation approach towards the realisation of Agenda 2063. It traced the introduction of evaluation practice in Africa influenced by the development agencies, the governance challenges to Africa's democratic path highlighting the forces behind the evolution from OAU to NEPAD, and consequently the APRM as an agency of the AU. Furthermore, the chapter discussed the development of the APRM continental framework, the key stages in its development, and efforts to enhance influence were analysed. Finally, the last section analysed the degree of influence of the evaluation inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes on the national policies, as well as the efforts towards addressing the refugee challenge in Africa.

CHAPTER FOUR: THE EVALUATION PRACTICE OF THE APRM IMPLEMENTATION IN UGANDA

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on the domestication and practise of the APRM evaluation system in Uganda. It follows Chapter Three, which presented the standard APRM evaluation system in Africa as institutionalised from the continental guidelines to the participating countries. To contextualise the APRM evaluation practice in Uganda, the chapter draws from secondary sources of literature to address the study questions. The chapter seeks to asses: the role of the APRM evaluation process (inputs, activities and outputs) in influencing the type of use or non-use, and the role of the APRM stakeholders' participation in influencing the type of use or non-use of APRM data in Uganda's policy process. Lastly, is the extent to which the context of the APRM system influences the type of use or non-use in Uganda's refugee policy framework as a best practice. The study adopts a case analysis approach to assess the use and influence of the APRM evaluation system on Uganda's public policy.

This chapter four is organised based on the elements of Mark and Henry's (2004:43) schematic framework to examine how the APRM evaluation system operates through the inputs, activities, outputs and outcomes to bring about influence in public policy. Drawing from multiple secondary sources of literature, the chapter presents a case analysis of the two APRM generation reviews, showing the extent to which use and influence were realised in Uganda's public policy. In addition, the analysis makes comparison with successful innovations in other APRM member states such as the innovations in South Africa's review and the collapsed process in Mauritius' peer review from which to draw lessons.

4.2 BACKGROUND TO APRM IMPLEMENTATION IN UGANDA

Uganda acceded to the APRM in 2003, as one of the pioneer countries that voluntarily offered to undergo a base review in 2005, thereby allowing the mechanism and its findings to inform its development framework (NPA-CSAR 2007:23). Prior to introduction of the APRM, Basheka and Byamugisha (2015:80)

indicate that institutionalisation of similar participatory approaches to development had been adopted in tracking the implementation progress of the poverty reduction strategies. Related approaches were adopted in the implementation of the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP), which was characterised by inclusion of multiple stakeholders. Angey-Ufoyuru (2012:16) explains that non-state actors such as CSOs were involved in monitoring the implementation of the PEAP and the Medium-Term Expenditure Frameworks, a role they continued to play in the implementation of the APRM. The country had implemented two phases of the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) from 1997 to 2002, and cabinet had resolved to end it for a longer term strategy (CRR 2007:19). Therefore, the APRM was adopted at a time when the country was going through a transition to a new dispensation aimed at realising the Development Vision 2040 by implementing five-year National Development Plans (NDPs).

When the process of country self-assessment in Uganda was launched on the 9th February 2007, the APRM MOU (2003:341) required participating countries to ensure that CSOs mobilise and collect citizens' priorities for integration into the National Development Plan (NDP), promote citizen monitoring of POA, disseminate APRM information and sustain post peer review dialogues. In implementing this first review, comprehensive research approach to data collection was adopted involving "desk research, 200 expert panel interviews, 98 focus group discussions, and a national sample survey involving 1,588 households" (NPoA 2009:34). In addition were consultations in all of the country's regions, public hearings as well as memoranda submitted by different interest groups for validation. A total of 307 recommendations were generated to address the identified governance gaps, out of which 200 were adopted to constitute the first draft NPoA. In December 2007, the plan was submitted to the National Planning Authority (NPA), a statutory agency mandated by the NPA Act (2002:8), to integrate the APRM into the country's planning process and generate comprehensive development plans for Uganda. Consequently, the implementation of the NPoA is said to have started from 1st July 2008, for the first three years between 2008/9 and 2010/11.

4.2.1 Uganda governance context covering the period under peer review

Uganda is a land locked country located in East Africa whose economic and political landscape have been greatly shaped by its colonial heritage. Since gaining its independence in 1962, it was characterised by eight successive changes in government, without elections but instability attributed to ideological, religious and ethnic differences (NPA-NPoA 2009:28). In 1986, the National Resistance Movement (NRM) captured power through a five-year war, decentralised the system, stabilised the economy, emphasised respect for human rights, although maintained a no-party system until 2005. The NRM Government oversaw the promulgation of the 1995 Constitution, introduced a multi-party democracy system in 2005, and held periodic elections in 2006, 2011, 2016 and 2021 (NPoA 2021:3). Policies and strategies were introduced to transform the structure of the economy, from a predominantly rural agricultural economy to a growing service and industrial sector. By 2003 when the APRM was introduced, the country enjoyed relative peace and stability except for the war in Northern Uganda, which lasted from 1986 to 2006. According to the CSAR (2017:XV), Uganda registered significant progress between the first generation review in 2008 and the second generation review in 2017 across the different thematic areas of governance. Below is a highlight of the major issues and best practices reported.

In the democracy and political governance (DPG) thematic area, the NPA-CSAR 2017:3) indicates that regular elections have been organised every five years with citizen participation at all levels, although the electoral process still needs further strengthening. As a best practice, the CSAR (2017:15) recognises Uganda's 9th Parliament for having had the 7th biggest number of female members of parliament in Africa. Among the current major concerns are: a dominant executive constraining the performance of the judiciary and parliament, unfair competition for political power, constitutional amendments like the removal of presidential term limits and age limits, land conflicts, corruption and violation of human rights by security agencies (CCR 2018:48). Overall, the country is reported to have signed and ratified most of the standards and codes intended to promote good political governance.

In the thematic area of economic governance and management, the Cabinet Secretariat has adopted policies to advance economic management, sound public

finance management policies, to be fighting money laundering and corruption, as well as accelerating regional integration (NPA-CSAR 2017:128). The country has since enjoyed a relatively steady economic growth with support from the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), having benefited from the Highly Indebted Poor Country's Initiative (HIPC). To further reconstruct the economy, the country implemented two phases of PEAP (1997-2008), and three National Development Plans 2009/10-2014/15 to the current 2020-2021-2025/26. As a best practice, Uganda was recognised for having kept a good macroeconomic framework through which it was able to stabilise the monetary economy and check inflation (CSAR 2017:132). However, the country has experienced persistent economic challenges as highlighted by the CRR (2018:98) to include: weak institutional capacity to implement adopted policies, corruption, volatile foreign exchange, weak demand for exports worsening her trade balance, relies heavily on foreign aid, as well as experiencing challenges in economic diversification among others.

In terms of socio-economic development, strategies were put in place to encourage broad based participation in development gender equality, as well as reducing poverty and unemployment through successive National Development Plans since 2010 (NPA-CSAR 2017:304). Although the country has been greatly affected by HIV/AIDs with the prevalence at 18.5%, significant improvements in access to basic health services and essential drugs have been registered.

Furthermore, the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the SDGs, resulted in reasonable investments in promoting gender balance, agriculture and education to reduce poverty levels which reduced from 38.8% in 2001 to 19.7% in 2016 (NPA-CSAR 2017:428). As a best practice, Uganda was recognised for its exemplary refugee policy framework which grants freedom and protection to all refugees, including freedom of movement, property rights, the right to work and access to public services, all of which offer lessons to other refugee hosting countries (CRR 2018:232). Another good practice is the introduction and scaling up of the Social Assistance Grant Empowerment (SAGE) as social security cash transfers to elderly people in 55 districts by 2020 (NPA-CSAR 2017:304). While primary education enrolment greatly improved, completion rates have remained stagnant at 40%. However, persistent challenges have been

identified in the country's population being predominantly young people with 59.3% below the age of 20 years, which makes the country one of the youngest in the world, yet with high levels of youth unemployment (UBOS 2021:13).

Regarding corporate governance, while the government has put in place a regulatory framework to enforce good corporate governance practices, varying levels of implementation have been recorded across private and public corporate entities (CSAR 2017:XV). Institutions like the Equal Opportunities Commission have been put in place to ensure that equal rights are enjoyed by the vulnerable persons, although disparities continue to exist across regions as well as between the rural and urban areas. Persistent challenges have been identified by the NPoA (2009:28) as limited progress made in company registration due to few incentives for SMEs, no mechanism for funding non-state enterprises, as well as a policy framework for regulating micro-finance institutions and SACCOs and managing social security. Others highlighted by the CRR (2018:152) include an unfavourable environment for doing business characterised by limited access to finance, under-developed infrastructure, poor work ethics and high taxes, all of which call for reforms. The study observes that while the above policy changes may not be entirely attributed to the APRM implementation, the potential influence of each of the key elements of the system in each review can be examined.

4.2.1.1 The effects of the APRM process: Evaluation use and influence attributes in the context of APRM implementation in Uganda

To contribute towards addressing the problem of the missing middle, in understanding the influence of the APRM system, the chapter takes a mechanism-based approach to analyse evaluation influence in each of the two APRM generation reviews in Uganda. Furthermore, consideration is also given to the potential uses which Van Dororeen *et al.* (2010:100) summarise into three areas, namely steering and control, learning and giving account of performance in policy implementation.

Taking a mechanism-based approach, to analyse the two APRM generation reviews in Uganda, the chapter follows Mark and Henry's (2004:43) evaluation influence framework which indicates that "each of the evaluation process/outcomes can be an outcome of evaluation and can also be an underlying mechanism leading to some

other outcome". They explain that evaluation influence is affected by various factors that include evaluation inputs, activities, outputs and contingencies in the environment, which constitute the major elements along which each generation review took place. Mark and Henry (2004:43) detail the first factor as evaluation inputs, with attributes which include: communication, human resource expertise, instructions, financial resources and time. Selected inputs applicable in the APRM system are identified for further analysis in this chapter.

The second factor is the evaluation activities which are presented as stakeholder participation, evaluation planning and design, data collection, analysis, development of conclusions and recommendations, generation and dissemination of reports (Mark & Henry 2004:43). The third factor is the evaluation outputs with attributes that include: responsiveness, credibility, sophistication, communication and timeliness. In addition, the fourth factor is contingencies in the environment/policy setting which include: facilitating, competing and inhibiting factors such as micro politics, culture of evaluation, administrative/management support and information needs among others. As a result, the above factors lead to immediate and long-term outcomes through the general mechanisms with attributes such as: justification, persuasion, salience, skill acquisition, policy deliberation, coalition formation and standard setting.

Relatedly, reference is made to the compliance to the APRM standards and codes covered in the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (APRM-MOU 2003:9), the Base Document (2003), the APRM Guidelines for Country Review (2003), the APRM Statute (2016) and the APRM Guidelines (2016:22) among others. Therefore, using a case analysis approach, the following section presents a discussion of the first-and second-generation reviews to establish their degree of influence on the country's policies.

4.3 CASE ONE: THE FIRST-GENERATION OF THE APRM EVALUATION IN UGANDA (2005-2015)

Uganda's first generation peer review officially started on 15th February 2005 when the President Yoweri Museveni signed an MOU on the country's technical

assessment with the APR support mission's lead person (NPA-CSAR 2007:7). The Government of Uganda in observing the APRM Guidelines for Country Review (2003) committed to establish appropriate structures within a period of one and half years (APRM-GoU 2005:23). In addition, was the commitment to ensure access to all of the relevant information, facilitate wide stakeholder consultations, and ensure their safety and logistical support. At the end of the review, a CRR was generated reflecting major governance challenges that the country faced in relation to the four thematic areas and it was presented at the 9th Summit of the APR Forum in Egypt on the 29th of June 2008 (CRR 2009:2). Consequently, according to the NPoA Progress Report (2009:34), the country embarked on the annual tracking of the implementation of its first NPoA, which covered the period from July 2009 until June 2015, when the country presented its fourth NPoA Progress Report.

4.3.1 The effect of evaluation process on the type of use and non-use of APRM in Uganda's public policy

Guided by the objectives of the study, the next section analyses the evaluative influence of the elements in the review process. It follows the logic presented by Mark and Henry (2023:43), which includes inputs (evaluation plans, the questionnaire, financial inputs, human resources), activities, (methods and best practices) and evaluation output (reporting and dissemination) as discussed below.

4.3.1.1 The effects of the evaluation inputs

There are inputs into the evaluation context or policy setting for which adaptation is required to positively enhance use and influence. The evaluation inputs are tangible and intangible resources required in implementing a policy intervention to realise the desired results. In the context of the APRM evaluation system, the APRM Statute (2016:23) identifies the major inputs in the APRM to include the plans and best practices, financial inputs, human resources and the master questionnaire tool which are analysed in the following section.

(a) The APRM evaluation plans and best practices

The plans include guidelines and schedules aimed at ensuring that implementation is conducted legally, ethically and in compliance to the best practices, two of which were released in preparation. In September 2005, the original schedule was agreed

upon between the Government of Uganda and the support mission team. It envisaged the submission of both the CSAR and draft NPoA in December 2005 and the response to the CRR from the Continental Secretariat by June 2006 (NPA, APRM Mission Report (2005:8). However, it was disrupted by the election campaign which was characterised by diverting the budget, public attention and aspects of violence, stalling the process until May 2006, after swearing in the newly elected government (Uganda-NEPAD 2008:17). The commission developed a second road map that envisaged submission of the CSAR in January 2008 as indicated in Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1: The second peer review roadmap for Uganda 2006

Timelines	Planned activities
May 2006	Public awareness sensitisation at regional and national level
September 2006	Selection and building partnerships with TPIs, domestication of questionnaire and desk research
February 2007	Launch of field research and inauguration of the commission by the president of Uganda
February-March 2007	Carry out rational sensitisation and consultations with all stakeholders
April-May 2007	Undertake the technical assessments in preparation of the CSAR, which includes finalisation of the research instruments, questionnaire domestication, field work interviews, FGDs, national surveys, and stakeholder interactions
June 2007	Preparation of the CSAR, the NPoA and validation
July-August 2007	Submission of the CSAR and NPoA to the panel and preparation of the issue paper by the panel
August–Septembers 2007	Country Review Mission
March 2008	Draft Country Review Report
April 2008	Government response in 21 days

April 2008	Review and costing of NPoA taking into account CRM recommendations
June 2008	Peer review of Uganda
2008/2009	Incorporation of NPoA into the National Development Plan and National Budget

Source: NPA-CSAR (2006:23)

Table 4.1 reflects an initial comprehensive schedule which was adopted. Several activities were planned for the review process where the main ones included development of the draft CSAR and NPoA by June 2007, country review by September 2007 and finally the country's final peer review by the APR Forum in June 2008. However, Mbaziira (2008:11) maintains that the dates changed again for some activities due to other contextual factors, but the country's peer review by the APR Forum was observed in June 2008. The study believes that, timing being a major factor in determining the degree of influence, chances of instrumental use began to reduce with the changes in schedule, which negatively affected the realisation of instrumental use in influencing national policies and budgets in Uganda.

In terms of best practices, a communication and advocacy strategy were unveiled in March 2006, at a meeting with various stakeholders at the beginning of the first generation review. Aketch (2019:13) emphasises that in preparation for peer review, the country is expected to undertake stakeholder sensitisation prior to the field consultations, government engagements and validation of the draft Country Self-Assessment Report (CSAR). The NPA-CSAR (2007:2) reports that initially, there were many perceptions of NEPAD among Ugandans which had to be corrected through a robust strategy covering various media platforms.

As a major input, the public awareness about the APRM implementation is informed by the NPA Communication and Advocacy Strategy for NEPAD/APRM-Uganda (2006:2) which states the objectives. First, is to promote appreciation and in-depth understanding of the NEPAD objective and message to the wider public. Secondly, is to secure buy-in and commitment of the various stakeholders, especially the development partners for funding support, and policy makers to support policies in line with this new development agenda. The NPA-CSAR (2007:21) identifies the

publicity activities for the process to include “newspaper placements in national and regional (Vernacular papers), over 30 interactive radio and TV programmes, radio advocacy messages, announcements and jingles on most FM radios and national stations, printing of publicity materials, e.g. brochures, posters, billboards, banners and branded apparels among others...” (CRR 2009:14). In doing so, participating stakeholders were equipped with the relevant knowledge of the APRM and were informed of the appropriate roles expected of them. In comparison, the South African CRR (2007:23) equally attributes the success in the first generation of its peer review process to such extensively wide media coverage.

However, although to some extent publicity and outreach efforts were registered, a concern of limited publicity and late submission was raised. Tindifa and Luutu (2011:37) argue that some stakeholders reported that the media’s role remained marginal and limited to message transmission through the process. Therefore, resource constraints were identified to have had a negative effect on the communication, policy learning and motivation, limiting the potential for instrumental use of APRM data.

(b) The APRM funding inputs

After acceding to the APRM, in 2003, each APRM member state was obliged to pay USD 100,000 to the trust fund in addition to funding of the peer review process (the Base Document 2003). Upon signing a MoU with the APRM Continental Secretariat, the NPA-APRM Mission Report (2005:8) indicated that the Government of Uganda went further to invite development partners to support the peer review process. However, the chair of the panel of eminent persons had to intervene, insisting that the process could only be African-owned if the participating country contributed before the donors. In response to the chair’s concerns, an initial contribution which covered about 12% of the NPA’s budget for the financial year 2005 was provided by government in addition to office space for the secretariat and payment of utilities (*The East African*, 30 October 2006).

The delay in funding according to the Focal Point Minister was attributed to the 2006 elections that had consumed much from that year’s financial budget and yet the country also had to budget for the hosting of the Commonwealth Heads of State and Government Meeting (CHOGM) the following year in Kampala (NPA-APRM Mission

Report 2005:10). Hopeful about this inclusive approach, development partners extended financial input, especially in the integration and implementation of the costed NPoA into the country's NDP by different MDAs. The NPA-CSAR (2008:20) indicates that among the donors that responded to support both the review process and NPoA implementation were the UNDP, DANIDA, DFID, the AfDB and GIZ, and together they made contributions from 2006 to 2008 as reflected in the following table.

Table 4.2: Distribution of donor funds to the APR process between 2006 and 2008

Donor	2006		2007		2008		Total
	US\$	Ug Sh	US\$	Ug Sh	US\$	Ug Sh	Ug Sh
UNDP	0	630,000,400	US\$	620 631 435		762,075,321	2,012,707,156
DANIDA	0			694,200,000		152,894,603	694,200,000
DFID	0			823,530,998			976,425,601
AfDB	0			697,644,000		140,332,112	697,644,000
GTZ	0		80000	187,464,066	58,000		327,934,178
TOTAL		630,000,400	80000	302,347,049.9	58,000	105,530,203.6	4,708,910,935

Source: Tindifa and Luutu (2011:12)

With reference to the trend in Table 4.2 above, donor support greatly enabled government allocations to POA to increase from about USD 4.7 to about USD 4.9 for a period of three years (NPA-CSAR 2006:23). Relatedly, further prioritisation in budgetary allocation improved as the NPoA Progress Report (2009:178) indicates that approved government allocations to POA Vote Functions constituted 80% of governments' programmed budget allocations between 2008/9 to 2010/11 as reflected in the following table.

Table 4.3: Funding allocations for the POA between 2008 and 2011

POA Allocations	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12
Total GoU allocations to POA VFs (USD, billions)	2.295	2.242	2.471	7.008
Allocations to POA VFs as a share of the approved total POA Allocation	32.7%	32.0%	35.3%	100.0%
POA allocations as a share of the programmed GoU annual spending	80.33%	79.43%	78.90%	79.53%

Source (NPoA 2009:178)

Considering the shared mandate for the implementation of NPOA in terms of cost sharing between government (71.4%), NGOs (7%) and 24.9% shared jointly, the increased financial input from government was an indicator of collective level influence towards realising instrumental use of the APRM data. By comparison, Bunwaree (2007:17) argues that it is such inadequate resources that explain the collapse of the Mauritius first generation review. Therefore, it can be observed that the lack of a sustainable and timely domestic source of funding and continued reliance on the development partners attracted the risk of external influence on prioritised policy reforms, leading to conceptual use without actual implementation of national policies.

(c) The Human Resource expertise

With the evaluation capacity being a key factor in evaluation use and influence, the Base Document (2003:3) provides for recruitment of experts through Technical Research Institutions (TRIs) to conduct research used for generating the CSAR. In the context of the first review, it is reported that the consultants in the TPIs were appointed by the NPA under the supervision of the NGC through a rigorous selection process. The NPA-CSAR (2008:17) details how each of the thematic teams were constituted from an initial shortlist of 12 to eight consultant groups that the NPA presented in September 2005 to the support mission for the first phase of desk research and questionnaire domestication and generation of a CSAR. Mbaziira (2007:12) explains that using their expertise in the different thematic areas and the

ToRs, the consultants carried out the task of questionnaire domestication and reformulation, despite its complex nature and inability to translate some concepts. This collaborates with the NPA-CSAR (2008:18) which connotes that in the field work phase, out of further screening, five teams were retained. This reported rigour suggests a competitive process which leads to credible reporting that motivates stakeholders towards instrumental use of findings.

However, the NPA-CSAR (2008:18) indicates that some weaknesses were reported in the process of appointing TPIs which led to some being reshuffled repeatedly. In the final analysis, the CRR (2007:14-15), the debate on the quality of the recruitment process of the TPIs remained a concern, with claims that the recruitment process especially for the second phase was not so straight forward, and that there was no advertisement. On the one hand, Tindifa and Luutu (2011:9) report that consultants were simply invited to tender in their inception reports without being advertised, while others were allies of the ruling party. They add that as a result, the data collection and analysis turned out to be costly, as some TPIs performed poorly in the desk research and were dropped. Yet even those considered for the second level of fieldwork faced serious challenges with conducting the self-assessment. On the other hand, the commissioner who was heading the unit overseeing the APRM in the Finance Ministry, insisted that the procurement guidelines as stated in the Public Procurement and Disposal of Assets (PPDA-2003), as well as the donor guidelines, were fully followed, otherwise funds wouldn't be released.

To emphasise the importance of this technical expertise, Bunwaree (2007:15) points out that one of the major reasons for the collapse of the review process in Mauritius was the lack of expertise to adapt to the questionnaire. He explains that "the complexities and length of the questionnaire meant that many participants did not then actively participate in the process", denying many stakeholders ownership, use and consequently influence.

(d) The APRM questionnaire

The master questionnaire sent from the Continental Secretariat is a key tool used for guiding the collection of technical data (Mbaziira 2007:9). It covers the sections of the four thematic areas of economic governance and management, corporate governance and socio-economic development, democracy and political governance.

For each of the thematic areas, it contains the objectives, questions and indicators which must be reformulated and domesticated to the Ugandan context, so that relevant data is collected during the field work (APRM Questionnaire 2003). In the case of Uganda's first review, to ensure that the standard guidelines were observed, the NPA APRM-Mission Report (2005:18) indicates that a questionnaire contextualisation workshop was organised for the TPIs and facilitated by the research methodologist from the Continental Secretariat on 27th October 2005. Another workshop on questionnaire administration took place between 14th and 15th December 2005 (NPoA Progress Report 2009:34). Emphasis was placed on the centrality of the tool in ensuring participation of various interest groups with consideration of factors such as region and gender, as well as rural-urban divide. It was pre-tested among expert panel interviews in twelve districts (NPA 2005:2). However, certain weaknesses associated with the tool and its application were reported in the CRR (2009:13). Firstly, the tool sent from the Continental Secretariat was a bulky document of about 88 pages. It was composed of 89 questions for the thematic area of democracy and political governance, 53 questions for socio economic development, 82 questions for corporate governance and economic governance and the management section had 47 questions (UBOS 2007). Besides, little time was given to respondents, which did not allow them to comprehend the questions in the adapted questionnaire used in the survey, leading to minimal response rate.

Secondly, the questionnaire was prepared only in English with technical wording that is easily understood by only highly knowledgeable policy specialists. While the APRM Guidelines (2003) required that TPIs develop simpler versions translated into local languages, the NPA-CSAR (2005:18) reports that the TPIs raised the challenge of the questionnaire lacking conceptual clarity, was repetitive, with questions on some issues re-appearing across sections and was too big for its domestication. By comparison, Mbaziira (2007:23) observes that lessons can be learnt from Rwanda and Ghana, which whilst conducting their self-assessment emphasised the importance of questionnaire translation into local languages, creating a sense of ownership among stakeholders. This study observes that it is such innovations like simplifying the questionnaire and translating it into the different official languages

which contributed towards South Africa's successful and influential first generation review (South African CRR 2007).

Thirdly, certain questions which were perceived to carry political undertones were left out in the domesticated questionnaire version. Tindifa and Luutu (2011:18) illustrate this concern with an example of questions about Universal Primary Education (UPE), as a result of which critical data on such a major policy was not captured. Therefore, the methodologist advised that the focus is put on only specific sections that require empirical work translation (NPA-CSAR (2005:19), the complex nature of the questionnaire, inability to translate it and the limited time given to the participants not only affected the quality of data, but also increased the likelihood of conceptual and symbolic use in national policies. Therefore, while the required inputs were availed, the concerns raised require examining the activities that followed and their implications to the APRM's influence as highlighted in the next section.

4.3.1.2 The effect of evaluation activities on the type of use and non-use of APRM in Uganda's public policy

The APRM Base Document (2002:3) identifies major activities in the APRM review process to include: collection and analysis of data, development of conclusions and recommendations, reports generation and dissemination of information. While there are four distinct types of reviews, namely base reviews, periodic reviews, targeted reviews and special reviews, this study focuses on activities of the base and periodic review, as explained in Chapter Five. According to Michael (2003:7), the objective of the review activities is to assess accomplishments, identify shortfalls, share advice on certain policy dilemmas, and recommend actions. These are analysed in detail in the context of the APRM's country self-assessment and review processes in which data is collected and reports disseminated as discussed in the next sections.

(a) Data collection and analysis

In the context of Uganda's first review, the CSAR (2006:23) provides a schedule of the data collection and analysis activities, which included three major phases of the development of the draft CSAR and NPoA by June 2007, and a CRR by September 2007. The first major activities are provided for in the NEPAD/APRM Guidelines (2003:19), which is the first phase of preparation for the production of the CSAR. The

CRR (2009:21) presents a highlight of the three phases of the self-assessment to include: firstly, the pre-assessment to sensitise the stakeholders, create awareness of the public and domesticate the questionnaire. Secondly, the assessment stage is the data collection stage which involves using tools like desk research, expert interviews, national surveys, public hearings, as well as receiving of memoranda from different groups. Thirdly, is the post assessment phase, which involves the compilation the thematic reports into the final CSAR. The NEPAD/APRM Guidelines (2003:19) for the review activities require a highly consultative process that is led by the NGC of the country being reviewed, and guided and supported by the APRM Continental Secretariat.

In Uganda's first review, the preparation for collecting self-assessment data was launched officially by President Museveni at a sensitisation workshop in February and the fieldwork was conducted up to December 2007. During the workshops, the recommend methodologies, instruments and techniques such as literature review, desk research, national sample surveys, expert panel interviews as well as the focus group discussions (FGDs) were discussed with the TPIs (NPoA Progress Report 2009:34). Argey-Ufoyuru (2012:23) maintains that during the same event, the commission received memoranda from the different groups of stakeholders.

The NPA Workshop Report for Technical Partner Institutions (2005:2) reports that the data collection process started with gathering pertinent information through the desk research method to generate a background document that reflects a country's governance status on the four APRM thematic areas. The NPA-CSAR (2005: xiv) states that "... the process involved collection and analysis of statistics and data; desk reviews of secondary data, expert panel interviews, views from regional focus group consultations at both national and sub-national levels". The nationwide consultative process included national level sector Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs); the private sector; civil society and non-government organisations; and other non-state actors representing academia and the media to ensure an inclusive development policy process.

Furthermore, the second method of field data collection involved expert interviews. To ensure that quality data is collected, the NPA-CSAR (2005) details that a list of 277 extensively knowledgeable respondents on matters of governance policy in the

questionnaire were sampled from 12 districts. Mbaziira (2007:17) indicates that the fieldwork process involved 20 consultative workshops organised with key stakeholders from the government, political parties, parliament, the judiciary, local government officials and the armed forces. In addition were 200 expert interviews, 100 memoranda by different interest groups, 96 focus group discussions, and public hearings conducted in 13 districts, and five divisions.

However, some concerns were raised about the process. Firstly, commenting on expert interviews, Tindifa and Luutu (2011:18) maintain that the sampling criteria was not clearly understood, even by the field TPIs, since the commissioners were involved in identifying participants especially at the elite level. In the case of corporate governance 100 companies were selected and 57 key experts listed, 24 of which were simply company names while the rest reflected the individuals interviewed together with their firms. Secondly, TPIs raised a concern of the low response rate in comparison to the number of questionnaires given out, which was attributed to poor mobilisation. The CRR (2009:15) presents a case where a TPI assessing the socio-economic development thematic area claimed giving out 214 questionnaires to respondents in the category of members of parliament, political actors, judges and youth, but only received back responses from 50 participants. This reduction in response rate is perceived to have had an effect on the quality of data collected but was enhanced through triangulation of data from other sources.

The third method of data collection involved field national survey. A household survey focusing on similar questions to those in the adapted questionnaire was conducted by the Uganda National Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) in 69 districts covering a sample of 1,588 households (NPA-CSAR 2008:20). To capture the chronically poor people's voices such as peasants during the fieldwork, the report states that a total of 96 FGDs were carried out across the different regions of the country.

However, Tindifa and Luutu (2011:18) argue that the participatory methodologies were not adequately considered in the selection of respondents from stakeholder groups for the field research. There were concerns of unclear procedure for selection of participants in interviews and FGDs, mobilised through the Chief Administrative Officers (CAOs), which could have affected the quality of data arising out of the

biases associated with their positions in the district local governments. It has been argued that due to their loyalty as many top civil servants to the ruling NRM government, they mainly considered respondents who would give credit to the government in their responses, even when they had limited or no awareness about the APRM.

Other challenges were identified by the NPoA Progress Report (2009:34), as inappropriate timing being too close to the politically charged election period, the limited knowledge of the respondents on governance issues investigated, especially corporate governance, inadequate sensitisation from the secretariat, inadequate consultation of rural communities, as well as imbalance in participants considered among political parties. Tindifa and Luutu (2011:35) maintain that lessons could have been drawn from the evaluation of the previous process of the country's Poverty Eradication Action Plan in the 1990s, where participants were drawn from multiple stakeholder civil society groups.

The second major phase is the country review and drafting of the NPoA. In the case of Uganda's first review, upon submission of the CSAR in November 2007, the country review mission visited the country for three weeks between the 3rd and 23rd of February. The CRR (2008:12-13) reports that the mission team conducted four regional consultations with representatives of various stakeholder groups from 81 districts to confirm ownership of the views. Participants were drawn from government institutions, statutory bodies, ministries, the private sector, parliament, the judiciary, civil society, as well as the Juba Peace Talks Team, to verify the issues that emerged from the NPoA and the CSAR. The APRM Guidelines (2003) require report validation to ensure that the contents reflect logical and authentic views from the stakeholders, while building consensus on the best possible ways of addressing the identified governance challenges (Base Document 2003).

Maloka (2019:4) emphasises that the field activities are concluded with validation of the draft report and drafting of the preliminary NPoA which contains proposed solutions to the governance gaps identified. The NPoA composed of costed government priorities presents time bound commitments on the desired priorities in governance and development to be implemented within the next three to five years, with the M&E system (APRM 2017:3). The three levels of validation include internal

validation through regional meetings, internal meetings to confirm the authenticity of the draft report, and external validation by the panel of continental experts sampling from a list of respondents to generate a country review report (CRR). However, the validation methodology had several inherent weaknesses identified by the CRR (2009:36). Firstly, the objective of establishing whether the report content reflected the participants' views and recommendations could not be realised, since it was not the same interviewees but a different set of people who participated. Mbaziira (2007:15) indicates that due to resource constraints, the validation never involved the participants interviewed originally in the field to establish what had been left out. He gave an example where only one out of the 40 sampled respondents were involved in both the stages of the self-assessment.

Related work by Tindifa and Luutu (2011:22) indicates that due to budgetary constraints during validation, some participants were given summaries to avoid the full cost of printing voluminous copies, while the commissioners did not have adequate time to comprehend the 300-page content from the thematic reports compiled by the TPIs (Tindifa & Luutu (2011:22)). As a result, no feedback was given to confirm that validation reflected the correct submissions from the stakeholders' minds, since in some cases validation was not based on a detailed report making, it hard for participants to comprehend and verify the content. In line with this argument, Mbaziira (2007:6) insists that the process of selecting representatives of CSOs was not considered transparent enough to reflect the broad membership. He maintains that during the validation, participants who disagreed with the report content would have their views simply ignored and left out despite their strength. Therefore, the inability to comply with the set standards had implications on the legitimacy of the data collection, its quality and consequently the degree of influence that the reports had on the country's policies.

(b) Report generation

The third major phase is the country review reporting and modification of the NPoA. The preparation for the CRR was launched by President Museveni on 7th February 2008. The Country Review Team (CRT) led by designated eminent person is supported by the national APR secretariat to prepare a CCR (CRR 2009:35). To do so, this are based on the aggregated information from the background document, the

CSAR, as well as the consultations with different stakeholders on the governance situation in the country under review. Consequently, the report was reviewed by cabinet with a consolidated report for validation and was subsequently presented at the APR Forum by the President. It is important to note that the methodological challenges reported in the earlier process spill over to affect the content and quality of the CRR, which negatively affects the motivation for instrumental use.

The fourth major phase is peer review at the APR Forum. Uganda's first peer review took place in June 2008, at the APR Forum attended by thirteen heads of state in Sharm El-Sheikh in Egypt. The country review mission chair, Prof. Adedeji, presented Uganda's progress since the 1980s, the best practices and challenges reflected in the CRR. In its findings the CRR (2007:23) states that "Uganda has a good record of complying with democracy and good political governance principles, standards and codes. There are about 80 instruments relevant to political governance, out of which Uganda has ratified 44". However, Mbaziira (2008:1) argues that it may be a wrong premise to judge a country's performance based on ratification and domestication of international standards, since implementation may not take place.

The President presented the government's response to the CRR in which he argued that while the government acknowledged some findings and provided explanations, there were some falsifications, misinterpretations and misrepresentations. He further expressed his agreement with a number of the findings on issues like the country's high population growth rate, macro-economic reforms, trade liberalisation as well as the poor policy implementation (CRR 2009:23). However, he also objected to a number of issues, to which he provided explanations to his peers and the basis for his objection was the loopholes in the methodology adopted.

(c) Information dissemination

The final major activity is the publication of the CRR and the final NPoA and consequent tracking of implementation. Uganda's POA was published on the NPA and APRM Uganda websites as a form of dissemination of the APRM findings. However, it can be noted that limited access by all stakeholders becomes a hindrance to direct and timely action on policy recommendations by the concerned stakeholders, especially in government MDAs. Moreover, while a lead consultant

supported the monitoring of POA activities among MDAs for the fiscal year 2008/9, the NPoA Progress Report (2009:37) indicates that the process was largely bureaucratised among the technical people with few key informant interviews of key stakeholders from implementing MDAs. The CSOs were left to conduct a parallel monitoring under their umbrella body of the Uganda Governance Monitoring Platform, funded by the development partners.

Therefore, an assessment of the activities of the review process emphasised major methodological shortcomings. For example, Tindifa and Luutu (2011:19) insist that while it was reported to be satisfactory to the commission, they question the sample size of 10,000 out of a population of about 25 million. Similarly, such methodological loopholes in the process of implementing the mechanism for the basis of the researcher's justification for this study contributes towards addressing them and ensuring more instrumental use in influencing stakeholders and ultimately national policy.

4.3.1.3 The effects of the evaluation outputs on the type of use or non-use of APRM in Uganda's public policy

The output from the above APRM activities are the compiled final reports which include the CSAR, the CRR and the NPoA and were intended to impact on the country's planning process. At the national level, the CRR (2009:22) indicates that Uganda's CSAR was handed over to the cabinet and the parliament on 20th November 2007, while the draft programme of action was also presented by the commission on 19th January 2008. At the continental level, the first comprehensive CRR was submitted to the secretariat together with the draft NPoA and presented for discussion at the APR Forum of Heads of States and Government. The CRR identified the best practices and governance challenges, and was submitted to the Government of Uganda in March 2008. The draft NPoA is costed to reflect the planned interventions of how the country intends to address the identified governance challenges and is presented to the secretariat. Mark and Henry's (2004:43) evaluation influence framework presents major knowledge attributes for consideration about the outputs to include: credibility, communication, responsiveness, timeliness and sophistication as discussed below.

(a) Responsiveness

In terms of content responsiveness, the NPA-CSAR (2008) had 307 original recommendations and another 156 recommendations were added from the country review consultations, making a total of 463 contained in the revised NPoA. In its findings, the CRR (2007:23) states that “Uganda has a good record of complying with democracy and good political governance principles, standards and codes. There are about 80 instruments relevant to political governance, out of which Uganda has ratified 44”. However, Mbaziira (2008:1) argues that it may be a wrong premise to judge a country’s performance based on ratification and domestication of international standards, since implementation may not take place. While he insists that the basis of a country’s advancement in good governance is assessed on the extent of implementation as opposed to ratification of standards, he acknowledges that the report presents very important information on Uganda’s governance progress and deficiencies.

(b) Credibility

In 2008, as a major indicator of instrumental use, the POA was one of the 23 studies that informed the NDP good governance thematic paper, which was a clear signal by the Government of Uganda to ensure direct use of the APRM recommendations. It was also integrated into Uganda’s national budgets of 2008/2009, 2009/2010, 2010/2011 and funded through the MDA annual budgets under the national Medium–Term Expenditure Framework (Angey-Ufoyuru 2012:21). Furthermore, the NGC later integrated the POA into the 5-year NDP 2010/2011-2014/2015. Since then, the NPA continued to engage with the state and non-state governance actors in coordinating, and evaluating the implementation of the country’s POA. This practice reflects instrumental and intentional use of APRM data in Uganda’s policy process at the national level. In addition, the reports have been used by CSOs as a basis for undertaking policy advocacy, activism and lobbying, while academia uses them to inform further policy research.

(c) Timeliness

To assess the extent of use of such APRM reports, the CRR (2009:34) suggests that the timing of Uganda’s peer review was favourable in promoting a more instrumental use of APRM data. This was because it coincided with the government’s shift from PEAP/PRSP to the five-year NDP I, a factor that could have enabled the mechanism to influence the new national plan’s content. However, Tindifa and Luutu (2011:37)

insist that most of the priorities integrated into the NDP and implemented had already been formulated in the NRM party manifesto for the 2006 elections. This casts doubt on the degree of the APRM influence on the country's policies, making it appear more symbolic than instrumental. Therefore, some commentators believe that while some changes may have been made, they may be a spill over effect from the ruling party manifesto and not necessarily the APRM process or its report.

The researcher observes that while the report identified major issues relevant in addressing governance challenges, changing from conceptual to instrumental use is dependent on the stakeholders' involvement and the contextual factors which are analysed in the later section of this chapter.

4.3.2 Stakeholders' participation in influencing the type of use or non-use of APRM in Uganda's public policy

The APRM participatory philosophy of ensuring involvement of the different governance stakeholders in the country is provided for in the guidelines stipulated in the Base Document (2003). It is worth stressing that while Mark and Henry's (2004:43) framework considers stakeholder participation and selection as one of the attributes in the activities, this study presents it as one of the major factors affecting evaluation use and influence in the context of peer review. The justification was detailed in Chapter Three indicating that since the peer review approach is built on African communal ideology, some elements of the stakeholder analytical framework were adopted for integration into the evaluation influence framework as part of the study's proposed contribution towards a framework for enhancing evaluation use and influence in the APRM evaluation system.

As detailed in Chapter Three, stakeholders are defined by Freeman (2010:25) as individuals, groups of individuals or organisations with interest in a specific policy issue for which their interests affect and are affected by changes in that particular policy. Based on a contractual exchange relationship in decision-making, Sandison (2005:89) classifies stakeholders as internal or external and primary or secondary depending on how their influence and power directly or indirectly affect the policy implementation. In the context of Uganda's first review, the major stakeholders driving the process at the national level include internal stakeholders such as the President's political leadership, the members of parliament, staff in MDAs as state

actors, while external stakeholders include the CSOs and development partners among others. The stakeholders are entitled to participate through representation at the NGC, the consultations, validation, as well as annual monitoring of the NPoA implementation. A case in point is during the country self-assessment process. Mbaziira (2007:11) explains that a total of 20 public consultative workshops were conducted with key stakeholders from within and outside government. Their participation, negotiation and the roles played are considered key in contributing towards the various levels of use as explained in the following section.

4.3.2.1 The President's role in providing political leadership

In terms of influence, the most important source of support to the APRM was from the political leadership. Other attributes include: interest, control of assets, people and finances, as well as personal authority.

(a) Power and influence

As a strong ally to support the mechanism, the ideological factor of the President's belief in the APRM as a Pan African and home grown initiative to solving African problems is a great enabling factor. Informed by the Pan African ideology, the President is largely responsible for decisions like the country acceding to the APRM, signing the MOU on technical assessment, facilitating a transparent review process, and championing and sustaining the review process (NPA CSAR 2008:5). In 2003, Uganda was among the first pioneer set of countries to accede to the APRM on 9th March 2003, together with South Africa, Mauritius, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Mozambique and Egypt (NPA-CSAR 2007:6). The CRR (2009:2) indicates that within a relatively short time, President Museveni also signed an MOU on a technical assessment mission with the APR support mission team on 15th February 2005, making Uganda the seventh country to welcome a voluntary review.

(b) Control over resources

Control over people, assets and finances were another attribute to be considered. To illustrate control, Mbaziira (2007:10) explains that President Museveni's government designated the NPA as the country's Focal Point, a coordination and communication agency mandated to integrate the NEPAD and the APRM into Uganda's National Development Planning processes. In addition, the government embarked on

establishing appropriate structures and institutions within one and a half years to successfully enable the country to undertake self-assessment and adopt a National Programme of Action (NPA-CSAR 2008:7). To ensure effective institutionalisation, the government went further to facilitate bench-marking studies on the experience in structuring the NEPAD/APRM unit in countries like Rwanda, Kenya and South Africa (NPA-CSAR 2008:6).

As an indicator of financial control, Angey-Ufoyuru (2009:23) explains that the government facilitated Uganda's APRM Secretariat to formally start its operations under the NPA and appointed a programme manager followed by recruitment of seven technical staff in September 2006, along with four consultants in each thematic area. Furthermore, the appointment and location of the Focal Point as the Minister for Planning in the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, was a strategic location to guarantee the direct use and integration of findings into the national planning framework, and so was the location of the secretariat in the NPA which is mandated with developing national plans. To further ensure a successful process, the NPA-CSAR (2008:20) indicates that President Museveni's government organised a donor conference to mobilise the necessary resources to support the APRM activities, out of which over USD 1 billion was raised from the UNDP, DANIDA, DFID, the AfDB and GIZ among others.

(d) Power and interest

The power and interest of the political leadership was another attribute identified. In 2007, political leadership was also demonstrated when the cabinet of the Ugandan government adopted the national visioning policy where the planning framework is linked systematically to the long-term and medium planning goals with the short-term priorities and budgets harmonised with the POA (Angey-Ufoyuru (2012:18). It was recommended that the programme of PEAP be phased out in favour of a five-year NDP, and two workshops between 16th to 17th September and 1st to 2nd December 2008 were organised to harmonise the NDP strategies with the NPoA.

The interest and responsibility attributes were another indicator. The President's political leadership was also demonstrated when he personally presented the government's response to the CRR in June 2008, at the APR Forum attended by 13

heads of state in Sharm El-Sheikh in Egypt. The CRR (2009:271) states that on behalf of his government, the President acknowledged some findings and provided explanations, while pointing out what he called some falsifications, misinterpretations and misrepresentations. However, he also objected to a number of issues which included the executive undermining the legislature, escalating corruption, term limits extension, discrimination between local and foreign investors, impunity, donor dependence, unpopular land policy, an inefficient public procurement system, and involvement in inter-state conflicts among others. Therefore, the official commitment of the President before his peers to address the governance concerns raised in the reports poses great influence for his individual decisions and the collective national policy agenda. It is worth noting that while he also outrightly rejected some of the major criticisms raised against his government in the reports, he continued to support the APRM implementation in Uganda.

(e) Influence and interest

As a result of the President's influence and interest, the POA was one of the 23 studies in 2008 that informed the NDP good governance thematic paper and consequently, the POA was integrated into Uganda's national budgets of 2008/2009, 2009/2010, 2010/2011 and funded through the MDA annual budgets under the national Medium–Term Expenditure Framework (NPA-CSAR 2007:21). It has been observed that despite some opposition and scepticism from parliament and cabinet, the first generation APRM activities were sustained by the political will and strong support from the President who overruled the objections raised against the process. On 20th November 2007, when the commission presented the CSAR and the draft NPoA to cabinet, their mandate was questioned by the ruling party members who did not feel that the report content was in their favour. Similarly, when parliament blocked the APRM process, the NPoA Progress Report (2009:34) indicates that “it took the intervention of the President to silence these critics, because as he assured us, it was important to show that the country had nothing to hide”. This suggested commitment to a credible review whose findings can be used for policy improvement.

The NPA and the NGC later integrated the POA into the 5-year NDP 2010/2011-2014/2015. Since then, the President and his government have ensured that annual reports on the implementation of the first NPoA track its implementation for the

period between July 2009 and June 2011. Furthermore, the NPA-CRR (2018:3) indicates in that June 2015, the country presented its fourth NPoA Progress Report implemented between 2011 and 2014, in Johannesburg, South Africa during the 23rd Summit of the APRM. In Uganda, Angey-Ufoyuru (2012:16) maintains that the use of APRM data continues through ensuring budgetary provisions, sharing information of POA implementation progress with the NGC, supporting NGC meetings with policy planning units, and actively participating in preparing and validating the progress reports generated on POA implementation. Mbaziira (2008:2) argues that it is such committed leadership which explains the success registered in countries like South Africa, and the collapse attributed to the lack of it in Mauritius.

However, Tindifa and Luutu (2011:34) state that “while the President’s personal initiative and involvement was looked upon favourably as responsible for moving the process forward, the negative side of it was that it strengthened what in Uganda is termed as ‘presidentialism’ or a ‘presidential project’ which has eroded the system of checks and balances”. This observation created a strong perception among some stakeholders that the APRM is not necessarily an African governance process, but more of a president’s personal project and hence buffering it from the parliamentary oversight. Its continued operation outside the established checks and balances also denied the APRM process and outputs the desired credibility to effectively influence public policy in Uganda. Therefore, despite such committed leadership, the lack of an entrenched domestic legal framework continues to undermine the sustainable implementation of the NPoAs. The technical personnel in government perceive it as a political process of the President whose recommendations are not under formal obligation to integrate in national policies and programmes for instrumental use.

4.3.2.2 The role played by Members of Parliament

The participation of members of parliament in the APRM process is provided for in the APRM Base Document (2003). Through the APRM sub-committee, members of parliament interact with the NGC to ensure that the reports generated from the APRM process are debated in the house. The attributes considered include: roles and responsibilities, legal supervision, knowledge, power and influence.

(a) The roles and responsibilities

Angey-Ufoyuru (2012:10) identifies other roles including ensuring that APRM matters are integrated in the parliamentary agenda for government business, introducing and passing legislations aimed at enhancing the APRM process, implementation of the NPoA, dissemination of APRM information to their various constituencies, as well as budget scrutiny in support of the effective policy implementation of the APRM recommendations.

However, through their roles and responsibilities, members of parliament became strong opponents of the APRM due to lack of a legal framework. In the context of Uganda's first generation review, the NEPAD-APRM Newsletter (2008:13) indicates that the Uganda APRM Commission organised two workshops to sensitise MPs about the APRM process, in 2003 and December 2006. Being major stakeholders in influencing national policies, multiple strategies for engagement were adopted. Firstly, in 2005 during their first visit to Uganda, the APRM support mission had to meet the speaker and deputy speaker to discuss their individual and institutional support towards the review process. Secondly, two slots of members of parliament as permanent representatives were preserved for both the party in power and opposition. Thirdly, ensuring continuous involvement of members of parliament throughout Uganda's peer review process from its launch, desk and field research, regional consultative workshops, validation meetings, as well as attending the formal presentation of the CSAR to the speaker, leader of the opposition and the chairs of parliamentary committees. Fourthly, providing a copy of the CSAR to each member of parliament; and fifthly, tabling the CRR for debate in parliament. Consequently, the CRR (2008:12-14) reports that parliament played an oversight role in monitoring the APRM process and its compliance to the standard guidelines, as well as participation in the validation meetings of the CSAR.

(b) The knowledge and legal supervision

Members of parliament provided input to the reports, the NPoA, and ensured that cabinet is brought on board in conducting the APRM process. However, Tindifa and Luutu (2011:17) reported that awareness of the APRM process among members of parliament was very low, and some claim that they never even received briefings

from their representatives, implying that many members of the commission rarely report to their constituencies.

The NPA-APRM-Mission Report (2005:16) further indicates that “The deputy speaker of parliament Hon. Rebecca Kadaga also complained about the lack of briefing to parliamentarians by the country support mission when it paid a visit to parliament in September 2005”. While she recommended that parliamentary representation to the APRM Commission be improved, and a committee specifically dealing with NEPAD/APRM be appointed, it did not happen and instead matters are directed to standing committees on foreign affairs. To make it worse, on 20th November 2007 when the NGC attempted to present the CSAR, members of parliament voted to block the process on grounds of lack of legal mandate. Since then, besides members of parliament’s representation to the APRM Commission, limited involvement took place towards fulfilling the legislative and oversight role of parliament to the APRM. Later, in April 2010, the APRM Report was tabled before parliament and was handled by the standing committee of Finance and Economic Development, but it was not fully debated in parliament (NPoA Progress Report 2009:34).

In comparison, ECA (2011:10-22) shares innovations, indicating that the parliament in Kenya collects additional data from the communities beyond the consultation and validation process through which they generate feedback on the review. Also, the South African Parliament set a good example by conducting its parallel self-assessment, using a joint-coordination committee covering all of the thematic areas. Furthermore, the Focal Point Minister is required to give regular updates on APRM activities, while the NGC asked to defend the NPoA before resources are allocated. In addition, parliament in partnership with the civil society is expected to play the role of mass sensitisation, dissemination of findings and oversight roles. However, in Benin, the failure to have the NPoA included in the appropriation bill as a prerequisite for adopting the national plan is advanced as a major hindrance to NPoA implementation.

Therefore, the lack of legal basis for the NGC translates into inability for parliament to fully debate APRM reports, while denying it a legal basis for budgetary allocations on the recommended areas for action, resulting in conceptual use and in several

cases non-use. This left the APRM Secretariat without a direct vote for its activities but surviving on the budgetary allocations from the NPA, which houses it.

4.3.2.3 The role of development partners

As major stakeholders in shaping development policies of African countries, they influence use of APRM data through: financial control, influence and interest as explained in the following section.

(a) Financial control

Through financial control and interest, development partners from the beginning became strong allies to the APRM implementation. After signing the MoU on technical assessment with the Continental Secretariat, the NPA Publicity and Communication Strategy (2005) was largely funded by the UNDP. Furthermore, the NPA-CSAR (2008:20) indicates that after establishing the national secretariat as the coordination unit, an initial contribution was made which took about 12% of the NPA's budget for the financial year 2005, but was inadequate to facilitate the review. The delay in funding according to the Focal Point Minister was attributed to the 2006 elections that had consumed much from that year's financial budget, and yet the country also had to budget for the hosting of the Commonwealth Heads of State and Government Meeting (CHOGM) the following year in Kampala (NPA-APRM Mission Report 2005:10). Despite the financial commitments from government, it was reported that out of the 8.5 billion UGX which the Commission had budgeted for, only 4.7 billion was available. (Weekly Observer Newspaper, November 2006:16-22). Relatedly, Chikwanha (2007:4) emphasised the inadequacy of finances by arguing that "at the start of the field work in 2007, government owed the national APRM Secretariat more than USD 600,000 in arrears after failing to meet its annual contribution of USD 400,000" (presumably for 2005 and 2006). As a result, a donor conference was organised with the intention of mobilising the necessary resources to support the APRM activities. The NPA-CSAR (2008:20) indicates that from the resource mobilisation conference to support APRM activities, donors responded to support both the review process and NPoA implementation between 2005 and 2008 as reflected in Table 4.2 below.

Table 4.2: Distribution of donor funds to the APRM process between 2005 and 2008

Donor	Agreement
UNDP	USD1,050, 000
DANIDA	USD 420 000
DFID	USD 373,785
AfDB	USD 400,000
GTZ	USD 27, 9485

Source: Tindifa and Luutu (2011:12).

With reference to Table 4.2 above, the support from development partners towards the implementation of the APRM activities up to monitoring the implementation of the NPoA went a long way in guaranteeing use and influence.

(b) Interest from strong allies

Moreover, strong interest and influence from the development partners was demonstrated through other activities supported included workshops training TPIs, members of parliament and other state and non-state actors on their mandates, public hearings and receiving stakeholders' memoranda and submission of their views, elections of NGC members through their constituencies and financing of NPoA implementation (NPoA Progress Report 2009:34). In addition, development partners monitored different APRM activities to ensure a transparent and independent review process. For example, to ensure an independent NGC, Mbaziira (2007:12) notes that they closely monitored the election process of representatives from different interest groups to ensure that there were minimal possibilities of manipulation. They included the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (UK-DFID) and the Danish Development Assistance (DANIDA), Therefore, with resources guaranteed from development partners, chances of instrumental use of APRM findings increase, while limited resources result in conceptual and even non-use. However, the CRR (2009:23) raises the concern of Uganda's dependence on assistance from donors

who also tend to influence their development process resulting in contradictory policies. Therefore, the inadequacy in financial inputs contributed not only to the non-compliance of some APRM standards, but also to the quality of data generated and the confidence to guarantee its instrumental utilisation into the national planning systems. As a result, much of the influence remained conceptual and symbolic to justify pre-determined political positions.

4.3.2.4 The role of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs)

As stakeholders representing the voices of non-state actors in the APRM implementation, CSOs influence use through: roles and responsibilities, interest and knowledge as explained below.

(a) Interest and performance of roles and responsibilities

Through their interests in performing roles and responsibilities identified in the APRM Statute (2016), the CSOs as strong allies ensured representation of non-state actors and citizens in society by contributing to the information quality and credibility of the peer review process. Tindifa and Luutu (2011:xii) state that “for the APRM to have impact on governance requires effective and open public participation of civil society and all other actors in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of performance.” This implies that successful peer review must involve active participation of diverse stakeholders. Before the implementation of the APRM in Uganda, CSOs had previously been involved in the country’s Poverty Reduction Strategy Programmes (PRSP). During the implementation of the APRM, CSOs were mandated with mobilising citizens to participate in the identification of their priorities for integration in the national development and promoting citizen monitoring of the POA and sustained post peer review dialogues (Angey-Ufoyuru 2012:16).

The NPA-CSAR (2008:9-10) shows that the civil society category at the APRM Commission is represented by nine organisations among which were the Uganda National NGO Forum, the National Association of Women’s Organisations in Uganda, the Uganda Media Union, the National Union of Disabled Persons in Uganda, the Joint Christian Council, the National Youth Council, the National Women’s Council and the Inter Religious Council of Uganda. During the country self-assessment, consultative meetings were organised at the national level with four

regional meetings in each of the country's regions in which 14 CSOs were represented by umbrella organisations. The activities in which they participated in the APRM process included submission of memoranda and public hearings. It was also reported that the commission conducted 32 public hearings within 13 districts where on average 100 stakeholders participated in each session. These were organised through a consultative workshop with CSOs to capture those issues in written and oral submissions to fill any gaps which could have been missed in the field work and literature review. Angey-Ufoyuru (2012:7) maintains that this participatory approach was made possible by the existence of the previously used approach in the national consultative processes of PEAP, PRSPs as well as MDGs monitoring.

However, Tindifa and Luutu (2011:17) insist that the process of selecting representatives of CSOs on the commission was not considered transparent enough to reflect the broad membership. It was reported that some of the indigenous NGOs and traditional institutions with fundamental influence on the local population were not recognised, leading to a critical omission in the country self-assessment. CSO networks like the Development Network of Indigenous Voluntary Associations (DENIVA) and the Uganda National NGO Forum insisted that some key eligible organisations questioned the review credibility. It is argued that throughout the first generation review process, there is no record of explicitly indicating views received from traditional institutions. Furthermore, the NPA-APRM Mission Report (2005:8) points out that in the APRM Strategy, the civil society organisations were represented to serve the purpose of channelling messages. It is argued that while the strategy committed to reach out to different CSOs as critical stakeholders, the nature of its design reflected a more elitist approach that limited its influence among the grass roots people. As a result, Mbaziira (2007:11) insists that the issue of governance was reduced to Public Administration and the capacity of the APRM to influence national policies in the interests of the wider public was minimised.

In addition, during the compilation of the NPoA, Mbaziira (2007:11) maintains that the process was narrowed into a more technical one where consultants mainly interface with the implementers in government's structures. The CSO Report indicates that "... in several instances it did not reflect the issues highlighted in the

report and in others had interventions which we consider superficial points”. It was reported that some of the issues discussed in the dialogue between the civil society and government would not only be left out in the reporting, but the CSOs also lacked adequate capacity to follow up on critical issues.

(b) Knowledge and responsibilities

Furthermore, through their knowledge, roles and responsibilities as strong allies, CSOs played a role of strengthening the tracking, and the implementation of government’s NPoA commitments. A coalition of 17 CSOs called the Uganda Governance Monitoring Platform (UGMP) was annually releasing reports documenting major developments. They focused on data collection for 32 indicators aligned to the four key governance areas and priorities in the NPoA, namely transparency and accountability, the democratisation process, conflict resolution and observation of human rights, but were not operating within a clearly established framework. In their 2009 report entitled “Is Uganda on track with its commitments in the APRM process?” the UGMP (2010:23) identified the positive aspects in the report to included government passing of the Land amendment, Domestic Relations, and the Anti-Corruption Bills, enhanced measures for child protection and increasing the funding towards electoral processes. Relatedly, government’s challenges included the issues of term limits, electoral reforms, reviewing the NGO Statute, land grabbing and evictions, and limited stakeholder participation in planning and budgeting processes. Relatedly, such recommendations were important in influencing continued reforms in national policies and programmes but lacked sustainable funding as development partners withdrew (NEPAD-Uganda 2010).

In line with the above, the NPA-APRM Mission Report (2005:8), the memorandum that the CSOs presented to the support mission on 14th February 2005 indicated that it seemed as though their participation in the APR process was taken for granted, and called for government to demonstrate political will towards a more inclusive and well-resourced process of peer review. The NPoA Progress Report (2009:34) maintains that lessons on inclusive participation could have been drawn from the evaluation of the previous process of developing the country’s Poverty Eradication Action Plan in which participants were drawn from multiple stakeholder civil society groups. To further improve on the role of CSOs in peer review, the NPoA Progress Report (2009:42), argues that the APR process should not only end with the CRR

and the NPoA submitted to the APR Forum and other regional and continental bodies for debate and review, but should also provide for space for CSOs and other stakeholders' response to the comments from the Forum. Such an addition would go a long way in enhancing influence on effective follow-ups and support towards implementation of the commitments in the NPoAs. This situation resulted in more symbolic use of APRM data to justify politically determined policies and programmes.

4.3.3 The extent to which the APRM context affects the type of use or non-use of the APRM in Uganda's policy framework

In Africa, the evaluation literature is characterised by increasing calls for adoption of an appropriate context sensitive, home-grown and customised evaluation policy framework based on African values (Gaothobogwe *et al.* 2018:52).

As detailed in Chapter Two, contingencies in the environment are presented in Mark and Henry's (2004:43) framework to include facilitating, competing and inhibiting factors in the policy setting. These include micro politics, culture of evaluation, administrative/management support and information needs among others. The study contributes towards understanding the role of context by drawing insight from the political systems theory to explain how the environment affects the use and influence of the APRM in determining policy outcomes. According to Ile (2009:65), the theory provides an excellent framework for understanding evaluation influence by recognising the influence of interdependent environments. Based on the systems thinking, Birkland (2011:26) explains that inputs into the government from the evaluation context in the form of proposals and feedback are converted by subjecting them to the opinion of actors within the political system and converting them into discernible outputs in the form of policy decisions.

In 2016, a SWOT analysis of the APRM context presented contextual factors that need to be examined. According to the APRM (2016:12), the challenges include uncertain political support, lack of sustainable financing of high review costs, a low level of compliance with the standard, poorly designed NPoAs with inadequate follow up on recommendations, poor coordination, a cumbersome questionnaire and increasing gap between actual impact and expectations. Relatedly, positive factors include the renewed determination of the leadership and the positive reception among citizens in the mechanism's experience. However, the CRR (2018:23)

identifies facilitating factors to include the institutional capacity, legal framework, external support from development partners and the timing, while inhibiting factors include limited domestic financial resources, politics and the other sources of data informing national policies other than the APRM evaluation.

4.3.3.1 Facilitating factors influencing the type of use or non-use of the APRM in policy process

A major facilitating factor to the operationalisation of the peer review functions at the country level have been the institutionalised structures. The supplementary documents to the APRM Guidelines for Country Review (2003:4) highlight the major APRM national structures and their functions which Uganda established upon signing the MOU on technical assessment (CRR 2009:2). They include (a) the APRM Cabinet Sub-committee chaired by the Focal Point Minister, (b) the NGC made up of stakeholder representatives, and the national secretariat as explained in Chapter Five. Working through these structures, the APRM-GoU (2005:23) confirms government's commitment to supporting the review process financially and technically. In Uganda, the NPA-CSAR 2008:6) indicates that their establishment was informed by its bench-marking on the experience of structuring the NEPAD/APRM unit in countries like Kenya, South Africa and Rwanda. The following section assesses how each of the key structures facilitates the APRM in Uganda.

5.3.3.1.1 The APRM Cabinet Sub-committee led by the National Focal Point Minister

In Uganda's context, the first APRM operational structure was the Cabinet Sub-committee led by the National Focal Point Minister. Appointed by the head of state, he/she coordinates the activities at the national level with the continental structures and the President (NPA-CSAR 2008:23). The major attribute is providing administrative support as explained below.

(a) Administrative support

At that time of Uganda acceding to the APRM, the Focal Point person was designated as the Minister for Planning in the Ministry of Finance. Administratively, this was a strategic location intended to support instrumental use by directly integrating APRM recommendations into the country's development plans among

other roles. The NEPAD Uganda Newsletter (2006:5) spells out other roles performed by the Focal Point Minister as the link between the national APRM structures and the continental structure, providing political oversight and mobilising government to ensure a smooth implementation of the APRM process.

The study notes that, between 2005 and 2007, the portfolio was held by three ministers, which could negatively affect influence, even though the President ensured continuity even after general election disruptions of 2006. Relatedly, Mbaziira (2007:13) added that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had intended to use the process to present themselves positively to the country's external development partners, did not appreciate the objective facts in the report, until the NGC Chairperson insisted "we are not working for you; we are answerable to the APRM Secretariat". Eventually, it is reported that it took the President's intervention to silence those who criticised the objectivity of the APRM process, arguing that it was necessary to show that government had nothing to hide. Furthermore, Tindifa and Luutu (2011:22) indicate that when the NGC presented an objective CSAR to cabinet on 20th November 2007, the chairperson of the commission reported negative reaction with members of the ruling NRM party questioning, "Who are you and who appointed you?" Consequently, the peer review process was almost derailed as cabinet was almost throwing" out the commission team which contributed to non-use by some stakeholders in government. Therefore, the lack of coordination between the Focal Point Minister, cabinet and other government institutions during the first review could explain the conceptual use and non-use of APRM data in influencing national policy in some sectors of government.

4.3.3.1.2 The role of the National APRM Governing Commission/Council (NGC)

To facilitate the effective functioning of the APRM the NEPAD/APRM Guidelines/O&P (2003:17) provide for the establishment of the APRM National Commission. The NPoA Progress Report (2007:37) identifies its mandate in ensuring that the peer review is conducted in a technical, inclusive, transparent and accountable manner to the country's citizens. Other roles include overseeing the development of the CSAR and the NPoA, developing and implementing a competent communication strategy for effective participation, and ensuring timely delivery of the reports to the summit. The attributes considered include: provision of administrative support and evaluation culture.

(a) Administrative support

In Uganda, the first country's APRM National Commission was appointed in September 2005 by President Museveni through the Focal Point Minister. To ensure broad representation, it was composed of 17 members, but the number was later increased to 21 to accommodate more from other interest groups such as the legal fraternity and the private sector (Mbaziira 2007:12). However, the first commission was later replaced with the APRM NGC in March 2008 by the APRM National Focal Point and State Minister for Finance, Planning and Economic Development. The NPA-CSAR (2008:6) explains that initially, the NPA and the Focal Point Minister had agreed to nominate and select the commission members, but the head of the review mission team rejected the idea. He insisted that "the review should not be perceived as a government venture but one owned by Ugandans. The commission's work should be defined by the principles of credibility, integrity, and ownership by stakeholders. It must be independent.... and elected by the institutions they represent" (NPA-CSAR 2008:6). Consequently, the consensus was reached that the stakeholders identified by the NPA instead nominate their representatives guided by an inclusion criterion previously used in the national consultative processes of PEAP, PRSPs as well as MDGs monitoring.

(b) Evaluation culture

In 2009, the new structure of the National APRM Governing Council that replaced the Commission was inaugurated. It was well constituted with a mix of representatives from government, the opposition, the media, civil society, religious organisations and secular groups. As a way of empowering the stakeholders in their mandates, the NPA-CSAR (2008:9-10) shows that successful members to the commission were formally given appointment letters by the Focal Point Minister to represent the six categories. The first category was for civil society represented by nine organisations among which were the Uganda National NGO Forum, the National Association of Women's Organisations in Uganda, the Uganda Media Union, the National Union of Disabled Persons in Uganda, the Joint Christian Council, the National Youth Council, the National Women's Council and the Inter Religious Council of Uganda. The second category was of four representatives from the central and local governments and the team was headed by the Head of the EPDRU which is directly responsible for the APRM in the Ministry of Finance.

The third category was three representatives for statutory bodies which were the National Planning Authority, the Uganda Law Society and Makerere University. The fourth category was three members of parliament with a representative each for the ruling party, the opposition and the East African Legislative Assembly. The fifth category was the private sector and the sixth was the trade unions. The NPA-CSAR (2008:9-10) indicates that while both state and non-state actors were represented on the commission, the majority were from civil society, the private sector and labour unions. Angey-Ufoyuru (2012:6) indicates that the 13-member committee had nine commissioners and four independent experts for each of the four thematic areas to monitor the implementation of the NPoA 2008 to 2011, and to prepare the APRM Progress Reports 2008 to 2012.

While the participatory approach was helpful in avoiding the establishment of a state-centric authority, as was the case with Mauritius where the review process failed, there is a challenge of lack of clarity on the standard APRM Guidelines on what the exact number of the NGC should be. As a result, the commission membership varied from country to country. For example, the AfriMap Report (2006:23) indicates that the smallest number occurred in Ghana (7), while the number in Nigeria was (216), Bukina Faso (28) and Benin (97). By comparison, Bunwaree (2007:17) indicates that the National Economic and Social Council (NESC) had over a half of its members subjectively appointed by the focal minister. This resulted in a subjective reporting favouring government, which negatively affected the credibility of the process and the reports leading to symbolic use of data to justify pre-determined policies. Relatedly, Mbaziira (2007:12) reports that in Rwanda, the APRM support mission raised concerns regarding the commission membership. In response to the criticism, the commission was restructured and the representatives were reconstituted, drawing from a range of stakeholders including the private sector and the civil society to the satisfaction of the country review mission team.

However, although the composition of the commission appeared to reflect broad representation of different stakeholder constituencies, Tindifa and Luutu (2011:x) argue that it was also perceived to have been drawn from the NRM ruling party to play the role of insulating and defending their government against any critics. Some observers had the perception that the supporters of the ruling party had the majority of representatives on the commission, thereby questioning its true independence.

As a result, there were attempts to control the peer review process to the extent of even editing the country self-assessment report to simply reflect a positive image of their party and government. Therefore, it can be observed that the driving factor that informed the composition of the commission was representation of different interest groups, whilst less attention was given to merit.

(c) Administrative support

Regarding the NGC operation, the NPA-CSAR (2008:17) indicates that the NGC members upon their inauguration were then divided into four administrative committees, each dealing with providing support to a particular governance thematic area on matters of contracting technical researchers, publicity activities, finance, logistics and report writing. Furthermore, the NPoA Progress Report (2009:34) adds that the terms included a requirement for commissioners to independently consult their constituencies for their input on matters arising in the commission's agenda, but also to generate feedback to be integrated within the sector reports. However, while the independence of the NGC is protected by establishing it alongside the NPA, the latter also controls its budgets. This suspicion was increased with the guidelines that required that the NGC membership in Uganda be answerable and directly under the supervision of the executive through the minister on behalf of the President, which implies his/her capacity to influence the NGC decisions and actions. It is argued that the commission seemed intimidated, something which did not reflect independence in executing its mandate. This raises concerns regarding its independence, functional autonomy and credibility to influence governance policy improvement.

By comparison, to guarantee independence and objectivity, AfriMAP (2007:17) reports that South Africa introduced an innovation of the APRM provincial governing councils for the nine provinces which supported the central NGC, which resulted in a more successful first-generation review. In Uganda, the NPA-CSAR (2008:16) acknowledges that while the ideal practice of establishing commissions as a statutory body in Uganda requires legislation by parliament, the President, while setting up the APRM commission, by-passed parliament. Such accountability to parliament would promote public participation through committee hearings, as well as parliamentary debates to enhance the APRM influence in the country's policy process, which is reduced to being more symbolic.

4.3.3.3.3 The National APRM Secretariat and the National Planning Authority (NPA)

To facilitate effective implementation of the peer review, the Base Document (2002:3) provided for the establishment of an APRM Unit in the country undergoing review. In the context of Uganda, this is in the National APRM Secretariat housed in the National Planning Authority (NPA). The NPoA Progress Report (2009:34) indicates that the NPA was designated in 2004 as the National Focal Point Institution for the APRM, to integrate the NEPAD and the APRM into Uganda's National Development Planning processes. This is done through administrative support to the APRM activities.

(a) Administrative support

Angey-Ufoyuru (2012:6) explains that it is the principle statutory agency in charge of national development planning established in 2002 by an Act No.15 of parliament in compliance with Article 125 of the 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda. In February 2005, the NEPAD/ARPM Unit in the form of a National Secretariat was established in the NPA in August 2005 in preparation for the country self-assessment. Angey-Ufoyuru (2012:12) explains that its mandate is coordinating the participation of relevant MDAs, ensuring alignment of the APRM process with the existing policies, together with the medium-term planning process. It is headed by the National APRM Programme Manager, who ensures regular reporting to the NPA on technical and administrative matters of the commission, in undertaking its mandate of overseeing a rigorous selection of TPIs, consultations, validations and reporting activities of the review process (CRR 2009:4).

To ensure the independence of the country review process and avoid manipulation by government, the CRR (2009:14) emphasised the key role played by the NPA in the review process as a technical institution to the NGC which is responsible for spear-heading the review process. However, in terms of accountability, the NPA Act (2002:8) requires that reports are first submitted to the minister who also submits them to parliament for their approval. Mbaziira (2007:11) argues that the influence of the NPA is affected by its lack of independence from the executive, since "its chairperson, deputy and three members are appointed by the President for a five-year term, renewable once for each". Furthermore, the NPA Act (2002) gives powers to the President to remove a board member from office on grounds of incompetence,

misbehaviour and misconduct. This not only negatively affects the independence of the NPA, but also the credibility and use of the findings.

Moreover, Tindifa and Luutu (2011:35) maintain that the facilitating role of the secretariat in enhancing the APRM's influence is affected by conflicting accountability requirements. Firstly, while the national APRM structure suggests that the secretariat is accountable to the commission, in practice, the NPA which houses it uses its budgetary control of finances and logistics to influence the process and content of reports. Secondly, although the secretariat is one of the structures within the NPA, its head is answerable to the National Focal Point Minister, who acts as the link between the government and the commission. By comparison, Bunwaree (2007:17) stresses that such a state-centric approach to constituting the NPA undermines its influence, as was the case in Mauritius' failed review. The above accountability concerns have implications on the independence of the NPA to implement the NDP formulation as informed by the APRM reports, instead of the ruling party's manifesto. This suggests the symbolic use of APRM findings in Uganda's case to justify political decisions already prioritised in the ruling party manifesto other than the assumed instrumental use.

In comparison, the positioning of the Focal Point as an agency in Uganda's context exercises lesser influence, compared to Ghana where it is a whole ministry of regional cooperation and NEPAD, together with an appointed Focal Point operating within the ministry (Mbaziira 2007:11). Furthermore, Rwanda took a different approach where a special NEPAD representative was appointed with an office established in the President's office and reporting directly to the President. Despite the weaknesses associated with the APRM, the CRR (2009:14) maintains that the integration of the NPoA helped in ensuring more effective coordination of government agencies as well as ensuring better utilisation of budgetary resources without unnecessary replication.

4.3.3.2 Inhibiting factors to the APRM evaluation system influencing public policy

The literature on APRM operations in Uganda identifies two major inhibiting factors which are the lack of a well domesticated legal framework and politics by different stakeholders.

4.3.3.2.1 Lack of a well domesticated legal framework

Regarding a legal framework, the APRM Base Document requires that upon signing the MOU on technical assessment, the participating country domesticates an institutionalised legal framework to support the APRM implementation. In Uganda, the absence of a legal framework passed by parliament to guide the establishment of APRM structures, appointment of commissioners and later council members raised concerns regarding its independence, functional autonomy and credibility to influence governance policy improvement. As a result, there is lack of clarity and a number of conflicting roles can be observed from the APRM operations. There is a need to institutionalise the APR process by giving it a legal status through parliament.

(a) Legal supervision

The practice in Uganda is that commissions as statutory bodies involved in accountability work require legislation by parliament, and their activities should be scrutinised by the public accountability committees of parliament. Going by Ugandan law, the NGC like other statutory bodies mandated with public monitoring activities and reporting ought to be scrutinised by the public accountability committees of parliament chaired by members of opposition parties (Tindifa & Luutu 2011:8). In Uganda, until now, the NGC is not legally institutionalised, and its accountability is questioned. The NPoA Progress Report (2009:38) explains that the NGC has remained not legally institutionalised, and its accountability is questioned. The NPA-CSAR (2008:16) acknowledges that while the ideal practice of establishment requires an act of parliament, which would not only promote public participation through committee hearings, but would encourage parliamentary debates to enhance the APRM influence in the country's policy process.

In addition, the NPoA Progress Report (2009:34) adds that, in practice, the oversight of APRM activities was put under the Foreign Affairs Standing Committee instead of the Finance and Planning Committee to which the NPA is accountable since parliament is expected to play a central role in validating, implementing and monitoring the NPoA. Despite the presidential support, lack of legal entrenchment of the APRM process into the Ugandan system robs it in an element of country ownership, as well as public accountability, and makes it vulnerable to political

manipulation. The non-binding status of the APRM system denies its structures a legal basis in their mandate, creating the perception of a presidential project associated with political partisanship, bureaucratic bickering, and corruption in selection of TPIs, field work and compilation of the reports.

As a result, the technical personnel in government MDAs perceive the APRM as a political process whose recommendations they are not under formal obligation to integrate into national policies and programmes leading to non-use or conceptual use.

(b) Micro-politics

The lack of a legal framework affected the process of selecting participants. This has translated into unclear selection of the TPIs, the civil society and other participating stakeholders. As a result, more attention to selecting TPIs who are allies to the regime had effects on the APR process and quality of output. Similarly, was the unclear sample selection of respondents in the research phase who were mobilised by Chief Administrative Officers (CAOs) in the local governments. Being supporters of the NRM regime, Tindifa and Luutu (2011:23) argue that these top civil servants considered mainly respondents who would give credit to the government in their responses, even when they had limited or no awareness about the APRM. This lack of an entrenched domestic legal framework continues to undermine not only sustainability, but also independence of the institutional structures of the APRM, as well as the effective implementation of the NPoAs leading to symbolic use.

4.3.3.3 Competing factors to evaluation influence of the APRM system

The major competing factors are politics and patronage, which were reflected in the selection of stakeholder representatives to the NGC, the recruitment of TPI's, as well as sampling of participants in the consultations and validation. Right from the country's accent to the APRM, politics affected the APRM's influence in several ways. Firstly, the way financial resources were allocated towards the peer review activities and political struggles among public officials led to delays in the release of funds. "At the start of the field work in 2007, government owed the national APRM Secretariat more than USD 600,000 in arrears after failing to meet its annual contribution of USD 400,000 between 2005 and 2006". They further attribute the problem partly to "the bureaucratic power struggle between two key officials, the

Permanent Secretary to the Treasury who is responsible for releasing the funds and the Focal Point Minister who would operationalise the President's order". This lack of cooperation among officials reduces the mechanism's influence on the country's public policy.

Secondly, regarding membership to the NGC, due to politics, the NPA-CSAR (2008:6), the NPA and the Focal Point Minister had initially agreed to nominate and select the commission members, but the head of the review mission team rejected the idea, arguing that the commission should be defined by the principles of integrity, ownership by stakeholders and credibility. He insisted that "it must be independent.... and elected by the institutions they represent" (NPA-CSAR 2008:6). Consequently, the consensus was reached that the stakeholders selected by the NPA instead nominate their representatives guided by an inclusion criterion previously used in the national consultative processes of PEAP, PRSPs as well as MDGs monitoring. In addition, during compilation of the CSAR, Tindifa and Luutu (2011:22) reported that the commission omitted some participants interviewed because their dissenting views conflicted with what the consultants included in the report.

Furthermore, concerns of political influence were raised on the unclear process for the selection of a TPI. The debate on the quality of the recruitment process of the TPIs remained a concern and this had an effect on the outcome. The weaknesses arose from the initial phase of appointing TPIs, who were reshuffled repeatedly. The NPA-CSAR (2008:18) indicates that the selection criterion for the above phase was rigorous and based on competitive bidding. However Tindifa and Luutu (2011:10) report that the process of recruitment was never advertised nor did it follow the standard procurement procedure, as consultants were simply invited to tender in their inception reports. Moreover, Mbaziira (2007:12) argues that the politically influenced process of identifying TPIs turned out to be costly, as some performed poorly in the desk research and were dropped, yet even those considered for the second level of fieldwork faced serious challenges in conducting the self-assessment process.

In 2006, due to politics, the general elections had a direct effect on the implementation of the peer review activities, since Uganda's review process was characterised by two schedules. Although the government had committed itself, the original schedule was disrupted by the election campaign which was characterised by diverting the budget, public attention and aspects of violence, stalling the process until May 2006, after swearing in the newly elected government (Uganda NEPAD 2008:17). The TPI's expressed fears arguing that partisan politics may negatively affect the credibility of the outcome which came to pass (NPA-CRR 2008:14-15). As a result, there was a delay between the production of the CSAR in 2007 and the CRR in 2008. The peer review process resumed after the general elections of 2006. Finally, the effect of politics is observed in the desire of the President to use the APRM to meet his ideological goal of Pan Africanism and its findings to improve his party's image while justifying its pre-determined political agenda. Therefore, the researcher observes that the most common effect of politics as an inhibiting factor is associated with the lack of independence of the APRM structures during the review process and consequently influencing outcome in a more symbolic way.

In summary, the above section drew from multiple secondary sources, to present a case analysis of the first generation APRM reviews in terms of process, activities and context, showing the extent to which use and influence were realised in Uganda's public policy. It acknowledged the commitment of Uganda's political leadership, in institutionalising the APRM evaluation system, with the financial support of development partners and the active participation of the CSOs. It however raised a major inhibiting factor of the absence of a legal framework, which allows political manipulation of the process and findings leading to more symbolic and conceptual use of the APRM. Also, evidence of non-use is attributed to the absence of a legal framework leading to inadequate uptake of APRM reports by MDAs, limited alignment across MDA plans and budgets, and a systemic culture of limited respect and ignoring of evidence. Therefore, the section concludes by indicating that while there are some cases of instrumental use evidenced with examples, literature reflects more use of findings for symbolic purposes to defend pre-determined political decisions by the regime.

4.4 CASE TWO: THE SECOND GENERATION OF THE APRM EVALUATION IN UGANDA (2017-2021)

The Base Document (2003:2) provides for periodic reviews in intervals of two-four years after the base review to capture any emerging issues that may arise. However, in 2013, the enthusiasm for peer reviews among several countries had started waning due to financial and human resource capacity challenges faced by the APRM until 2015, when the revitalisation agenda was adopted. In July 2016, the NPA-CSAR (2017:8) indicates that Uganda voluntarily expressed its readiness to be peer reviewed again.

In 2017, upon signing an MOU for technical assessment, Uganda underwent a second-generation country self-assessment and a country review in 2018 as the second country after Kenya (CRR 2017:34). This was followed by the first annual progress report on the NPoA implementation in 2020 and the second progress report in 2021. This section analyses Uganda's second-generation review guided by the research questions and major elements of the APRM evaluation influence, which include the process, stakeholder involvement and context.

4.4.1 The effects of the APRM process on the type of use or non-use in Uganda's public policy process

To assess the evaluation influence of the second-generation review, the researcher again analyses the different elements of an evaluation mechanism as identified by Marks and Henry (2011:111). In doing so, comparison is made with the first-generation review in Uganda and the Kenyan experience in pioneering the second-generation country review as discussed in the following section.

4.4.1.1 The effect of evaluation inputs on the type of use and non-use of APRM in Uganda's public policy

These are resources required to implement a policy intervention, which the NEPAD/APRM Guidelines (2003:20) identify to include the plans, tools, finances and technical capacity, in terms of compliance, efficiency, appropriateness and effectiveness as reflected in the following section.

(a) The APRM evaluation plans and best practices

In preparation for any review, the CRR (2017:3) indicates that the preparations for this second-generation review were formally launched on 15th June 2017. On the same level, the APRM Memorandum of Understanding for technical review was signed between the lead panel of APRM eminent persons and the President of Uganda. It can be noted that in the second review, there was no communication strategy based on the assumption that all stakeholders were knowledgeable about the APRM and their expected roles from the experience of the first review. The constrained budget without UNDP funding could only apply to the core activities. The researcher observes that the minimal awareness through a few television talk shows attended by officials from the secretariat has implications on effective participation of different stakeholders, lack of which translates into more conceptual use and non-use of findings.

Following the guidelines laid down in the APRM Statute (2016), the second review focused on the progress registered in the implementation of the previous recommendations which were integrated into the second National Development Plan (NDP II), as well as the best practices adopted in the four thematic areas. Consequently, the reports were presented at the APR Forum in June 2017, making Uganda the second country after Kenya to be reviewed (NPA-CSAR 2017:8). Relatedly, it is worth emphasising that even the first NPoA Annual Report (2021) tracking implementation was interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Implied virtual data collection targeting limited participation of stakeholders raises more questions on the quality of data, resulting in a declining trend from symbolic use, to conceptual and non-use in some cases.

(b) The APRM funding inputs

By 2017, each member state was obliged to pay USD 300,000 annual contributions from the USD 100,000, for funding of the review process (APRM Strategic Plan 2016-2020). The researcher observes that unlike in the first review where the country's mandate to facilitate the review process was largely supported by the development partners, the financial inputs towards the second-generation review were largely born by the Government of Uganda, except in the implementation of the NPoA. As a result, the country self-assessment activities were conducted under a very limited budget. The NPA-NPoA Progress Report (2021:242) presents a

summary of the NPoA financing covering the period of the FY 2019/2020 to 2021/2022, with a total of about USD 7.9 billion spent of its implementation in a period of three years as reflected below.

Table 4.4: NPoA Financing per Thematic Area from 2019 to 2022

Thematic area	US\$ (Millions)				
	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022	Total	%
Corporate Governance	88.18	86.15	87.16	261.48	3.31%
Social Economic Development	456.69	487.21	468.86	1,412.86	17.89%
Democracy and Political Governance	1,188.29	1,555.21	1,371.75	4,115.25	52.12%
Economic Management & Governance	696.17	708.36	2,106.79	2,106.79	26.68%
Total	2,429.33	2,836.92	2,630.04	7,896.29	100.00%

Source: NPoA Progress Report (2021:242)

As reflected in Table 4.4 above, despite the Covid-19 disruptions in the country's financial flow, the Government of Uganda exhibited a high level of commitment to financing its NPoA by raising its approved budget from 40.5 trillion in FY 2019/2020 to 44.8 trillion in FY 2020/2021 (CRR 2021). However, with persistent financial constraints, development partners came in later to finance the implementation of the second NPoA, and address the governance challenges identified from the review. According to the CRR (2017:23), a total of USD 7.9 billion was provided for covering a period of three years out of which USD 5,576,192, 724 was projected to be available from domestic revenue, and the actual expenditure varied over the years creating shortfalls. Therefore, such variations in the financial input negatively influenced the situation resulting in more conceptual use and non-use of APRM findings on the national policies.

(a) The APRM human resource expertise

To ensure generation of quality data that will attract the legitimacy and use by stakeholders, the APRM Statute (2016) requires that consultants under Technical Partner Institutions (TPIs) be hired to ensure technical and objective data management and reporting. The NPA-CSAR (20017:8) indicates that five teams of consultants were selected to conduct desk research on each of the governance thematic areas. However, the researcher observes that no mention of the advertisement and recruitment process of consultants was made in the reports. To emphasise the need for an independent process, the coordinator of democracy and good political governance from the Continental Secretariat briefed the selected TPI's during a working session.

Furthermore, while the firms reflected the required technical competence, just as in the first review, the researcher observes that the unclear process of identifying TPIs remained a concern, as it was perceived like a political reward to firms aligned to the regime. Such allegations from unsuccessful firms not only affected the quality of data, but also influenced non-use of reports. Therefore, the continuous lack of transparency and rigour in the recruitment of TPIs cast doubts in the minds of government officials on the legitimacy of the reports generated, resulting in rampant conceptual and non-use of findings.

(c) The APRM evaluation questionnaire

As a major tool guiding data collection, the APRM Guidelines (2016) require that a standard questionnaire be sent from the APRM Continental Secretariat. The major activity related to it is reformulating it to ensure that it is domesticated and applicable in the Ugandan context for quality data collection and reporting (NPA-CSAR 2016:17). However, despite earlier efforts made by the Continental Secretariat to review the questionnaire in 2012, the CSAR (2018:13) indicates concerns from the consultants from the TPI who found it bulky, as was the case during the first review. In addition, the limited resources did not allow for its translation into local languages for easy comprehension of the questions, especially by the grass roots people during the survey. Therefore, without any workshops organised for training TPIs, the limited time and resources for translation into local languages all had negative implications on the content of the reports contributing towards more conceptual and non-use of APRM recommendations.

4.4.1.2 The effect of evaluation activities and methods on the type of use and non-use of APRM in Uganda's public policy

The activities carried out in the review processes are provided for in the APRM Statute (2016:8), which stipulates the five successive stages indicated earlier in the first case. The activities were launched on 15th June 2017 by President Museveni, and an MoU on technical assistance was signed (NPA-CRR 2017:37). As indicated earlier, the major attributes identified by Mark and Henry (2004:43) include collection and analysis of data, development of conclusions and recommendations as well as generation and dissemination of APRM reports.

(a) Data collection and analysis

Following the APRM Statute (2016:8), the first major phase of the peer process involves developing the Country Self-Assessment Report (CSAR). The activities start with gathering pertinent information through desk research to generate a background document that reflects a country's governance status on the four APRM thematic areas. The NPA-CSAR (2017:xiv) states that "... the consultative process involved collection and analysis of data; desk reviews of secondary data, expert panel interviews, and views from regional focus group consultations at both national and sub-national levels. The nationwide process of consultation included government ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs); civil society organisations, the private sector; academia, the media and and other non-state actors represented.

The second major phase was of country review and drafting of the NPoA. This was conducted by the Country Review Mission (CRM) team of 19 experts drawn from 10 African Union member states conducted between 30th October and 13th November 2017 (NPA-CRR 2017:4). The consultative meetings held by the CRM were launched by the Prime Minister of Uganda, from which they interacted with diverse stakeholders including senior government officials from the judiciary, legislature and executive, the diplomatic corps, bilateral and multilateral partners. The CRR (2017:35) shows that the mission team, supported by the country APRM Secretariat and the background document discussed the CSAR with representatives of the government, which presented a written response on the issues raised. In line with the APRM mandate, the CRR (2017:35) maintains that the CRM assessed the

findings contained in the CSAR, and comprehensive stakeholder consultations were conducted for credibility of the review process.

(b) Development of conclusions and recommendations

The third major activity is the country review reporting and modification of the NPoA. The NPA-CSAR (2017:6) explains that the collected information from formal and informal sources, as well as the consultations with different stakeholders, is aggregated into the CRT's findings of the governance situation in the country. The first national consultative workshop held in Kampala attracted participants from 34 government MDAs, 14 CSOs represented by umbrella organisations, the private sector and academia, to whom a draft synthesis report was presented by consultants, and discussed and recommendations solicited (NPA, APRM-CSAR 20017:8). No major concerns on editing out dissenting views were reported.

The CRR (2017:37) states that “the revised draft of the CSAR was presented for validation at the four different regional workshops”, receiving inputs from 172 participants. The first was held in Western Uganda in Mbarara City with 54 participants representing various LGs entities. The second one was held in central Uganda in Mukono District with 32 participants representing CSOs LGs and other entities. The third was held in Northern Uganda in Gulu District with 49 participants representing districts LGs, CSOs, academia and NGO forums, The fourth validation workshop was held in the Eastern Region in Mbale City with 38 participants who included district leaders, representatives of the private sector, CSO umbrella organisations and academia.

Furthermore, the NPA-CRR (2017:37) indicates that a final validation national workshop was organised in the capital-Kampala in February 2017, from which the CSAR was finalised, submitted to the President of Uganda and also disseminated to the different stakeholders. Such an inclusive validation exercise is said to have resulted in a more acceptable CSAR and consequently the NPoA was designed to address Ugandan governance challenges leading to ownership, legitimacy and quality of the reports which enhanced the degree of its influence on national policies. The CRR (2017:35) shows that the mission team discussed the CSAR with representatives of the government which presented a written response on the issues raised. From the reviewed NPoA consensus was generated on the governance

issues raised, the challenges and the policy recommendations proposed by stakeholders to generate the final NPoA (CRR (2017:39). The costed preliminary NPoA was submitted to the secretariat, showing how the country intended to deal with the challenges (NPA, CSAR 2017:6).

At the end of the validation stage, an issue paper is generated as an output showing the different stakeholders' perspectives on the state of governance in the country and the identified challenges faced in the country (NPA 2017:6). In addition, the content of the issue paper is identified and consensus is built on the best possible ways for addressing the identified issues (NPA-CRR 2017:34). Similarly, the CRR (2017:9) indicates that the draft CRR was discussed with government to confirm accuracy of its content, but also to get its views, reactions and conclusions on the issues raised. This was followed by review of the draft CRR activities as prioritisation of relevant projects and activities, identification of implementing government agencies and stakeholders and costing of the NPoA by the Ministry of Finance and Planning.

However, due to budgetary constraints, the second-generation process did not extensively cover all of the expected activities, but emphasis was placed more on data collection and reporting but limited validation. Consequently, this could explain cases of non-use of APRM findings where the cabinet was not aware of the priorities for implementation in government plans and budgets. Similarly, there is no record of parliamentary involvement in debating the report and allocation of funds for prioritising the implementation of the final NPoA.

(c) Reporting

The fourth major activity is peer review at the APR Forum. The second generation CRR was presented on the 27th of January 2018 in the 27th Summit of the APR Forum in Addis Ababa Ethiopia. Among the commendable government policies highlighted, were the NPA-CRR (2017:271) reports that the model refugee policy framework that promotes integration, the government's approach to oil management, the youth representation was discussed in parliament. In light of the mandate of the APR Forum, the reviewed country during its presentation is expected to commit to follow up on the implementation of the reforms indicated in the NPoA. The NPA-CRR (2017:35) indicates that a country that demonstrates commitment and willingness to

rectify the shortcomings identified may not only attract assistance from participating countries, but also encourage donor governments to extend support. Furthermore, the NPA-CRR (2017:35) maintains that the government responses were attached to the final report which was cleared by the Panel of Eminent Persons for submission to the Continental Secretariat for presentation at the APR Forum for the final stage of review.

(d) Information dissemination

The final major activity is the publication of the CRR and the final NPoA. As a final stage, the CRR is published by the secretariat who disseminates the information to the public and all interested stakeholders (Base Document 2003). The review report is formally tabled in the sub-regional and regional entities such as the Pan-African Parliament, the Peace and Security Council, the AU's Economic, Social and Cultural Council (ECOSOC), the African Commission on Human and People's Rights, as well as the Regional Economic Community (REC) to which the reviewed country subscribes (NPA-CRR:2017:35).

Following the passing of the second NPoA, preparations for POA implementation involved harmonisation between the Finance and Planning Ministry and the APRM structures. In addition was the integration of the NPoA into the NDP, the National Vision and the Medium-Term Expenditure Frameworks. This was intended to ensure close collaboration, to build synergies among the different programmes, and better utilisation of available human and financial resources which led to effective implementation of the NPoA. However, reflecting on its methodology, Bosman and Clifford (2021:34) argue that the data collection and analysis process was methodologically constrained, using an empirical-descriptive approach without sufficient contextualisation in the country's history and socio-cultural complexities.

To track the country's progress towards addressing the identified governance challenges, the NGC was given the responsibility to monitor the NPoA implementation, but its reporting turned out to take much longer than earlier planned, yet timing is a critical factor in promoting the desired influence (NPA-CSAR (2017:1). Consequently, the NPoA Progress Report (2021:2) indicates that two annual progress reports have so far been generated with the last one covering the period of July 2019 to June 2021. However, Bunwaree (2017:17) identifies the challenge of

making the process more state centric which also explains the collapse of the Mauritius first generation review.

In addition certain short comings have been identified in the second generation peer review process which could have significant implications on the evaluation influence on the policies and budgets adopted in Uganda. The first limitation is about the nature of stakeholder participation and its potential effect. The entire process of data collection right from the start was conducted by the consultants using information provided by bureaucrats. With the discontinued data collection by the CSO based Uganda Governance Monitoring Group (UGMG), it may not be practically possible to assume independent monitoring, as the civil servants in MDAs appear to be the same people monitoring their own implementation work of the NPoA. The other stakeholders were only involved at the validation stage of the draft report, which was passed by the NGC. The lack of involvement and ownership of report content throughout the process implies that some stakeholders' input is left out and not included in the desired policy changes.

The NPA-NPoA Progress Report (2021:245) also identifies some additional challenges in preparing the progress reporting. Firstly, is the lack of particular indicators of the NPoA that are directly linked to the country's programme based budgeting system. Secondly, is the challenge of attributing NPoA implementation successes or weakness to a single government institution. Thirdly, is the nature of NPoA activities being cross-cutting, which necessitates the different MDAs working together for delivery of the set objectives, yet coordination among government institutions remains a challenge. As a result, tracking accurate data consistently for reporting purposes casts doubt on the degree of the APRM's influence on the country's policies.

In addition, with specific reference to the 2021 Report, it was prepared when the country was under Covid-19 lockdown, a period in which almost all MDAs were operating at 10% capacity as per the presidential directives. In addition, with the travel restrictions, all communications and coordination related to data collection were virtually conducted through online meetings (NPA-NPoA 2021:XX). This resulted in limited access to more recent and accurate data from the key respondents, despite the existence of online facilities. According to the NPoA

Progress Report (2021:3), meeting all of the different respondents by the researchers to access the necessary data using the limited facilities not only slowed down the process, but also its effectiveness in report writing. Therefore, the researcher concludes that the more compliance to the standard activities is ensured, the higher the chances of realising instrumental use of the APRM data in influencing national policy processes.

4.4.1.3 The effects of evaluation outputs on the type of use or non-use of APRM in Uganda's public policy

From the second review, APRM reporting and outputs submitted to the APR Forum for the final peer review included the CSAR, CRR, NPoAs, and annual progress reports. Uganda's second-generation reports were presented on the 27th of January 2018 in the 27th summit of the APR Forum in Addis Ababa Ethiopia and were recognised as critical references about the achievements, challenges and prospects of improving governance. The next sub-sections discuss how each APRM report from the second-generation review contributes towards and influences Uganda's public policy.

As a major finding, the NPA-CSAR (2018:6) indicates that Uganda made remarkable progress in institutionalising mechanisms aimed at promoting democracy, and protecting economic, social-cultural and political rights of its people among which are the vulnerable. Besides the corporate governance thematic area in which participants had limited knowledge, issues reported in the CRR (2018) included corruption, climate change, gender and development among others. The inclusion of such identified issues in the NPoA for action reflected responsiveness from government. The reports were analysed based on attributes advanced by Mark and Henry (2004:43) in their schematic framework of evaluation influence which include communication, responsiveness, timeliness, credibility and sophistication as discussed below.

(a) Communication

The evaluation outputs in the form of reports serve as valuable sources of information for other governance stakeholders using APRM data for policy advocacy, activism and lobbying of governance to bring about instrumental use. The CRR

(2018:4-6) communicates several findings indicating that the country demonstrated high levels of political will in policy reforms through ratification and domestication of several regional and international standards. The NPA-CRR (2018:5) maintains that since 2008, “the country has also made significant progress in institutionalising mechanisms to promote constitutional democracy, protect the socio-cultural rights of its people, and especially the vulnerable groups in society”. It also recognises that the country has maintained commitment to continued improvement in governance by putting in place the right laws, institutions and enacted legislations to create a supporting environment. However, the CRR (2017:10) indicates that the country faces a challenge of insufficient financial and human resources to implement the policies. It is reported that a number of the established institutions and enacted legislations remain unenforced with incomplete domestication of standards in some cases.

The CRR (2018) states that “most of the African standards and codes required under the APRM stipulations had been ratified by Uganda”. In addition, it is reported that most of the ideals of such standards are equally enshrined in the Ugandan Constitution. This study observes that the progress referred to is more legislative and primarily evidenced through signing and/or ratifying international standards, codes and domestic policies, although still lag behind in some governance areas like promotion of women’s rights. Therefore, the reports continue to lament about the weak implementation of such instruments to bring about the desired influence reflecting more symbolic than instrumental use of the APRM data.

(b) Responsiveness

Another outstanding achievement highlighted is APRM data being a source of input in the formulation and implementation of the country’s development blue print called Vision 2040 through the five-year National Development Plans (NDPs) for 30 years. The report states that “Uganda is currently implementing its NDP II, covering the years 2015/16 to 2019/20. It is fair to say that the country’s adoption and implementation of well-documented, predictable and transparent economic policies and programmes has clearly paid economic dividends” (NPA-CRR 2018:10). However, persistent challenges are again presented in the form of weak institutional capacity, corruption in public finance management, poor resource mobilisation, weak

economic diversification with 72% of the population relying on agriculture, as well as low value addition.

(c) Credibility

Reflecting on the second-generation review reports, Bosman and Clifford (2021:34) present a summary of findings on the APRM's influence which suggests credibility of reports. They acknowledge progress which has been registered through established institutions and policies for democratic consolidation from the 1995 Constitution, an anti-corruption legal framework, the promotion of gender equality, managing diversity, public access to health services, as well as management of cross-cutting issues like poverty, unemployment and land management. However, they insist that significant challenges remain, placing the young democracy at the risk of crossing the thin line between authoritarianism and democracy. Therefore, the findings suggest more symbolic use where good practices are highlighted for political reasons other than causing direct change in the national policies.

(d) Timeliness

A final National Programme of Action (POA) was released on time and integrated into the NDP III covering the financial years 2021/2022 - 2024/2025. Since it is intended to define the country's priorities, it is currently funded through the MDAs and local government's annual budgets under the National Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (NPoA 2021:XIX). This was followed by monitoring the NPoA implementation by the government MDAs and local governments, while annual progress reporting for its implementation began in 2021. However, the researcher observes that the annual monitoring fell short of the intended wide stakeholder consultation, since it was limited to data collection by bureaucrats in MDAs who generate the reports with limited feedback to other stakeholders. This has raised questions on the objectivity of the process leading to non-use of its recommendations.

(e) Sophistication

The second NPoA implementation report (2021:XIX) maintains that methodology for the development of the NPoA implementation progress report follows the seven-step process recommended by the Base Document (2003). It begins with the lead consultant together with the thematic teams developing an analytical template,

engaging in the collection of secondary and primary data from different MDAs, local governments, the private sector and NGOs. Furthermore, the reporting template is populated, the key messages in the thematic report are reviewed followed by a workshop for the NGC, lead consultant and thematic researchers to discuss the draft thematic reports, which are then aggregated into a comprehensive report with financial analysis. The final stage is the validation retreat by the NGC in which the synthesis report is reviewed followed by the final validation involving the different stakeholder representatives from the MDAs, local governments, parliament and the judiciary. However, the NPoA Progress Report (2021:3) indicates that during the second generation review, the stakeholder participation was limited by the COVID-19 restrictions and data collection was conducted virtually through online documentation, teleconferencing and email exchange. Therefore, efforts have been made to ensure regular reporting which has resulted in different types of use. The next section presents an analysis of the participating APRM stakeholders and the extent of their influence on the public policy processes and outcomes.

4.4.2 APRM stakeholders' participation in influencing the type of use or non-use of APRM in Uganda's public policy

The APRM Statute (2016:7) emphasises the need to observe the participation of different state and non-state actors, highlighting that the review process is supervised by the NGC that is composed of equal stakeholder representatives. During the second country self-assessment process, the NPA-CSAR (20017:8) reports that more efforts were made to comply with the participatory requirements stated in Chapter 11 of the APRM Statute (2016) regarding the nature of the National Governing Council and other structures. Consequently, major stakeholders were involved to enhance its use and influence, which include the President, members of parliament as state actors, and non-state actors like development partners and CSOs as explained in the following section.

4.4.2.1 The President's role in providing political leadership

As the country's head of state, the President's effect as a head of state lies in his actions and decisions towards the peer review (APRM-MOU 2017). The attributes considered for analysis include: power, influence, interest, control and personal authority.

(a) Power and influence

During the second-generation review, President Museveni's roles in providing the necessary political leadership involved signing up a country's accent to the APRM, signing up an MOU with the Continental Secretariat on technical assessment, appointment of the Focal Point Minister and other office bearers, ensuring effective facilitation of the country self-assessment as well as the NPoA (APRM Guidelines 2016). In addition, he physically attended the APR Forum and delivered his government's response to his peers in the APRM (NPoA Implementation Report 2021:2). Such actions give salience to the issues raised and set the national agenda for action.

(b) Personal authority

In his response from the findings from the second-generation country review, the CRR (2017:272) quotes from the President's speech in which he states "Firstly, I would like to appreciate the fact that this forum has embraced the major strategic bottlenecks facing Africa as part of our review mechanism and will be discussed today". The Ugandan President responded to both the best practices and the challenges identified and explained how his government planned to address them through the NPoA. Firstly, regarding the country's best policy framework on refugee integration, he explained that "We host these refugees out of our ideological orientation of Pan Africanism. We take it as our duty to host our brothers and sisters who have been displaced by different conflicts and other causes on the continent." This suggests that Uganda's refugee policy framework is greatly influenced by the political ideology of the Head of State as a major stakeholder, while the APRM instead provides a platform for show-casing this best practice and points out some areas for improvement.

Regarding the second-best practice identified as Uganda's strategic approach to managing its oil resources, the President acknowledged the country's deliberate efforts to put in place relevant laws aimed at ensuring better and sustainable management of the oil resources for development of the current and future generation (NPA-CCR 2017:273). About the third best practice of youth representation, the President emphasised his government's plan to ensure inclusive participation of the different interest groups that have been oppressed by certain beliefs and cultures in development programmes. In his conclusion, he committed

his government to integration of the recommendations identified by stating that “Out of the recommendations and as part of our strategic plan, we have developed a 5-year Programme of Action and government is committed to its implementation into our National Development Planning Process and the annual National Budgeting as we have done before” (NPA-CRR 2017:280). Such a response provides justification and policy consideration for instrumental use and influence of the APRM data.

(c) Control (People, finances and institutions)

The researcher observes that such political leadership provided by the President goes a long way in promoting the evaluation influence of the APRM. Given that there were previous concerns that the priorities informing the government’s development planning were from the ruling party manifesto, it is worth noting that alignment of the three best practices provides the best way of promoting instrumental use of the APRM. By driving the collective decisions of government to prioritise budgetary allocations in particular sectors as recommended in the APRM, there is an observed shift from non-use of APRM data, through conceptual, symbolic and finally instrumental use into the country’s planning frameworks.

4.4.2.2 The role played by Members of Parliament

As members of the legislative organ of any country, their roles in the APRM process are spelt out in the APRM Statute (2016:23). In analysing their role in influencing the type of use, attributes considered include: legal supervision, financial control, power, knowledge and influence.

(a) Legal supervision

Through committees of parliament, they are expected to interact with members of the NGC to ensure that the reports generated from the APRM process are debated in the house (Angey-Ufoyuru 2012:10). In addition, they ensure that APRM matters are integrated into the parliamentary agenda for government business, and they introduce and pass legislations on APRM matters, enhance the APRM process and implementation of the NPoA, and disseminate APRM information to their various constituencies. They are also responsible for budget scrutiny in support of the effective policy implementation of the APRM recommendations (Angey-Ufoyuru 2008:12).

However, it is important to note that during the second-generation review, members of parliament played a minimal role. The NPoA Progress Report (2021:13) indicates that since parliament as a key stakeholder in the policy process is expected to play a major role in validating, implementing and monitoring the NPoA, the oversight of APRM activities in parliament was erroneously put under the Foreign Affairs Standing Committee instead of the Finance and Planning Committee to which the NPA is accountable. Furthermore, the NPA-CSAR (2017:23) indicates that some reports were presented to the Committee of Foreign Affairs; this did not generate much business to get to the agenda of parliament for extensive discussion and recommendation of acts to the different MDAs.

(b) Knowledge

Parliament is responsible for representation and oversight using data generated by the APRM and other resources to run its business and debates. However, in Uganda's second-generation review, the minimal influence from parliament was attributed to a lack of a committee directly dealing with APRM matters to ensure that its reports are not only submitted but also debated and budgetary allocations made towards the recommendations. Currently, APRM matters are handled by the Committee of Foreign Affairs, which deals with a lot of business, and upon realising that the reports cannot be used politically to improve the country's image among the AU member states, they ceased to prioritise it as important business. This is further worsened by the lack of an existing legal framework passed by parliament to inform the APRM institutions and their accountability relations with parliament. The inability for parliament to fully debate APRM reports denies its recommendations a legal basis for budgetary allocations, resulting in symbolic use by the executive to justify pre-determined political decisions.

4.4.2.3 The role of Civil Society Organisation's (CSOs)

As major stakeholders representing the non-state actors in any country's development process, CSOs play a major role in contributing towards quality peer review data which is key in influencing public policy. The analysis of their role in influencing the type of data covers: roles and responsibilities, interest, knowledge and influence.

(a) Roles and responsibilities

In the second generation of peer review, it is reported that the CSOs fulfilled their roles by participating in two consultative meetings which were organised at the national level with four regional meetings in each of the country's regions as allies in supporting the APRM implementation. According to the NPA-CSAR (20017:8), "The first national consultative workshop held in Kampala attracted participants from 14 CSOs represented by umbrella organisations, the private sector and academia, to whom a draft synthesis report was presented by consultants, discussed and recommendations solicited (NPA-CSAR 20017:8). In addition, there were the four regional consultative workshops which involved CSO representatives who were invited (NPA-CSAR 20017:9).

The researcher observes that, beyond the selection criteria for CSO participation, certain concerns have been raised about the operating environment for CSOs. Firstly, the NPA-CSAR (2017:358) indicates that "there is very minimal effort that government has put in place to ensure that the capacity of CSOs is built". Although it passed the NGO Act (revised), which is said to have created a platform for enabling the coordination of CSOs in professional associations and trade unions, the Act is perceived as more restrictive and the networks have largely been the efforts of the CSOs. Furthermore, the CRR (2018:261) insists that Paragraph 72 of the Act is enforced selectively by government with the intention of curbing public debate on governance issues. Government however insists that it is intended to protect Uganda's interests against NGOs that push foreign interests. Without such debates, the data generated may not be used to influence policy through lobbying and advocacy.

(b) Interest and financial control

During the second-generation review, and the decline in donor funding, the coalition of 17 CSOs called the Uganda Governance Monitoring Platform (UGMP) stopped releasing annual reports documenting the implementation of the NPoA, which was a major indicator of instrumental use of the APRM in Uganda. Besides the claim that the selection favoured those friendly to the regime, CSO participation provided important spaces for channelling messages to the grass roots people until the civic space continued shrinking with government introducing new legislation regulating

their operations in Uganda. This gave way to a more symbolic use in government and conceptual use to other stakeholders who increasingly doubt the credibility of the data generated.

4.4.3. The extent to which the APRM context affects the type of use and non-use of the APRM in Uganda's public policy

Informed by Mark and Henry's (2004:46) classification of contingencies in the environment of an evaluation system, the major facilitating factors in the APRM include the institutional capacity, administrative support, culture and information needs, while inhibiting factors include the lack of a well-domesticated legal framework and politics as discussed in the following section.

4.4.3.1 Facilitating factors influencing the type of use or non-use of APRM in policy process

The APRM Statute (2016:10) provides for establishment of structures intended to support the APRM operations which were established during the first-generation review. The existence of already established institutional capacity provided a major facilitating factor. The most outstanding structures were the National Focal Point Minister, the National Governing Council (NGC) and the National Planning Authority (NPA) as explained. These institutions play the role of providing administrative support to bring about use and influence of the APRM in the country policies.

4.4.3.1.1 The APRM cabinet sub-committee led by the National Focal Point Minister

The APRM Statute (2016:22) requires that the Head of State appoint a Focal Point Minister who coordinates between the national APRM structures and the continental structure. Major attributes for assessing their influence include mainly providing administrative support.

(a) Administrative support

In the second-generation review, it was Uganda's Focal Point Minister together with the Vice President who in July 2016 delivered the country's expression of readiness to be peer reviewed again to the CEO of the APRM Continental Secretariat. The researcher observes that while the Focal Point Minister continues to preside over the

appointment of the NGC and other APRM national events, little effort has been made to engage the cabinet to introduce a legal framework for the APRM in Uganda. Consequently, without an act of parliament to provide a legal basis compelling government officials to implement recommendations and NPoA actions, use remains more symbolic to justify pre-determined political decisions.

4.4.3.1.1.1 The role of the National Governance Commission (NGC)

The establishment of an independent NGC as a supreme body bringing together representatives of various stakeholders is provided for in the APRM Statute (2016).

(a) Administrative support

According to the CRR (2017:3), Uganda's second review was under the leadership of an independent National Governing Council (NGC) was composed of eight eminent members led by a respectable chairperson, Dr. Robert M. Okello. Other members and the constituencies represented were Dr. Sallie Simba Kayunga (Academics), Hon. Amos Lugolobi (MP. Ruling Party), Ms. Sarah Walusimbi (Private Sector), Mr. Joshua Kitakule (Inter-Religious Council of Uganda), Hon. Abia Christine Bako (MP. Opposition Parties), Ms. Silvia Angey Ufoyuru (NPA) and Ms. Hellen Grace-Wangusa (CSOs). The NPA-NPoA (2021:XIX), stresses that all of the appointees were vetted as credible senior citizens appointed on the 30th October 2018 in a ceremony presided over by the Focal Point Minister. The issuing of terms of service spelling out their mandate up to 2022 was intended to ensure the effective provision of administrative support for securing instrumental use.

(b) Evaluation culture

The lack of a history of conducting evaluations in government negatively affected the quality and credibility of the evaluation process as well as the output. With the lack of standard guidelines on how the NGC is constituted, there were no joint elections organised, as constituents used different approaches to identify their representatives. This was a deviation from the previous practice in the first review where elections were organised and observed by development partners to guarantee integrity and ownership. The CRR (2009:21) indicates that some members endorsed themselves by virtue of their positions, while others were appointed based on their connections with the executive. The researcher maintains that such unchecked

executive decisions created a fertile ground for accusations of political manipulation, raising questions about the quality of the reports to attract instrumental use by public servants in MDAs.

(c) Financial control

The continued dependence on the budgetary allocation and human resources from the NPA suggests lack of independence to effectively undertake functions providing leadership, policy direction and review of the implementation of NPoA activities annually. This situation is further worsened by the multiple reporting requirements to both the NPA, which controls its budget, and the Minister who must present reports to parliament and the cabinet. This grants them powers not only to influence the NGC decisions and actions, but also the content of the reports.

The increasing political patronage by the ruling party in the appointments as rewards has affected the technical capacity, timing and quality of reporting by the thematic committees of the NGC. Generating reports requires a detailed methodology involving data collection and analysis from cabinet memos, sectoral budget performance reports, performance review reports, and budgetary allocations in the medium-term expenditure frameworks and national budgets. Even where consultants have been hired, politics has resulted in questioning of the consolidated report submitted to cabinet and later on by the President before presentation at the APR Forum (CRR 2017:272). Such challenges result into non-use of the APRM recommendations by the relevant MDAs.

4.4.3.1.1.2 The National APRM Secretariat and National Planning Authority (NPA)

The NPA as the principle statutory agency in charge of national development planning was designated as the National Focal Point Institution for the APRM to provide administrative support.

(a) Administrative support

During the second-generation review, the CRR (2017:4) indicates that the national secretariat ensured the coordination of all peer review activities by providing the technical, financial and administrative support to the national implementation of the APRM. In addition, it performed the function of documenting and maintenance of the

data base about APRM activities in Uganda, and prepared background documents to support the different APR organs in the country. Relatedly, the CRR (2017:5) explains that the NPA as a government agency which houses the secretariat played the role of providing leadership and guidance to the APRM process in Uganda, ensuring its credibility and independence, as well as safeguarding it from manipulation by political actors.

However, although the secretariat continues to be one of the structures within the NPA, its conflicting accountability relations negatively affect the capacity to create effective policy influence. For example, the manager who heads the secretariat is answerable to the National Focal Point Minister, who acts as the link between the government, and the commission raises concerns about its independence, which remains a persistent challenge that affects the credibility of its reports. Although the national secretariat tried to remain committed to efficiently executing technical and administrative tasks, the CRR (2017:6) maintains that its location under the NPA poses the risk of being subjected to budgetary control and political interference from the executive.

(b) Micro politics

The CRR (2017:7) emphasises the lack of independence from the executive since its chairperson, and three top executive members are appointed by the President for a five-year term. Furthermore, the NPA Act (2002) gives powers to the President to remove a board member from office, which influences top civil servants who are loyal to the regime, to bias the process and reporting, especially when the outcome appears unfavourable. Such questions on the attitude of the actors and methodology undermine the influence of the review outcome. As a result, continued concerns of unclear accountability relations and adoption of a more state-centric approach to the functioning of the secretariat relations create fertile ground for a more symbolic use of APRM reports.

4.4.3.1 Inhibiting contextual factors influencing the type of use or non-use of the APRM in Uganda's public policy

In every evaluation environment, certain inhibiting factors tend to emerge as forces working against the goals of the desired policy intervention.

(a) Lack of a legal framework

In the context of Uganda's second-generation review, the lack of a well domesticated legal framework to provide a supportive environment to guide the process, actors and use of the APRM evaluation remains a pending challenge. While the reporting continues to take place, the fact that the APRM process is not legally entrenched into Uganda's legal and institutional structure robs the report contents in a sense of ownership, public interest and accountability. With the lack of legitimacy derived from parliamentary approval like all other oversight bodies of government, the APRM process is perceived as a presidential project associated with a credibility risk. Institutionalising the APR process by giving it a legal status would go a long way in ensuring independence of the structures involved and enhancing their influence of policy outcomes amidst the challenging context of politics and corruption. Consequently, the review became more susceptible to political manipulation resulting in the symbolic use of the APRM by government to achieve its political goals.

(b) Limited domestic financial resources

Another inhibiting factor is the domestic financial constraints to effectively facilitate a highly consultative review process with all of the procedures, as laid down in the APRM Statute (2016). The NPoA Progress Report (2021:23) indicates that from the 2018/2019 financial year, the country experienced reduced revenue collected and so were the approved budget and the available resources for the NPoA implementation. This trend however changed in 2019/2020, when the approved budget increased by 11.4% amounting to 40.5 trillion to 45.5 trillion in 2020/2021, although it declined again in 2021/2022 to 44.8 trillion. This situation was attributed to the COVID-19 disruptions, which negatively affected the economy as well as the budgetary resources available for APRM activities. Therefore, due to the limited domestic resources, the peer review process which had been planned to take place within a period of 6-9 months and conducted periodically every 5 years never occurred. According to the NPA CSAR (2017:7), this turned out to take much longer than earlier planned, yet timing is a critical factor in promoting the desired influence.

4.5 THE EFFECT OF CONTEXT ON THE TYPE OF USE OR NON-USE OF APRM DATA IN UGANDA'S REFUGEE POLICY FRAMEWORK

The management of refugees in Uganda is informed by a framework that has been ranked as the second most progressive in the world, consisting of the Refugee Act 2006 and operationalised through the Refugee Regulations 2010 (UNHCR 2019:23). As an internationally recognised model law, the 2006 Act recognises the granting of refugee status as both a human right and a humanitarian act (World Bank 2016:12). The Refugee Regulations of 2010 in addition to the Refugee Act 2006 consist of key principles, namely the right to employment, to own property including land, to access services like education, as well as the entitlement to fair treatment, in addition to ratifying several international standards.

To counter the domestic challenges and make refugees economically self reliant, Uganda introduced reforms by establishing the Settlement Transformation Agenda (STA), which is a more holistic district-level refugee management approach which was integrated into the National Development Plans II and III to impact on host communities (Ahimbisibwe 2019). In addition, the STA is largely funded by both the UN and the World Bank through an initiative of the Refugee and Host Population Empowerment (ReHoPE). Furthermore, the World Bank (2019:20) explains that the CRRF was formally launched in March 2017 to embrace initiatives, policies and mechanisms to address the needs of both the host communities and the refugees. The next section analyses the extent to which the APRM and other contextual factors have enabled or inhibit the refugee policy framework in Uganda.

4.5.1 The role of the APRM evaluation system in influencing the refugee policy framework in Uganda

Within the APRM evaluation system, national policies and practices for refugee management are evaluated in two objectives under the Democracy and Political Governance thematic area. The first objective is constructive management of inter-state conflicts and protecting the rights of refugees, while Objective Nine is about managing diversity in which refugees are included as vulnerable persons (APRM Base Document 2003:349). The NPA-CSAR (2017:118) shows that “Uganda has been applauded for having one of the best inclusive legal and policy frameworks governing refugees in Africa”. Considering the country’s experience of hosting refugees in rural settlements and providing them with land for self-reliance rather

than depending on humanitarian assistance, the CRR (2018:249) emphasises that Uganda offers lessons for other countries that host refugees. The next section examines the evaluative role of the APRM in Uganda's refugee policy framework based on the contextual factors such as politics, culture, resources and administrative support among others.

(a) Financial resources

From the second-generation review, the NPA-CSAR (2017:2) stresses that the recommendations from the 2008 Report were integrated into the National Development Plan (NDP II). The CRR (2009:57-108) identified a major challenge of inadequate resources allocated by the Government of Uganda at both national and district level, to extend all of the necessary services to the refugees in the country.

Furthermore, it recommended an increase in budgetary allocations and reforms intended to address the local needs in a more sustainable way. To address the identified gaps and implement the APRM recommendations the government raised budgetary allocations and adopted reforms in the form of the ReHoPE, which was integrated into the National Development Plan (NDP II, 2015/2016-2019/2020).

However, the NPA-CSAR (2017:125) points out that the lack of participation of the refugees and host communities to address local needs continues to be manifested partly in the refugee policies, offending the principle of participation of the rights of primary stakeholders that forms the core of the rights-based approach. It emphasised that the ReHoPE Project was intended to ensure that local communities participate in refugee programming, a factor which was not yet well addressed in practice. To explain this limitation, Betts (2006:270) argues that the refugee settlement structures like the Refugee Welfare Councils (RWC) operate parallel to the local government council system, and disconnect refugees from the representation in the host district local councils, and the district development agenda which is meant to influence their lives.

In 2017, its implementation was however short-lived due to government's failure to raise the required funding to sustain it from the declining donor support, which reduced to 42%, even when the number of refugees had tripled (UHCHR 2017:9). In 2017, the President of Uganda and the UN Secretary General, in partnership with

the UNHCR, mobilised development partners to contribute resources through the Uganda Solidarity Summit and the Kampala Declaration on Refugees (NPA-CSAR 2017:118). The summit aimed at highlighting Uganda's implementation of CRRF and mobilising resources to meet the immediate and longterms humanitarian needs of refugees and host communities.

(b) Role flexibility

The NPA-CSAR (2017:118) maintains that as a result of the settlement approach, the urban refugees find it hard to access work, since acquiring permits remains costly, exposing them to exploitation. In this regard, Meyer (2006:6) challenges the 'empowerment' discourse surrounding the SRS, when even the right to employment is limited to self-employment in the private and informal sectors, with no affirmative action to support or recruit refugees in main stream public service. Where the Employment Act, 2006 and other labour laws make provision for employment of several vulnerable groups, the migrant workers and refugees are not included (Employment Act 2006). Consequently, most refugees struggle to find what to gainfully engage in productively, even when the framework exempts refugees from the high costs of obtaining work permits (World Bank 2018:13). Such a situation denies refugees the right to access quality and affordable services, which are lacking in their poor host communities, despite the statutory Instrument no.13 of 2016 which offers express exemptions of refugees from paying for work permits. Therefore, despite the financial support from humanitarian donors coupled with the corruption allegations, the funding shortfalls in government have remained a pending challenge that limits refugees' access to essential services like sanitation, essential medicines and clean water.

The CRR (2018:240) recommended interventions like government developing a strategy aimed at defusing the emerging sense of resentment between Ugandans and the refugees arising out of competition for scarce resources like land, education and health services. The allocation of land to refugees has been identified as a major concern, as more land continues to be allocated for their settlement in refugee hosting districts, which not only intensifies tension, but also puts more significant strain on the local communities. In addition, the government is considering leading efforts aimed at addressing peace and security challenges that cause displacements

in the region. The model was later repackaged into the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) introduced in 2019, with five mutually reinforcing pillars which include admission and rights, resilience and self-reliance, emergency response and ongoing needs, expanded solution and voluntary repatriation. To minimise corruption that had been reported in previous scandals, the CRRF funds were sent directly to districts instead of to the central government, even with such funding shortages.

The debate however remains on the extent to which the APRM influences the type of use or non-use in Uganda's refugee policy framework, or instead serves a supplementary role of providing a continental platform for showcasing this best practice so that other countries can learn from it. Therefore, the APRM's influence in a country's refugee policy framework is strongly linked to several other enabling and inhibiting factors that are both external and internal to Uganda. These include the external pressure, financial support from international humanitarian donors, the competing processes including politics, the ideology of the country's leaders and the geographical location of the country.

4.5.1.1 Enabling factors other than the APRM evaluation system which influence the refugee policy framework in Uganda

Uganda's framework on the one hand is said to mirror international frameworks which were adopted under the influence of external macro forces for compliance to international standards (RLP 2006:4-5). On the other hand, it is argued that domestication and reforms have been influenced by the politically motivated developments engineered by leaders of the time in Uganda (Kalyango-Sebba & Zanker 2022).

The following section discusses the other factors which to a greater extent have influenced Uganda's refugee policy framework other than the APRM evaluation system. The researcher observes that besides the role of the APRM as an enabling factor influencing the refugee policy framework, there are other contextual factors that include the ideology of the political leadership, domestic political factors, as well as the external pressure from development partners as explained.

(a) The political ideology and refugee management in Uganda

Refugee scholars like Betts (2006) trace the history of refugees from the post-colonial character of the Ugandan state, since managing refugees existed before the establishment of the APRM in 2003. The CSAR (2008:20) acknowledged that Uganda had put in place the relevant legislations of the 2006 Refugee Act and ratified major international and regional conventions and protocols for protecting refugees.

The ideology of the political leadership emerges as a strong enabling factor. President Museveni's ideology of Pan Africanism remains an important enabling factor for acceding to and sustaining APRM implementation in Uganda. The political ideology of Pan Africanism and the broader African concept of *Ubuntu* adopted by the leaders are also critical drivers (Khasalamwa-Mwanha 2019:4). This is in relation to the spirit of Pan Africanism, while explaining the motivation of the current refugee policies in Uganda which propose the discourse of 'African brotherhood, solidarity, and kinship'. This is informed by Uganda's history where some Ugandans were hosted in other African countries, especially during the 1970s' reign of terror by Idi Amin Dada and thus, many see it as good to host brothers and sisters (Meyer 2019:7).

The discourse of Pan-Africanism is also promoted at the international level, with the UNHCR referring to Uganda as a 'good host' compared to her neighbours, to promote a refugee hosting success story (World Bank 2019:17). To illustrate this commitment to refugee management, the CRR (2018:273) quotes President Museveni in his speech in which he explained, "We host these refugees out of our ideological orientation of Pan Africanism. We take it as our duty to host our brothers and sisters who have been displaced by different conflicts and other causes on the continent." Based on the African communal ideology and support for one another, he emphasises the need for hospitality towards the brothers in times of challenges. Furthermore, the President of Uganda is for example quoted saying "We handle refugees well [in Uganda] because we do not believe in colonial borders. These are Africans; and Uganda is therefore their home" (Rebuild 2022). This has come with a framework where refugees have almost the same rights and privileges as the nationals.

Relatedly, the World Bank attributed Uganda's refugee policies to her strategic geographical location amidst conflicting countries and the ethnic relationship between Ugandans and many of her neighbouring communities (World Bank 2019:17). It elaborates that "the refugees and the host communities often have geographical proximity, share the same essential resources and livelihood activities, at times competing but often complementing one another".

Similarly, the NPA-CSAR (2017:63) explains that Uganda is not new to managing refugees, since many come from neighbouring countries due to conflicts and ethnic divides such as the Dinkas and other ethnic communities in South Sudan in 2013 and 2016. However, it is also noted that as a result, cross boarder conflicts have increased due to the struggles for resources such as land, leading to conflicts between the refugees and host communities. Relatedly, the World Bank has for example attributed the developments in the domestic framework to the character of Ugandans as generous and open people, some of whom have witnessed the challenges of forced migration as refugees themselves (World Bank 2019:16). To illustrate this point, the World Bank points out how President Museveni was once a refugee in Tanzania himself (World Bank 2019:17).

Furthermore, informed by the Pan-African ideology, Uganda demonstrated continued commitment to ratification and domestication of several regional and international refugee frameworks, although with significant challenges in domestication and implementation. However, the researcher observes that by focusing on the countries' ratification of standards, the APRM misses out on capturing the actual influence which can be seen through implementation of domesticated policies. However, some scholars have criticised this ideology of Pan Africanism for covering up for the actual drivers of many flawed Ugandan refugee policy framework and its Self-reliance Strategy, insisting that with the ideology is only being reflected in the policy document in development, but lacking in implementation and evaluation (Meyer 2009:7). It thus remains to be seen whether these are genuine concerns or posturing statements made for other ulterior motives. Therefore, the above contextual factor suggests that Uganda's refugee policy framework is greatly influenced by the political interests of the heads of state as a major stakeholder, while the APRM instead provides a platform for show casing this best practice and points out some areas for improvement.

(b) Micro Politics in Uganda

The third enabling contextual factor is the domestic political factors. Besides the influence of the APRM on the refugee policy framework, Milner (2019:378) indicates that some scholars have studied the refugee phenomenon from a historical perspective and attributed several factors consisting of domestic and international politics to the refugee legal and policy response at various times. In terms of domestic politics, Betts (2006:272) argues that many African countries are, for example, said to have struggled with anti-colonialism and independence movements in the 1950s and 1960s, and as such the geopolitics of the time affected the refugee response of post-colonial African states. From a historical perspective, he notably points out patronage and refugee politics, associated with both internal and external factors as major motivations of the current refugee regime, as opposed to addressing the humanitarian needs and rights of intended local beneficiaries.

With specific reference to the Ugandan refugee politics, Milner (2009:378) traces the contextual factor of politics and patronage that is largely influenced by the post-colonial character of the Ugandan state and its strategic interdependence between donors, host governments and local actors for 'successful' outcomes. Betts (2006:243) argues that on the one hand, through patronage as an interweaving factor, the 'Refugee policy has been only used by Ugandan leaders to assert their political authority within strategically important refugee-hosting areas supported by the development partners. Since independence, refugee politics was motivated by different political interest of the leaders in Uganda from time to time. During Obote I's rule, the self-reliance agenda was adopted to bring in foreign aid which helped to legitimise his rule while it enhanced the nation-building agenda by channeling resources to the countryside.

During President Amin's regime, Uganda acceded to the 1951 UN Convention together with its 1967 Protocol on 27th September 1976, but Betts (2006:254) argues that by this ratification, President Idi Amin, who was rather viewed as anti-refugees for the expulsion of Asians, established a good working relationship with the UNHCR. President Amin viewed refugees as providing an opportunity to politically strengthen his regime for political patronage by building a strong army and working with the international community which would give him the much-needed resources and legitimacy (Betts (2006:264). Relatedly, the key highlights from the Obote II

regime of 1980 to 1985 included scaling up the settlement model to address problematic Rwandan refugees and the political emergence of West Nile as a significant political base.

Betts (2006:247) has argued that President Museveni's government at the time used patronage and funding for refugee programmes from development partners to maintain support from peripheral refugee-hosting regions. He adds that this is the strategy that has been used by all post-independence leaders to channel humanitarian resources to more strategic locations for patronage and political authority, insisting that without which there would be no Ugandan model. Furthermore, the act was operationalised through the 2010 Refugee Regulations which broadly provide for the procedural framework which was influenced by the political developments in Uganda. In 2015, with a massive influx of refugees, the Ugandan government attempted to address the gap in the international framework by addressing the local challenge in promoting economic self-reliance. Uganda undertook policy reforms that led to the integration of refugee management into the country's National Development Plans II and III.

(c) International politics

The fourth enabling contextual factor is the external pressure and financing from international partners which is another enabling contextual factor. Regarding external influence, refugee scholars have argued that Uganda's policy framework mirrors international frameworks. Ahimbisibwe (2019:23) identifies them to include the 1951 Convention and 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees, the United Nations New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, 2016, and the Organisation of African Unity (OAU)'s Convention Governing Specific Aspects of Refugees in Africa, 1969, among other instruments. Hopkins and Buffoni (2019:23) explain that Uganda largely inherited laws and policies which were adopted under the influence of external macro forces for compliance to international standards. This was characterised by intense lobbying, especially by the UNHCR (RLP 2006:2). Indeed the Act domesticates the international and regional refugee frameworks, thus fulfilling Uganda's obligations regarding the status of refugees. The RLP (2006:2) explains that the enactment of the 2006 Refugee Act was influenced by the desire to balance, as put by Meyer (2006:31), the "competing interests of national and

international players”. They include the UNHCR’s desire to give legal backing to the Relief and Development approach in 1999 and its self-reliance strategy, while ensuring compliance with the international framework at the time (UNHCR 2019:18). Furthermore, subsequent reforms were not only intended to address the gaps in the international framework, but were also funded externally. In addition is the history of established legal and institutional structures to support refugee management informed by the regional OAU Refugee Convention, international 1951 UN Convention and the 1961 Protocol among others (Sebba & Zanker 2022).

(d) Resources

Relatedly, international financing is another contextual factor in influencing the implementation of the refugee policy framework. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, international financing was driven by several factors including African states’ democratisation processes, the structural adjustment programmes (SAPs), the drastic surge of refugees as a result of the cold war, coupled with decreased external development support that changed the narrative on refugee policy formulation (Minler 2019:20). With financing came patronage from the international community, extending resources to despots as ‘a key mechanism for purposes of purchasing allegiance as well as maintaining support (Tangri & Mwenda 2006). Some scholars use the concept of ‘extraversion’ to refer to a situation where weak African states use their strong external influences to attract funding used to strengthen their rule domestically. In the 1990s, such resources through the donor-driven Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) were used to facilitate local patronage through decentralisation in Uganda.

During President Museveni’s regime, the 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda was enacted as a progressive rights-based instrument and provides for human rights for all persons without specifically mentioning refugee protection (Ahimbisibwe 2020). The 2006 Refugee Act was later passed based on the 1995 Constitution. KLP (2006) argues that the passing of the 2006 Refugee Act was a result of the desire to comply with the international framework at the time of the humanitarian decade of the 1990s (Crisp 2010:7). It was a result of intense lobbying by the UNHCR to fulfill the country’s obligations regarding the status of refugees. During parliamentary debates on the country’s refugee bill, while several

implementation concerns were identified for consideration, the leader of government business kept insisting on the goal of including the provisions of the international frameworks (Hansard 2006). Consequently, it was passed detailing a comprehensive institutional framework for refugee protection, and the rights and obligations of refugees. In addition, it provides for group recognition, mass influx and temporary protection (Ahimbisibwe 2020).

The long spans of the good working relations with international agencies like the UNHCR have been critical contributing factors to Uganda's refugee policy outlook. Iazzolino and Hersi (2019:372) describe Uganda as an 'international donors' pet in the region' on progressive refugee management policies in exchange for foreign aid at the time. Furthermore, in 2003 a basket initiative called 'Convention Plus' had been initiated by the UNHCR and brought together the EU, Denmark, the UK and the Netherlands. The initiative was primarily aimed at devising means of reducing secondary movements of refugees to Europe (Betts 2006:269). Based on the emerging liberal refugee theme of the humanitarian to development, the nexus motivated international humanitarian support to Uganda's adoption of the principles of self-reliance. The UNHCR informed of the availability of funds from the European Union and the UNDP to support integration. Seeing an opportunity for resources to be controlled directly by the Government of Uganda, the latter agreed to taking over the settlements from the UNHCR and justified as intended to promote sustainable livelihood for both the refugees and host communities as a means of realising public services and co-existence (Idris 2020).

The Settlement Transformation Agenda (STA) was supported by the UN together with the World Bank through the Refugee and Host Population Empowerment (ReHoPE) initiative. However, it has been argued that its refugee policy framework is foreign smart, in the guise of compliance with international and regional frameworks, and yet detached from the needs of both refugees and host communities in the country (Rebuild 2022:34). By implication, Uganda's will to host and support refugees perhaps cannot exist without the expected foreign support to the national and refugee budget, which is also tagged on fulfilling the latter's interests. Therefore, considering the above evidence from literature, empirical data becomes necessary to inform the conclusions of the study on the use and influence of the APRM in the context of the refugee policy framework.

4.6 STRATEGIES FOR ENHANCING THE INFLUENCE OF APRM FINDINGS FOR PUBLIC POLICY IN AU MEMBER STATES

While the process is greatly appreciated as Africa's most innovative solutions to its governance challenges, its implementation in Uganda's second-generation reviews reflects significant gaps and challenges that require interventions for a more positive influence. Several proposals have been advanced in the review reports, the CSO memorandum and monitoring reports, and publications on the APRM as discussed.

(a) Sustainable funding

The first recommendation is the call for demonstration of political will and unconditional commitment from the Government of Uganda through adequate resource allocation for the APR process. There is a need for strategic planning and effective coordination of all stakeholders towards improved review. The CRR (2008:390) identified the failure of the Finance Ministry to delegate the powers of strategic planning and coordination at various government levels, as indicated in the NPA Act 2002. This involves ensuring sustainable funding which is in line with the principle of ownership to avoid the over reliance on aid from development partners which limits local ownership of the policies adopted. Furthermore, to establish a mechanism to enable non-state actors' access to POA resources would go a long way in enhancing APRM influence for implementation. This can be done by raising POA allocations upwards through bi-annual sector reviews and ensuring that indicators for monitoring POA implementation are integrated into the sectors' management information systems.

(b) Regular and extensive stakeholder awareness

The second recommendation is ensuring that the review process is inclusive enough to go beyond the executive to also cover political parties, civil society and parliaments among others. This requires the process to start with a massive awareness strategy for all stakeholders to secure their buy in and commitment. In Uganda, while a communication strategy was put in place to extensively reach out even to the ordinary public, it was observed that the nature of the mechanism's

design reflected a more elitist approach with minimal evidence of key documents translated into local languages.

Furthermore, both reports show concern for the limited participation of local communities in the planning and budgeting process, especially in local governments, leaving most of the priorities focused on central government and the interests of the development partners. It has been argued that for effective consultations to occur there is a need for a more robust strategy targeting stakeholders at all levels, especially the lower levels of government with documents and communications translated into their local languages. In addition, the cultural and traditional institutions which in many areas exercise more influence among the grass roots Ugandans than government were left out in the strategy. The CSAR (2007:392) indicates that research results from institutions of higher learning are rarely used to influence government policies which calls for constructive engagement to reduce the gap between the central and local levels of government.

(c) Enforcing APRM standard guidelines

The third recommendation is adopting a strategy to avoid political partisanship in the composition of the APRM Commission by consulting CSOs to nominate their own representatives. To have the desired influence on governance policies of a country, a transparent and multiple stakeholder participation process was envisaged as provided for in the guidelines. There is also a need to observe the APRM operational guiding documents in consultation and validation processes. The operational guidelines require that the stakeholder validation is followed by cabinet validation and the report is published with names of key informants and stakeholders involved in the validation. The first review report only reflected the names of key informants but not stakeholders (NPA-NPoA Progress Report 2009:166). Besides the debate on the use or non-use of APRM data, some major lessons were learnt towards improved national policies and programmes. Maintaining a feedback platform to stakeholders after the consultation and validation is also important in ensuring a sustained APRM. In addition, the NPA-CRR (2017:35) suggests that no feedback was given to those who had participated and neither the TPI nor the commission ever returned to provide feedback to those who had been interviewed. Such errors and omissions in the process had an effect on the quality of data in the APRM reports. However, this study recognises that although most reviewed countries would

keep the CSAR confidential and only published the CRR, Uganda published it in the CSAR Report.

(d) Improved coordination between APRM structures and government MDAs

Angey-Ufoyuru (2012:23) emphasises that the government's adoption and integration of a POA generated from the APR process into existing policy initiatives resulted in better coordination between MDAs. Consequently, as part of the APRM's influence, it helped to reduce in fighting between various institutions over resources drawn from the national budgets. Tindifa and Luutu (2011:35) maintain that "The CSAR in particular is fairly comprehensive and is arguably one of the best reports in the APRM governance series so far. The CSAR is very strong on what government has been doing while also highlighting criticism of that record". However, it is criticised for not clearly articulating the causes of government inactions and failures (Tindifa & Luutu 2011:35). In addition, the analysis is said to be methodologically constrained by an empirical-descriptive approach and not contextualised sufficiently within the socio-cultural and historical experiences of Uganda.

(e) Timely and independent peer review process

The fifth recommendation is ensuring independence of the peer review process without covering up government inadequacies. There should be timely release of the entire peer review road map so that CSOs and other actors prepare adequately for their participation and input from their membership. There is a need for non-state actors engaging in data collection on indicators aligned to the four key governance areas and priorities in the NPoA namely, transparency and accountability, the democratisation process, human rights and conflict resolution (Tindifa & Luutu 2011:26). Participation of actors outside government ensures independence in the process, but also enhances the credibility of the reports to attract use and influence. This will go a long way in minimising the political influence and the bureaucratic capture of the APRM process, especially the requirement by the government that national planning by the NPA should follow the ideas contained in the NRM manifesto as used in the election campaigns without the input of other stakeholders.

(f) Information dissemination to all potential users

The sixth recommendation is providing correct and timely information about the different activities in the peer review process. CSOs and other stakeholders should

be allowed to participate in the selection of TPIs. Government should ensure an enabling environment through the NGO Act and guarantee the necessary space for the CSOs to participate freely in the peer review process. There is also a need for a legal framework that not only allows active engagement of civil society, but also compels stakeholders in government to be accountable and effectively integrate and use APRM data. The absence of a framework to ensure that the institutional structure and the APRM process legally entrenched in Uganda's legal system makes it to be viewed in a negative light by some stakeholders. It is perceived as more of a presidential project associated with a credibility risk, characterised by corruption in the recruitment of technical actors and institutional struggles and conflicts in their attempt to influence the process and outcomes. Institutionalising the APR process by giving it a legal status through parliament would go a long way towards ensuring independence of the structures involved and enhancing their influence of policy outcomes amidst the challenging context of politics and corruption.

(f) Inclusion of the entire body politic in the peer review

The seventh recommendation is ensuring that the peer review process effectively includes the entire body politic in the country's governance such as the parliament, the executive, political parties and CSOs among other actors. Therefore, while the APRM strategy committed to extensively reach out to different CSOs as critical stakeholders, the nature of its design reflected a more elitist and technical approach. It has been recommended that improving the APR influence requires a more institutionalised participation of the grass roots population. Tindifa and Luutu (2011:xii) call for translation of the reports and the NPoAs into some commonly spoken local languages and to be widely disseminated to the local governments and traditional institutions, so that their views from local governance administration can also be well incorporated.

(g) Institutionalising of NPoA performance monitoring

The eighth recommendation regarding the limitations in the methodology for monitoring the NPoA implementation, according to the NPA-NPoA Progress Report (2021:250), suggests that the APRM stakeholders including government need to devise a mechanism aimed at improving the country's budget absorption capacity in those intervention areas addressing the gaps identified in the NPoA. In addition, is

the need to identify major drivers of the NPoA that are appropriately linked to the country's Programme-Based Budgeting System. This goes a long way in ensuring more accurate tracking of the financing of the policy intervention, especially through mid-term review processes. Moreover, there is a need to strengthen the role of local government in POA implementation in all of the thematic areas, as opposed to focusing on the central government's MDAs, while reversing the variations and declining trend of allocations to fundamental POA. This may involve integration of POA performance indicators as a means of influencing government institutions to integrate POA actions in their work plans and policy statements. Secondly, establishing and strengthening institutional mechanisms for implementing POA actions that government shares with non-state actors since implementation cannot take place without such institutions.

4.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter organised along the elements of Mark and Henry's (2004:43) schematic framework presented a case analysis of the two APRM generation reviews showing the extent to which use and influence were realised in the country public policy. Available records suggest increased establishment of institutions and policies, as well as signing and ratification of standards and codes with limited domestication and enforcement, which suggests minimal instrumental use but more symbolic and conceptual use of the APRM. Reference was made to the identified best practice of the refugee policy framework, which indicates that the APRM's role lies more in serving the learning function by providing a platform for showcasing best practices than promoting accountability, control and driving policy reforms. Further evidence of varying influence was presented and was reflected in inadequate uptake in the reports of the APRM and government MDAs, limited alignment across MDA plans, budgets and APRM recommendations, inadequate documentation of use of recommendations and a systemic culture of limited respect and ignoring of evidence.

Therefore, the chapter concludes by indicating that while there are some cases of instrumental use evidenced with examples, literature reflects more use of findings for symbolic purposes to defend the policies adopted by reforming existing ones and attitudes of stakeholders. Further evidence of non-use is attributed to the absence of

a well domesticated legal framework leading to inadequate uptake of APRM reports by MDAs, limited alignment across MDA plans, budgets and APRM recommendations, and a systemic culture of limited respect and ignoring of evidence. The study emphasises that being a voluntary self-monitoring initiative, the significant variations in the degree of use, point towards the need to develop a framework with clear guidelines detailing the theory of change for the APRR implementation process. The next chapter presents empirical data collection and analysis to inform a proposed APRM framework, to provide the required guidance for the process, stakeholders and context, if the APRM evaluation influence on the country's public policy is to be realised.

CHAPTER FIVE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the research process detailing how the data was collected to generate answers to the research questions stipulated in Chapter One. It follows Chapter Four, which discussed the state of the APRM evaluation system detailing the structure, its background, the process through which it is operationalised at different levels, the actors, activities, outputs and outcomes. It covers different sections including the description of the research approach and study design, which reflects the strategies adopted for the purpose of data collection and the rationale for their adoption within the context of this research.

The first section presents the research design, highlighting the five paradigms that guide and inform public administration research to include: positivism, interpretivism, feminism, critical theory, postmodernism, complexity theory and chaos theory. The first two dominant paradigms will be explained in detail showing their ontological, epistemological and methodological assumption. The chapter identifies interpretivism as the preferred paradigm adopted to inform the study with associated justifications leading to a qualitative approach. The second section provides a background to all of the three approaches: quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods, before narrowing the focus on the qualitative approach. The characteristics of the approach, and justifications for its adoption are explained as well as the designs in the approach which include ethnography, phenomenology, grounded theory, and case study design adopted in this study.

The third section details the study area, case selection of APRM implementation in Uganda's first and second generation reviews, as well as the country's refugee policy framework and the scope thereof. The fourth section presents a detailed methodology, highlighting the research process, sampling data collection methods and techniques, along with their justifications. Finally, the fifth section covers the ethical considerations and how they were observed in the study, as well as the pilot study. Therefore, this chapter presents the pragmatic arrangements of how data was

obtained and analysed during the research project as discussed in the following sections.

5.1.1 Research approach

In any scientific study, the research approach reflects the procedural plan followed to generate answers to the research questions. Kumar (2014:122) defines a research approach as a precise strategy that outlines how various methods and processes should be employed to ensure that the researcher answers the questions validly, objectively and accurately. The approach serves the purpose of describing the strategy that is used to test the thesis's problem statement, and provides a framework for selecting the research methodologies that were applied to realise the objectives of the research project (Jilcha 2019:2; Leavy 2017:8; Kumar 2011:94; Hofstee 2006:113). The content of a research approach is summarised by Flick (2014:111) to include the planning for the process of research, the data collection set up, the sampling techniques and procedure, and the case selection among others.

5.1.1.1 Types of research approaches

Creswell (2018:31) presents three broad research approaches, namely quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods. From the three dominant research designs identified, Fouche and Schurink (2011:312) focus on discussing the major differences between quantitative and qualitative research designs since the third is a combination of both. Creswell (1994:3) remarks that the dichotomy between the approaches may not be relevant, but the two should be appreciated as a continuum, with each having a range of tools and strengths as well as weaknesses. However, Maxwell (2018:32) insists that the differences between the approaches lie in the philosophical assumptions presented by the researcher. In what follows is the description of three major research approaches detailing the characteristics, strengths and weaknesses of each, the preferred choice for the study and the justification.

(a) Quantitative research approach

This research design is a generic approach to testing objective theories. It involves the use of numerical data to answer questions regarding relationships between variables (Apuke 2017:41; Creswell 2009:22; Marczyk, DeMatteo & Festinger

2005:17). To generalise the results to the population being investigated, the quantitative approach is adopted involving the application of numbers in determining how data is gathered for a particular research topic. It is a technique for objective and systematic utilisation of numerical data from only a scientifically chosen subgroup of a community (Maree & Pietersen 2007:145). According to Bryman (2012:35), the quantitative research is a type of approach that strongly emphasises the measurement of data gathering and analysis. Like wise, Leedy (1993:143) explains that the quantitative method works by hypotheses building and testing against the facts of reality in order to influence variables and control natural occurrences.

Characterised by a deductive approach, Leavy (2017:9) indicates that its goal is largely about proving and disproving theories that already exist. Kumar (2014:14), explains that” the quantitative approach is based on the rationalism philosophy. So the quantitative research method typically adheres to a rigid, structured and pre-determined set of procedures to investigate, highlighting the validity and reliability of the findings and drawing generalisable conclusions”. The researcher is assumed to be independent of the research subject with the purpose of generating generalisable findings (Lapan *et al.*, 2012:03). Depending on the research subject, a questionnaire could also be used as a data collection tool in the social sciences. The approach is primarily used in the natural sciences due to the positivist nature of the disciplines in the natural sciences (Bryman 1984:77). However, as a major weakness, detailed information regarding the context of events or behaviours cannot be obtained via quantitative research approaches. This is one of the major reasons why the researcher preferred the choice of a qualitative research approach as explained in the next section.

The following section discusses the study’s conceptualisation of the research approaches highlighting the major categories of research approaches. Furthermore, it explains the different research designs associated with the public administration discipline and social science in general, as well as the choice of the suitable design highlighting its advantages and disadvantages. In addition, the different research designs applicable in qualitative enquiry are discussed and finally narrowed down to the case study design as the preferred choice in this study.

(b) Qualitative research approach

Due to its ability to generate data which is deeper and richer in meaning than the quantitative approach in which data is essentially numerical, the qualitative approach is presented as an alternative that is mostly adopted in social research (Babbie 2008:25). It is defined as a research approach that aids researchers in researching subject matter within its natural contexts in an effort to interpret or make sense of occurrences in terms of the meanings that individuals assign to them (Denzin & Lincoln 1994:2). Characterised by an inductive approach, studies aimed more at understanding and describing human behaviour as opposed to statistical analysis tend to prefer this design (Leavy 2017:9; Marczyk *et al.* 2005:17). The approach is presented by Marshall and Rossman (2006:2) as a more thorough way for researching social issues. In addition, Nieuwenhuis and Smit (2012:126) expand on the aforementioned description by stating that qualitative research is concerned with understanding the processes and the socio-cultural aspect of the environments, which impact distinct behavioral patterns.

Unlike the quantitative approach, O'Sullivan *et al.* (2010:39) explain that data from qualitative research is sometimes difficult or impossible to translate into numerical form, since non-numerical rather than text-based data is utilised. It has been added that most of the time, qualitative research methods are adopted to comprehend complex topics in difficult circumstances where the available body of knowledge is limited. As a result, Fouche and Delport (2011:64) maintain that the approach is used to define and comprehend the events being studied, as well as to respond to queries concerning their complicated nature. With the help of qualitative research, we can better understand why things are the way they are in our social environment and why particular individuals behave the way they do. Finding the answers to the why and how of a question is usually its focus. Maxwell (2018:32) explains that the approach covers procedures of data collection in a participant's environment, inductive analysis of data by building themes from particulars, and concludes with the researchers' interpretation of the meaning derived from the data. To address the shortcomings and benefit from the strength of each of the above two approaches, the third paradigm of the mixed method was advanced as explained in the next section.

(c) Mixed method approach

The third design is the mixed method approach, which is also frequently used in the social sciences. It involves using both quantitative and qualitative approaches in one study (Leavy 2017:9; Creswell 2009:23). In order to gather, understand and support data pertaining to a complex phenomenon, qualitative research methods are employed in combination with quantitative methods in this profession. Creswell and Plano-Clark (2007:5) explain that in a single study or a series of studies, this research methodology focuses on the gathering, analysis and combination of quantitative and qualitative data. Therefore, one could argue that the mixed method's goal is to thoroughly analyse data, considering both the quantitative and qualitative data's strengths and weaknesses in order to choose a research project that is appropriately balanced. The next section details the differences in the key distinguishing characteristics between the two major designs.

This study adopted the qualitative approach due to the nature of the research problem, the research questions and the philosophical underpinnings (Harwell (2011:23; Creswell 2009:22). In addition, Mouton (2001:144) also explains that the choice of the research design depends on whether studies are empirical or non-empirical, the goal and the issue being investigated. The justification for the choice of a qualitative approach is supported by Grix (2010:67), who states that the methodologies chosen are "inextricably linked to the research questions addressed and to the sources of data collected". Relatedly, Kumar (2005:20) adds that it is important for researchers to establish the research problem first which naturally guides them on the appropriate methods to adopt in a research investigation.

Furthermore, Grix (2010:68) maintains that the study's ontological and epistemological stances have an impact on the decision of the best research methodology for data collection. The literature indicates the study's object or subjects of inquiry, and their specific characteristics dictate the methodological approach and design (Danermark, Ektrom, Jakobsson & Kardsson 2002:150). Therefore, this study also adhered to the standard practice of research approach being guided by the nature of the problem and the subject of inquiry to use

appropriate research techniques and compile pertinent data to address the topic of investigation.

The following sections explain the characteristics of the qualitative approach that makes it a preferred choice for this study as informed by its advantages derived from the literature.

5.1.1.2 Characteristics of qualitative research

This study adopted a qualitative research approach due to the logic behind it, the characteristics, and the associated advantages of the study in comparison to other research approaches. Bryman (2012:380) identifies three major characteristics of the approach. Firstly, it takes an inductive approach to understand the relationship between the existing theory and the research problem being investigated. According to Creswell (2009:175), it is from the collected data that the researcher conducts data analysis through which patterns and categories are developed. Preskil *et al.* (2003:424) explain the importance of taking into account the theory, context in which the evaluation is taking place, and the past experiences of participants for the purpose of “construction, interpretation and integration of such knowledge”.

Secondly, its ontological position suggests that reality is socially constructed and an outcome of the interaction between individuals and not a separately existing phenomenon as objective truth. The approach takes place in a natural setting since the investigation is subject to existing conditions within the context of the research in the process of which some activities may overlap. Creswell (2013:45) maintains that the qualitative approach is characterised by the researchers’ direct involvement in on sight collection of data and examination of relevant documents. In the case of this study, the researcher interacted with the internal and external stakeholders who are involved in the operations of the evaluation system within their areas of work at the country’s APRM Secretariat.

Thirdly, it was informed by an interpretivist epistemological position that emphasises understanding of the social world which is based on the interpretation by the research participants. Bwengye (2015:30) suggests that it requires the establishment of patterns and relationships using an interpretive design. Similarly, Legorreta

(2015:120) emphasises that the most important element is the researcher's ability to establish a causal interpretation of reality through the generated evidence. Therefore, the approach involves the use of critical reasoning by interpreting the data on the different forms of utilisation referred to as the influence of the APRM evaluation in country policy processes. Having explained the nature of the qualitative approach, in what follows is its analysis in terms of the benefits that constitute the justifications for its adoption as well as the limitations.

5.1.1.3 Justification for adoption of a qualitative approach

In the current study, the major objective was to gain in-depth knowledge and understanding from APRM stakeholders' perceptions and experiences of the influence of the APRM evaluation process and findings. The study acknowledges the pros and cons of the qualitative approach, but emphasises that preference is based on several reasons associated with its strength with regard to the nature of the current topic and the phenomenon of evaluation influence being investigated. The first benefit lies in the approach's suitability to investigate the nature of complex phenomena such as evaluation use and influence. This was because the nature of the research topic was largely qualitative and so was the data being collected and analysed, making the approach consistent with the study objectives.

The approach was applied in exploring the meaning which individuals in the research setting ascribed to a social problem of compliance gaps and their implications on evaluation influence on policy design. So, the approach offers a more in-depth examination of different perspectives of evaluation influence with the primary goal of describing the contextual conditions, process, activities and actors in the study phenomenon of evaluation influence of the APRM. In line with the above, Lawrence (2014:134) argues that the approach enables the researcher to refine their ideas in the process of data collection and analysis to generate enhanced theoretical definitions. In addition, evaluation influence being a latent variable whose decision on the type of evaluation use and influence was understood through interaction with the stakeholders for their perceptions makes it appropriate to enable the researcher to generate deeper insights. Jupp (2006:248) indicates that a qualitative approach is suitable for researching complex social latent variables which cannot be measured quantitatively.

The second benefit is that the approach was considered more appropriate since the unit of analysis is the stakeholders in the APRM system, and the focus will be on the decision-making across networks of multiple actors that interact in policy design processes. It involves understanding the interaction of different actors in public policy decision-making as shaped by the APRM system. Punch (2014:117) maintains that the approach tends to focus on either one of the few cases studied by involving in-depth analysis to generate a comprehensive account of a phenomenon in a specific unit or event. Having observed that limited research has previously been conducted to examine the role of stakeholders in influencing utilisation of APRM findings at a micro level, the theory around the study topic is relatively nascent. Therefore, in support of the above development, Edmond and McManus (2007:1157) recommend a qualitative approach to gain deeper insights when the theory in the study area is nascent or young.

The third benefit is that the study focuses on interviewing stakeholders as the major technique of data collection to understand their experiences and perceptions on the system which makes the qualitative the best approach. To effectively examine the role of stakeholders, the study follows Tracy's (2010:841) suggestion to collect qualitative data using a descriptive and analytical approach. Barrat, Choi and Li (2011:23) are of the view that the qualitative approach is appropriate in responding to the how and why questions on the process from the perspective of the actors in their natural settings. Furthermore, Goffin *et al.* (2019) add that the thickness, depth and context-relevant data generated make the methodology appropriate for meaningful descriptive analysis. Therefore, the study adopted the approach to establish connections between the existing body of governance and evaluation knowledge on stakeholders' decisions in the types of use as shaped by political context.

The fourth benefit is that qualitative research serves the purpose of examining patterns of meanings identified to emerge from the collected data. According to Tshiyoyo (2012:34), this is done by the researcher transforming data into text through a process of recording and transcribing. In addition, Berg (2001:3) stresses that it is a means by which unquantifiable facts are assessed about a phenomenon

through meanings, concepts, symbols and characteristics that may not be meaningfully explained with numbers. Fifthly, the approach also involves multiple types of data. Both forms of primary and secondary sources are used through a process of triangulation (Bryman 2012:392), for the purposes of achieving a holistic account, a meaningful analysis and making an appropriate conclusion. According to Creswell (2013:47), the method is suitable for reporting on several perspectives of a phenomenon, identification of multiple factors involved, as well as painting a bigger picture emerging from a particular situation.

5.2 RESEARCH PARADIGM

To further inform the choice of the approach adopted in this study, literature indicates that every study is informed by a certain paradigm that epistemologically and ontologically guides its methodological processes (Eusafzai 2014; Kura 2012; Grix 2010). This is illustrated by Creswell, Guba and Lincoln (1994:23) who define a research paradigm as a “belief system based on ontological, epistemological and methodological assumptions”. Therefore, it is a worldview or a set of beliefs that emerges from a particular philosophy that informs a community of researchers in generating knowledge that is perceived to be reality.

Bryman (2012:629) maintains that the philosophical paradigm informing any study arises from its discipline’s orientation about the world. Fleetwood (2005:197) explains that the researcher’s assumptions about the nature of reality or being of a phenomenon under investigation (ontology) influences their thinking of what can be known about it and how the researcher relates to it (epistemology) and their thinking on the process of how it can be researched (methodology). Other elements of the paradigm include axiological assumptions, which focus on the role of values, and rhetoric assumptions which concern the language of research (Fard 2012:58). This argument is emphasised by Maxwell (2018:35) indicating that the nature of beliefs that the researcher holds informs the type of approach adopted in their inquiry in addition to their past experiences.

In the context of this study, the theoretical disposition of public administration as a field of study that focuses on social phenomena explains the adoption of a qualitative

approach as well as the ontological, the epistemological and the theoretical orientation as adopted. Fard (2012:55) explains five paradigms that guide and inform public administration research to include: positivism, interpretivism, feminism, critical theory, postmodernism, complexity theory and chaos theory. In the following section, the dominant paradigms are explained, while highlighting their ontological, epistemological and methodological assumption.

5.2.1 Positivism

This paradigm is based on a scientific approach that is rational and logical in understanding human beings and their environment. To explain realism as the ontology of positivism, Morcol (2001:103) emphasises the positivist assumption that reality is deterministic in nature and it exists independent of the knowing subject. Denzin and Lincoln (1994:5) add that it is informed by the argument that there is a reality shaped by natural laws that needs to be investigated, understood and predicted. Relatedly, Neuman (2014:97) maintains that in the field of social sciences, positivism is associated with naturalism, deductive logic, and empiricism in observation of participants' behaviour to confirm the occurrence of a phenomenon being investigated. It embraces the view that explaining the behaviour of a phenomenon being investigated and its relationships is guided by scientific rules.

Regarding the epistemological position of realism, Bryman (2012:28) explains that the paradigm places emphasis on application of natural science methods in researching social reality as informed by the orthodoxy of objectivism and realism. The paradigm suggests in a relationship between cognition and the object of cognition, that an independent reality exists separately assuming that the object exists independent of the investigator without having an influence on it. Methodologically, it is also urged that guided by universal laws, and upon following of strict procedures, similar studies if replicated and empirically tested must generate similar results (Morcol 2001:148). It follows the methodology of physical sciences which is reductionist and analytical.

5.2.2 Interpretive Paradigm

In contrast to the positivist paradigm, interpretivism emphasises the difference in the subject matter of social sciences, insisting that the social world is understood

differently in comparison to the physical world. Also referred to as constructivism, the paradigm puts emphasis on interpreting the intended meaning that people assign to the phenomenon under study in order to understand it (Nieuwenhuis 2007:59). Creswell (2007:20) emphasises the notion that social actors try to comprehend the environment in which they live, work and interpret their experiences in terms of a certain occurrence.

(a) Ontological assumptions

In terms of ontology, the paradigm considers reality or truth as influenced by its context resulting in multiple realities and interpretations that are mentally based, specific and change with time. Guba and Lincoln (1994:110) maintain that the ontology is said to be relativist, subjectively constructed where the researcher knows the reality from the respondent's subjective awareness of it (Hatch 2006:14). Interpretivism is premised on the claim that there can never be objective knowledge that is independent or outside individual thinking (Bunnis & Kelly 2010). The belief is that knowledge generated on the nature of reality is derived from within the thinking of those individuals involved and reflected through their subjective experiences (Grix 2010; Mack 2010). The worldview assumes that the nature of reality is best understood and interpreted with the subjective context of the individual social actor's viewpoint.

(b) Epistemological assumptions

In terms of the relationship that exists between the researcher and the object researched, the epistemological assumption is said to be subjective and transactional, where the findings are a product of the interaction between the investigator and the respondent (Jennings 2003:39). In terms of methodological assumption, the research follows an inductive process through which individual social constructions are elicited and refined during the interactions. Guba and Lincoln (1994:111) identify the commonly applied designs in this paradigm to include grounded theory, narrative research and action research, phenomenology and hermeneutics. Relatedly, Evans (2019:23) presents the epistemology of interpretivism, suggesting that truth or knowledge consists of mental structures that are surrounded by relative agreements. It is emphasised that knowledge is a product of multiple subjective interpretations generated through inductive reasoning of

qualitatively generated data (Bunniss & Kelly 2020; Mack 2010). This is the opposite of positivist assumptions where meanings are constructed from data by quantifying what is studied as opposed to subjectively interpreting phenomena to explore and understand specific details (Rubin & Rubin 2005).

In addition, according to Levers (2013:23), the difference is that the social constructionist paradigm contends that 'truth' varies depending on whom you ask, and that people frequently redefine truth in light of their interactions with others in contrast to positivists who seek one objective 'truth'. According to this paradigm, there is no such thing as an objective reality; instead, reality is formed by how people interact and how they perceive those interactions. It is also argued that social environment and interactions shape realities, which implies that people develop their own knowledge of the world through experience and reflection on that experience.

Crotty (1998:23), presents the assumptions of the interpretive paradigm to include: firstly, constructed meanings from participants' interpretation of the world they interact with in response to the open-ended questions. The paradigm suggests that that social reality is a result of processes through which individuals make sense of their day today actions, behaviour and situations, and people form or construct much of what they learn through experience. This is emphasised by Creswell (2007:20), who maintains that constructionism is mainly concerned with the notion that social actors try to comprehend the environment in which they live.

Secondly, the participants' meaning that is attached to phenomena is shaped by historical, social and cultural perspectives. In fact, Maxwell (2018:38) stresses that the researcher's intention becomes to understand the participant's context and also interpret whatever they find based on their own experiences and background as participants. According to this paradigm, social environment and interactions shape realities, which implies that people develop their own knowledge of the world through experience and reflection on that experience (Levers 2013:33). This indicates that social phenomena are not static but rather continually being revised. The paradigm is informed by the belief that understanding the world requires interpreting it. This corresponds with Wendt's (2008:147) assertion that "the world of lived experiences needs to be understood from the point of view of those who live it". This implies that the researcher's mandate is to understand the phenomenon under investigation as

interpreted from the lenses of the research objects and the subjective meaning attached from their lived experience (Bryman 2012; Kura 2012; Maree 2012; Mack 2010).

Thirdly, the meanings generated are from the data collected which a result of social interaction are. In the constructionist paradigm, there is no such thing as an objective reality; instead, the reality is formed by how people interact and how they perceive those interactions (Bryman 2012:33). As a result, the data collected from the research subjects' interpretation of their experiences in terms of a certain occurrence is considered as truth. It is through this lens that the researcher gives a particular interpretation of social reality, rather than one that may be taken as gospel.

Besides the study being located in public administration, it is about understanding the perceptions of APRM stakeholders, which makes interpretivism a more appropriate paradigm. It places a strong focus on comprehending people's subjective perceptions of social reality. Since public policy as a social science involves studying people as opposed to objects, Bryman (2012:30) explains that it involves allowing the researcher to understand the subjective meaning of the social actions being observed. The study recognises that there were several research designs applicable to qualitative research and these are discussed in the next section.

5.2.2.1 Types of qualitative research designs

Since this study adopts a qualitative approach, the common designs discussed include phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography and case study which is the main preferred choice.

(a) Phenomenological design

To gain a thorough knowledge of a phenomenon under investigation as intended in qualitative studies, phenomenology as a methodology provides both descriptive and interpretative aspects. Creswell (2007:57) defines phenomenology as the design that helps with the analysis of meaning as it is seen by different people in relation to their personal experiences with a given phenomenon. It is considered as a philosophy, a research methodology, and a theoretical framework for examining and comprehending people's actual experiences with a research phenomenon as well as

how they attempt to make sense of it (Merriam 2009; Maree 2012). This scientific method of inquiry is informed by the goal of discovering, comprehending and interpreting the significance of the world of subjective lived experiences from individuals who live it (Crotty 1998; Pringle *et al.* 2010). Therefore, it is a philosophical approach to qualitative research that entails a more thorough comprehension and description of a person's experiences with a specific occurrence for its interpretation (Creswell *et al.* 2007; Leedy & Ormrod 2014; Christensen, Johnson & Turner 2015).

To explain how it works, Holstein and Gubrium (1994:263) indicate that when using a phenomenological design, it is crucial to concentrate on one recurrent phenomenon and explain its occurrence according to how each individual research subject interprets and perceives its impact. In the context of this study of evaluation influence on public policy, its philosophy, which includes some presumptions or viewpoints about how the world is perceived, served as the foundation for consideration of this research design, research technique and procedures (Grix 2010). Therefore, through phenomenology, the goal was to gather insights drawn from stakeholders' lived experiences and understandings of the phenomenon and lived experiences from their subjective diverse viewpoints as well as the meanings attached to it. In the context of this study, the focus was on understanding the different ways in which the APRM process and findings influenced Uganda's public policy process by drawing from the opinions, attitude and experiences of stakeholders.

(b) Ethnography

This is another design adopted in the qualitative research approach. According to Creswell (2007:68), ethnography as a qualitative research design, aids in identifying the ingrained and shared patterns of a group's values and behaviors. Like phenomenology, ethnographic design is concerned with research that tries to understand culture, attitudes and beliefs as they are practiced by the people as subjects being studied in a particular setting (Nieuwenhuis & Smit 2012:127). There is a necessity to comprehend the social, cultural and political systems that are in place and have an impact on the participants' life. As a result, Nieuwenhuis and Smit (2012:128) emphasise that its importance rests in gaining enough knowledge of what

to offer as an intervention to fully realise their potential. This type was not however considered appropriate for this particular study.

(c) Grounded theory

This research strategy has strong traits of qualitative research since it emphasises theory generation through inductive reasoning. It however goes beyond just describing these experiences of people in a particular place as emphasised in both phenomenology and ethnography. According to Creswell (2007:62–63), the design tries to generate or find a theory so as to better understand the practice displayed by the research participants which is considered to be grounded theory. The foundation of grounded theory research design is that theories are formed from the evidence that is acquired from individual participants' experiences in the activities in which they participate as researched (Nieuwenhuis 2007:77). This indicates that the theory is based on research into the phenomenon it describes, which is learned about, developed and tentatively verified through a methodical gathering of evidence pertinent to such a phenomenon. Therefore, unlike the other earlier approaches, grounded theory goes beyond just understanding and describing the experiences of the actors to generating a theory through inductive reasoning. The current study however did not find it to be the most relevant design in investigating the evaluation influence of APRM on policies of AU member states and prefers a case study design.

In the context of this study, based on the different designs discussed above, an exploratory qualitative case study approach, underpinned by a phenomenological and interpretive paradigm was adopted. Literature indicates that interpretivism and phenomenology are associated with a qualitative design (Merriam & Tisdell 2016:8; Schensul 2012:77; Babbie & Mouton 2001:49). Therefore, the study qualifies to be located under interpretivism since firstly, it sought to understand in detail the stakeholders' perception of APRM influence in national policies through its evaluation practices. Secondly, qualitative strategies, methods and techniques were applied in the research process of data collection and analysis. Thirdly, it assumed multiple realities as perceived and understood from the different stakeholders' experiences with the APRM as opposed to assuming one objective reality. Fourthly,

it strongly recognised the role of context in which the peer review process operates and its importance in influencing policy outcomes.

In conducting the current study, the above elements of ontology and epistemology were considered and followed to come up with a framework for enhancing the influence of evaluation in the implementation of the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM). The paradigm was selected because it was fitting with the researcher's beliefs about the nature of reality. It should be noted that development of a research design starts with the location of the proposed work in a particular research paradigm. In this case this research is located within the interpretivist paradigm. In adopting this paradigm, the researcher considered the subjective interpretations of the APRM stakeholders at the country level as major sources of knowledge. Such information interpreted by stakeholders is intended to provide an indepth understanding of their perceptions and experiences in the APRM influence on public policies in Uganda. The research adopted qualitatively based key informant interviews, and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) to generate and corroborate within the framework of exploratory qualitative case study design to collect, interpret and analyse the data from stakeholders' perceptions and experiences.

(b) Case study research design

This research design was the most preferred choice and was adopted in this study for the purposes of refining the research focus in qualitative inquiry. To begin with, the researcher finds it important to clarify the term case study, since Nieuwenhuis (2007:75) cautions that it can be used to refer to a variety of things, such as the description of an analytical unit or research design. To break it down for easy understanding, Stake (2000:435) explains a case as a bounded or stable system that functions in a consistent and methodical manner with observable characteristics in both time and space. He further insists that a social phenomenon, which is ill-defined in time and space and cannot be distinguished from its surroundings, is not the case. Stake (1994:236) asserts that a case study "is not a methodological decision" but rather a selection of the subject under investigation as it can be adopted in quantitative, qualitative or mixed research.

While different scholars have attempted to conceptualise a case study differently, they stress certain common elements. The case study methodology is generally defined as empirical research, involving the use of contextually rich primary data within a bounded natural setting aimed at understanding a specific phenomenon (Barret, Choi & Li 2011:5-8). Relatedly, Simons (2009:21) defines a case study as an ‘in-depth exploration from multiple perspectives of the complexity and uniqueness of a particular project, policy, institution, programme or system in real life’. In addition, Simon (2008:21) emphasises that it involves “exploration of multiple perspectives’ of a complex system in its real-life context” with a purpose of generating in-depth knowledge on a phenomenon to inform practice.

Furthermore, Yin (2009:18) adds that a case study is an empirical inquiry that involves investigating a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context, most especially when the boundaries between context and the phenomenon are not clearly evident. It relies on multiple different sources of evidence, with data needing to converge in triangulating fashion. In view of this, Yin and Simon (2009) suggest that case studies are designed to gain a deeper “understanding and description of a less-known phenomenon” from different people’s multiple viewpoints or sources of evidence. The same view is also supported by Rule and John (2011:4), who argue that case studies are recommended where limited knowledge exists about a phenomenon and new perspectives are necessary to explore a given problem in a limited setting for transferability to other similar cases. Therefore, such characteristics provided the researcher enough time to conduct in-depth interviews with different stakeholders in their natural environment, and develop new knowledge and a concrete understanding of the complex phenomenon of evaluation influence.

Another strength of a case study design lies in its depth of understanding of the subject at hand and how it interacts with its surroundings. Due to its in-depth descriptions of the phenomenon in the case, Yin (2003:13) emphasises that the design allows the investigator to gain “holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events”. The purpose of case studies, according to Yin, is to research complex social phenomena in complicated circumstances due to their capacity to investigate the complexity of instances and their environments. The “why” and “how” questions are most frequently addressed through case studies, since they are well suited to

analyse complexity (Yin 2003). An in-depth understanding may cover a specific instance, including most of its attributes and traits, like its evolution, internal processes, history, external appearance, motivations for acts, and institutions developed through case studies.

Similarly, Bent and Flyvbjerg (2006:23) emphasise that case studies are highly “context-dependent” and offer real understandings of phenomena in their complexity, and yet the social sciences lack general predictive theories. Moreover, Yin and Flyvbjerg (2003:21) acknowledge that a system is never entirely isolated or contained in the social environment and requires the researcher to be open to contingencies on both the system's own and the researcher's own. Thomas (2011:23) adds that case study design offers the researcher a “rich picture” and “analytical insights” from different dimensions. Therefore, a case study is a comprehensive investigation of a single instance or a small group of cases that has the possibility to shed enough light on a wider population of several cases.

In using case study designs, Bwengye (2015:29) presents three techniques, namely explanatory, descriptive and exploratory research. Relatedly, Yin (2014:15) provides an explanation of what is involved in each of the types. The first category is exploratory research, which is typically used at the beginning of a research process to provide insights for identifying the nature of the problem. The second type is descriptive research which involves providing an accurate picture of the researched situation and events beyond the known relationship of the problem or opportunity under investigation. This may take the form of longitudinal or cross-sectional studies. Auriacombe and Holtzhausen (2014:21) further explain that data capture under this type takes place through the researcher asking and generating answers to questions of what, where, when and who. The third type is explanatory research which is normally adopted to explain causal relationships by answering the why and how questions, through generating hypotheses, and testing and validating theories. Yin (2014:15) asserts that in the social sciences, these three goals serve as a guide and definition for methodological choices like scope and time range, adopted depending on the type of the research question at different phases in the research process.

Furthermore, Yin (2014:15) advances two broad types among case study designs, namely the single case and the multiple case studies. He explains a single case study as research that uses just one unit of analysis, while a multiple case study involves using two or more cases as analytical units. Careful consideration was put into the criteria used to select the case. Lazar (2017:23) notes that the factor commonly considered while opting for the type of case study design to adopt with no intention of generalising is convenience. The researcher tends to choose a specific case that is readily available when conducting an exploratory case study aimed at building an initial knowledge base (Willis 2014).

For the purposes of this study, the case study design was preferred considering its related advantages which include firstly, the use of several sources of evidence, the ability to deal with multiple variables, as well as the adoption of theoretical propositions to inform the collection as well as analysis of data (Goffin, Ahlstrom, Bianchi & Richtner 2019:597-605). Secondly, triangulation is another advantage through the adoption of multiple sources of data to capture different views for enhancing the validity of the findings generated from primary and secondary data sources. Thirdly, the use of different methods and instruments is applied to enhance a strongly grounded theory as recommended by Goffin *et al.* (2019:596). Yin (2009:40) goes further to add that multiple sources are essential for case study research since different insights are generated and enhance the research's internal validity as well as the reliability. Fourthly, the in-depth analysis of a case enhances an effective understanding of causal relationships which leads to high internal validity. Furthermore, Bryman (2012:203) rates the design highly in ensuring construct validity because its in-depth inquiry into a phenomenon provides an excellent approach to testing as well as understanding concepts.

For the purposes of this study, intended to generate a framework for enhancing the APRM influence on country policies, the study at hand used a single case of Uganda as one of the AU member states and an exploratory method. From the literature on evaluation use and influence, Hojlund (2015:68) identifies a case study as the most preferred qualitative research designs used, especially in the public sector which is characterised by a unique political context.

In researching evaluation influence, literature on evaluation influence suggests that case studies have been among the methods adopted by researchers investigating the phenomenon of evaluation influence on policy decisions and decision makers' actions (Streicher 2017; Tri 2015:124; Gildemyn 2014).

This study also maintains that despite the above strength and advantages associated with the design, it has certain limitations. The major weakness is embedded within the particularity that makes it impossible to generalise due to validity reasons. The design's major weakness lies in difficulty to generalise the findings to a wider population since it provides weak insight into the dynamics found in there (McLeod 2019; Bryman 2012). Several authors such as Hodgkinson and Hodgkinson (2001), Jupp (2006:20), Noor (2008:1603) and Yin (2009:40), in their assessment of the design, emphasise the insufficiency of individual cases to be considered representative. Yin (2003:10) stresses that "Case studies are generalisable to theoretical concepts and not to populations or worlds." In addition, other scholars like Dilanthi and Baldry (2001:100), criticise it for lack of adequate rigor and excess bias. Therefore, the above criticisms imply that the design may not be appropriate for research that aims to produce knowledge that is applicable across time and location. However, this study maintains the design due to its strengths that outweigh its weaknesses. The researcher acknowledges that such limitations affect the design's ability to generalise the generated findings to the entire population in APRM member states, which makes it weak in terms of external validity. However, the study maintained this design going by the recommendations of Gerring (2004:352), who argues in defence of case studies when "proportional depth is preferred over breadth and boundness" and where the internal case is given precedence over external case representativeness".

In particular, based on the nature of this study, other reasons for the adoption of the qualitative case study methodology are associated with the nature of the political context in which APRM evaluation occurs. Firstly, the independent variable of evaluation influence which is being analysed is heavily affected by the actors' interactions in a given political context and can only be measured using qualitative tools like interviews and documentary analysis. Secondly, the case study allows the contrasting of different perspectives and observed behaviours of different variables

which can be compared by identifying differences and similarities among stakeholders. Thirdly, the in-depth understanding of interactions between evaluation stakeholders and their consequences can contribute to theory building development of an enhanced framework. Fourthly, is the case study design's ability to capture a detailed understanding of political context across the case, and it shapes the different forms of use in the APRM system.

In the current study, the application of the design was guided by the identified research questions in chapter one and the framework identified earlier, taking the unit of analysis as the internal and external stakeholders involved in the APRM decision-making process, with the purpose of drawing inferences. Yin (2003:10) explains the case study's strength and suitability in analysing complexity by generating in-depth knowledge in answering the questions of 'how' and 'why' about internal processes, as well as reasons for observed actions with the goal of analytical generalisation. Therefore, the researcher found the case study design most suitable to qualitatively study and understand evaluation process relationships amongst stakeholders, and how they affect the degree of use and influence of evaluation.

Therefore, the choice of the design, approach, methods and type of data collected from the APRM stakeholders in this study are informed by the epistemological and ontological assumptions of interpretivism as a paradigm acceptable in public policy, the public administration discipline, and social sciences in general. The study was informed by the assumptions of interpretivism since first, it sought to understand in detail the stakeholders' perception of APRM influence in national policies through its evaluation practices. Secondly, qualitative strategies, methods and techniques were applied in the research process of data collection and analysis. Thirdly, it assumed multiple realities as perceived and understood from the different stakeholders' experiences with the APRM, as opposed to assuming one objective reality. Fourthly, it put a strong recognition on the role of context in which the peer review process operates and its importance in influencing policy outcomes. In adopting this paradigm, the researcher considered the subjective interpretations of the APRM stakeholders at the country level as major sources of knowledge. Such information

interpreted by stakeholders is intended to provide indepth understanding of their perceptions and experiences in the APRM influence on public policies in Uganda.

5.3 LIMITATIONS AND DELIMITATIONS

This study to a greater extent reflects the experiences of stakeholders involved in the implementation of the APRM, but with varying degrees across issues of focus, categories of stakeholders. The section below explains the likely methodological challenges encountered in this research process and offers explanations of how the research dealt with them to meet the necessary ethical requirements.

5.3.1 Limitations

The first limitation was in line with time and content scope covered by the study. Although the APRM currently covers five thematic areas of governance, the current study was limited in scope to the first thematic area of democracy and political governance under which refugee management is evaluated in two objectives. They include Objective Three on management of inter-state conflict and refugees and Objective Eight on protection and promotion of the rights of vulnerable groups among which are the refugees. Although the APRM covers four thematic areas of Governance at the moment, only Democracy and Political Governance are considered for this study, since it generates the poorest results according to the previous African Governance reports as well as reports on best practices. The researcher also recognises that a 5th thematic area on state resilience to diseases and disasters was added by the APRM after the devastating effect of COVID-19, but this is also beyond the scope of the current study.

In terms of time scope, although the APRM was established in 2003, the study focused on the period between the first country review in 2008 and the second country review in 2017. However, appropriate procedures for data collection were highly observed and an appropriate sample considered to effectively understand the causal mechanism of the APRM evaluation system and how it influences the different forms of use and influence in a single country context. This being an exploratory qualitative study, the single country case is relevant in generating in-depth understanding of Uganda's successes in the internationally recognised

refugee policy framework. All stakeholders who were selected as participants had to meet the criteria of having been involved in APRM operations from 2008 to 2017 as part of the required experience.

In terms of content scope, the study focused on the effects of the APRM evaluation process on the individual and collective behaviour of stakeholders, and the use of findings as recommendations adopted for integration of policy actions in the country's NPoA. The content focused on the major elements of an evaluation system which include the inputs, activities, stakeholders and the context (Mark & Henry 2004:43). These ideas collaborate with Martinaitis *et al.*'s (2019:49-53) ideas on five complementary critical elements of a system's environment which affect how evaluation results are used or not. They include: the evaluation commissioners, the evaluators, the reporting units, the implementation agents and the type of evaluation questions, the methodology and how the generated evidence is used to serve intentional or unintentional functions or not used. Furthermore, as part of the content scope, the researcher appreciates that evaluation systems influence utilisation in the form of process of findings' use or non-use.

Besides analysing the APRM structure and process, the stakeholders as actors in the policy process were also analysed individually and collectively but the political allegiances affected responses of some participants leading to biased responses. These were analysed on two levels, the first being the the assessment of stakeholders' attitude towards a policy (support, neutral or opposition) in terms of three attributes of stakeholder influence, namely power, legitimacy and urgency. The second level involved analysing their attitude where the issue of concern was stakeholder salience or importance (latent, definitive or expectant). In the second layer, possible conflict points were analysed among seven different types of stakeholders (dominant, discretionary, dependant, dangerous, demanding, discretionary and definitive). However, although the study's focuss was limited to the effects of the APRM evaluation on public policy outcomes, some participants deliberately dodged some questions which they thought were politically sensitive, while others instead provided irrelevant and repeated responses which resulted into transcription challenges

In terms of methodological limitations, the researcher recognises that the sensitive nature of evaluation use and influence as a topic of interest relating to policy issues of democracy and political governance which caused some challenges in accessing some data. So, some limitations can be associated with the sensitive nature of the phenomenon being studied. The evaluation activities tend to result in power and resource shifts from some stakeholders who may have been resisting the APRM processes and subsequently may not willingly provide the necessary information. The researcher acknowledges that the phenomenon being studied is an intangible variable which is observed through experiences and perceptions of stakeholders involved.

Therefore, the data generated is based on the assumption that their responses are valid and true. Secondly, the study anticipates challenges associated with the adoption of various data collection and analysis techniques and methods. For example, in documentary analysis to establish the effect of the inputs, activities and outputs on evaluation influence, Flick (2009:259) emphasises the need for clarity and purpose of documentary analysis, since such records are used to legitimise institutional routines while others may provide incomplete information. Moreover, Creswell (2009:179) supports the use of such information sources as a true representation of the actual institutional language. Additional although secondary sources in the form of country reports from the Continental Secretariat were very helpful in cases of limitations in accessing primary interview data from stakeholders, there was poor documentation and storage of some records. The solution adopted by the researcher was triangulation in which multiple techniques of data collection and sources were adopted.

In line with the above, Muhammad *et al.* (2018:2085) highlight the demands of engaging in good qualitative research such as a rigorous and time-consuming process of collecting and analysing and reducing large scale data into a smaller number of themes. To address such issues, the financial resources were covered under the grant already received from Carnegie Corporation and the Partnership for African Social and Governance Research (PASGR) in 2020. Access to the different participants especially at the national level were aided by the available records of the 2016 country review participants. Thirdly, the researcher by adopting a case study

research design was also mindful of the limitations and inability to generalise findings from cases to the entire population of APRM member states (Goffin *et al.* 2019). Therefore, considering generalisation within cases as presented by Flyvbjerg (2006:227), the findings will be useful in identifying new areas of knowledge within policy evaluation to explore due to the limited available empirical evidence. Although the inferences made from the case data applies to the specific country case of Uganda and its refugee policy framework, general understanding and lessons from the proposed framework can be adopted to inform similar contexts in the other 41 AU member countries with similar contexts in Africa where the APRM system operates.

Another major limitation was associated with the outbreak of COVID-19 and the requirement for observing the standard operating procedures such as social distancing adopted in Uganda. The researcher was always able to secure spacious places outside offices and use of boardrooms, especially at the national secretariat for the interviews. He also gave participants options of both physical and virtual interviews. Fortunately, he successfully conducted all of the 27 interviews physically while observing the SOPs like washing hands regularly and use of masks and sanitisers. The researcher observed that due to the elite nature of this research and the stakeholders selected, the researcher was able to deal with most of the would be challenges through the method of interviews which provided an opportunity to explain and probe the participant to get more relevant information.

5.3.2 Delimitations

The first delimitation concerns the geographical and content scope of the study. In terms of geographical scope, although the APRM evaluation system is implemented in 41 out of the 54 AU member states, this study did not cover all of the states, but collected data from one Ugandan case study for in-depth investigation of the phenomenon of evaluation influence. Due to resource constraints and the limited time to complete the PhD programme, the study was limited to analysing evaluation influence in public policy in general and the case of Uganda's refugee policy framework in particular. In analysing the influence of the APRM on policy, the study also went beyond the obvious instrumental use to look at other forms of use and non-use, the actors and their interests, institutions, processes and context at the

different levels and the extent to which the nature of the system influences use or non-use. In a final analysis, some lessons learnt included the realisation that: participants' perceptions vary subjectively with context, issues, interest and roles played with some few having limited understanding of the technical aspects of the APRM implementation activities.

5.4 THE STUDY AREA

The single case qualitative study explores the stakeholders' understanding and perception of the APRM's evaluation influence in Uganda generally, and specifically the country's refugee policy framework as a reported best practice. The purpose was to generate qualitative data that could be used to positively enhance the mechanism's effect on reforms towards good governance among AU member states. The exploratory qualitative case study is limited in boundaries to a particular content, focus, coverage, place and time (Yin 2009; Stake 2005). The study area was identified as Uganda, a country located in East Africa which was selected purposively as explained below in the case selection section.

5.4.1 Case selection

In the current study, the research question is 'How can the APRM evaluation system be effectively improved so that it can positively influence policy design among member states?' To answer this question requires a qualitative approach to the in-depth understanding of the influence of the APRM evaluation process in terms of inputs, activities, outputs, as well as the context. This study adopted a single case of Uganda as an AU member state to examine the evaluation influence of the APRM on public policy in general and the country's model refugee policy framework in particular. The justification for the Ugandan case is twofold, being the continent's largest refugee-hosting country, whose policy framework was ranked a best practice in the APRM-CRR (2018:2) and based on its long-term engagement with the APRM (Tindifa & Luutu 2011:29).

Firstly, Uganda was among the pioneers to accede to the APRM in 2003, and among the first AU member states to be reviewed in 2008. The country is said to have demonstrated high levels of political will in policy reforms in line with AU mutually

agreed standards (APRM-CRR 2018:5). As an indicator of its commitment to the APRM evaluation, it was also the second country to have completed the second-generation review in 2017 (African Governance Report 2019:35). Secondly, while the APRM identifies refugees among the continent's top challenges (Mongae 2016:7), Uganda's open-door policy is ranked as a model of a progressive policy regime. The country's policy framework has attracted international recognition for its progressive and exemplary policy environment as reflected in several studies (Omata 2020; Betts *et al.* 2019; Hovil 2018; Ahimbisibwe 2018; Balyejjusa 2017; Ilcan 2015; Sharpe & Namusobya 2012; Berstin & Okello 2007; Jacobson 2006; Kaiser 2005). This approach to refugee management currently constitutes the legislation of the Refugee Act (2006), together with the Refugee Regulations (2010) and several other operational frameworks (Omata 2020:3). According to Ilcan (2015:2), the Act reflects the international refugee protection legal standards which the 1951 Convention, the 1967 Protocol, and the regional OAU Convention that was specifically intended to address the refugee challenges on the African continent, guaranteeing refugee rights and their protection.

The Refugee Act (2006) provides for several refugee rights. Section 29 of the Act spells out these rights in the status determination clauses to include: the right to non-discrimination, acquiring an identity card, gainful employment, elementary education, legal assistance and freedom of religion. Section 29(e) covers rights to: movable property, transfer assets, education, engagement in agriculture, commerce, handcraft and industry, association, and access to legal assistance and courts under the laws of Uganda. Therefore, the policy is in line with the global solution of repatriation once refugees are confident of the stability in their home governments (Mayer 2006; Crisp 2004; Chimni 1999).

Evidence from international reports indicates that Uganda is Africa's biggest refugee-hosting country and the fifth largest globally with over 1.4 million refugees (UNHCR 2020:18). Its Refugee and Host Population Empowerment Strategy (ReHoPE) is considered a core component of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) as reflected in the New York Declaration of Refugees and Migrants (2016), making it an internationally recognised model from which other countries can learn (GoU-CSAR 2017:2; Omata 2020:3). Furthermore, its settlement Transformation

Agenda (STA) as integrated into the National Development Plan II (NDP II 2015-2020) as recommended by the APRM has won it international recognition from the United Nations as a champion of refugee rights (World Bank 2017:vii).

As a result of the influence of the APRM 2009 evaluation findings, the APRM second Uganda Country Review Report (2018:1-9) acknowledges several reforms as a result of the previous evaluation. Ahimbisibwe (2018:9) suggests that the Government of Uganda responded with an increased budgetary allocation to refugees from 0.46% at national level in 2004 to 10% in 2019. It was observed that in the financial year 2004/2005, the responsible Ministry for Vulnerable Groups of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD) was allocated 0.46% of the national budget. The CCR (2009:108) further indicated that if refugees receive less than 1% of the district budget, it is said to worsen the refugee problem due to inability to access education, decent sanitation, safe water, employment and proper shelter, among others.

To address such challenges, the APRM recommended that the government provide adequate and increased budgetary resources allocated to refugees to address their needs (Tindifa & Luutu 2011:29). Other recommendations included proper data management for proper planning, as well as integrating the refugee needs into national policies (Mongae 2016:7). In response, Omata (2020:3) states that the country responded by introducing better refugee regulations of 2010 in addition to the Refugee Act 2006, and the government through the Uganda Bureau of Statistics supports the periodic registration of refugees so as to ensure reliable data to enable it to plan for them.

Further reforms have been undertaken between the period of the first and second generation reviews. The second APRM Uganda Country Self-Assessment Report (2017:2) reflects key recommendations from the 2008 Report that were integrated into the National Development Plan (NDP II, 2015/16-2019/2020) making the country's policy attract international recognition as a champion of refugee rights. Consequently, in fulfillment of the comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) as reflected in the New York Declaration on Refugees (2016), the Ugandan Government in partnership with the UNHCR jointly launched an integrated model,

the Refugee and Host Population Empowerment Strategy (ReHoPE). This strategy was integrated into the country's National Development Plan (NDP II, 2015 - 2020). Betts *et al.* (2019:23) explain that the key policy reforms include offering refugees the right to employment, to own property including land, and to access services like education, unlike many countries where refugees are hosted in camps.

Betts *et al.* (2019) indicate that the country's rural settlement integration strategy although adopted with support from the donors, has enhanced the extension of services and improved the standards of living of refugees and the local population in the hosting districts. The study observes that despite Uganda's struggles as a developing country with security, economic, political and environmental challenges, the country raised its budgetary allocations for refugees from 1% of the district budget and 0.46% at the national level in 2004 to 10% in 2019 (APRM-CRR 2018:2).

5.4.2 Scope of the study

This section reflects the boundaries of the study in terms of the APRM coverage for data collection. It includes the geographical, content and time scope as explained in each of the following sub-sections.

5.4.2.1 Geographical scope

The APRM Statute (2016:15) indicates that there are three levels in the scope of the APRM structure, namely the APR Forum, the Continental Secretariat, and the national level of member countries being reviewed. However, this study was limited to the national level in Uganda at which multiple stakeholder interaction takes place in influencing policy formulation and reforms. Uganda is located in East Africa, and the selection was restricted to stakeholders involved in the implementation of the mechanism at the national and local government levels. As recommended by Creswell (2013:137), the researcher visited the sites and individual respondents to collect as much in-depth data as possible from each of the studied units dealing with the different thematic areas at the National APRM Secretariat. Data collection involved key informant interviews of internal stakeholders (APRM staff) and external stakeholders as representatives of different categories of the population.

At the top of the national APRM structure was the Ministry of Finance in charge of planning whose office is located in Kampala Central Division at the Ministry of Finance Building. The staff as officials at the national APRM offices are located at Clement Hill Road in Kampala city operating under the National Planning Authority. The regional local district local governments and other ministries, departments and agencies were involved in the implementation of the National Plan of Action (NPoA). The MDAs covered included the Office of the Prime Minister, which houses the central government Monitoring and Evaluation System, and the Department of Refugees and Displaced Persons. Other stakeholders are the Ministry of Water and Environment, the National Information Technology Authority, the National Planning Authority Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, and the Ministry of Water and Environment where MDA Focal Point persons were interviewed. Such staff according to the APRM Statute (2016:15) are responsible for providing technical administrative and secretariat support to the different national APRM bodies.

Other participants interviewed were the district local government planners involved in APRM work and coordination of consultation and regional validation during the country self-assessment and country review. These were found distributed across the country in the districts of Gulu in Northern Uganda, Mbale in Eastern Uganda, Kisoro in South-western Uganda and Mbarara in Western Uganda. Among the external stakeholders' representatives, the APRM Guideline (2003:34) establishes a National Focal Point at a ministerial level to coordinate the NGC with the executive in ensuring that the APRM decision-making process translates into the medium-term planning process. The NGC is composed of wide stakeholder representation from umbrella bodies like the the Uganda NGO Forum Private, Sector Foundation of Uganda, the parliament and academia among others. They were interviewed as core stakeholders. In addition, the consultants constituting the Technical Research Institutes (TRIs) whose perceptions were sought about their experience in the process of preparing the CSAR and the CRR were interviewed. Other critical stakeholders in the sample include the members of the national planning committees who are responsible for the integration of the APRM's recommendations into the country's national development plan.

5.4.2.2 Content scope

In this study, the content explored includes the stakeholders' perception on the logical elements of the evaluation influence mechanism. Mark and Henry (2004:43) present those major factors that affect evaluation influence either directly or indirectly. The major elements included, firstly: inputs to include evaluation context and policy/decision setting). Secondly, the evaluation activities included selection and participation of stakeholders, planning and design of the evaluation, collection, and analysis of data, generation of reports and dissemination of information. Thirdly is the evaluation knowledge which includes credibility, communication, responsiveness, timelines and sophistication. Fourthly, are contingencies in the APRM environment such as facilitating conditions and inhibiting factors. From each element, Streicher (2017:15) maintains that each evaluation outcome can be both an outcome as well as an underlying mechanism that stimulates other outcomes at multiple levels, pathways and outcomes. Consequently, different forms of use or non-use of evaluation may be realised translating into varying degrees of influence. It is the above content that the researcher looked for from the responses of different stakeholders and the secondary data accessed.

5.4.2.3 Time scope

Regarding the period for the data covered in the study, the focus was on the period between the first country review in 2008 and the second-generation review in 2017. While Uganda was undergoing its first review in 2008, the APRM Uganda Country Self-Assessment Report (2017:2) indicates that recommendations from the 2008 report were integrated into the National Development Plan (NDP II). Furthermore, the APRM's Second Country Review Report (2018:1-9) acknowledges that the reforms that took place reflect the instrumental use of evaluation recommendations. The country has also since then generated a National Plan of Action for the years 2018-2022. Except for 2020 when the country was largely under lockdown to prevent the spread of Covid-19 pandemic, Uganda has maintained annual reporting with the last one conducted in 2021. However, the researcher found no specific data tracking the APRM's direct influence on policy changes attributable to the APRM, just like there was no data reflecting varying degrees of use in the form of symbolic use, conceptual use and non-use. Therefore, the study captures the experiences of the identified internal and external stakeholders on the factors which explain influence in some policy areas and not others.

5.5. POPULATION AND SAMPLING

This section describes the study population, and the process of how the sample was drawn to ensure that it met the required standards. The study population was composed of internal and external stakeholders within the APRM structures at the national level where decision-making for evaluation use takes place. An analysis of the population was conducted to ensure that data is collected from a representative sample with similar characteristics like the elements in the population were selected. The national level structures identified in the APRM Statute (2003:7) and the APRM Guidelines (2016:15) constituted the targeted population of internal and external stakeholders from whom data was collected.

5.5.1 Study population

The population is composed of external and internal stakeholders within the different units of the APRM national level system where decision-making for evaluation use takes place. The national level structures are identified in the APRM Guidelines (2016:15), for major categories, which constitute a population of 57 stakeholders from which the sample of 35 was drawn.

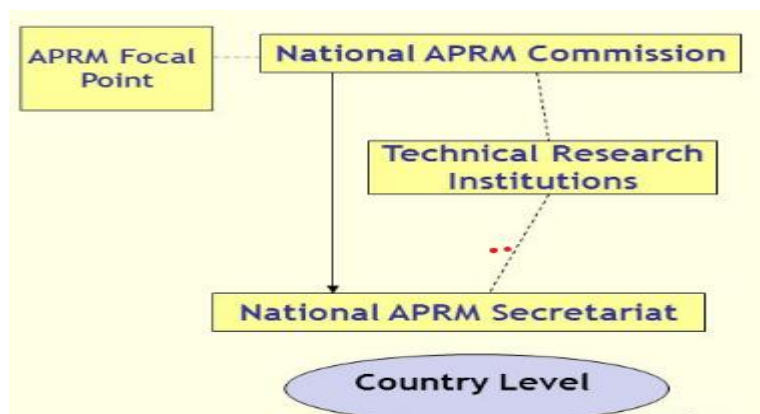


Figure 1.1: The APRM Evaluation System at the Country Level

Source: APRM (2017:13)

As reflected in Figure 1.1 above, the first structure at the APRM country level is the Focal Point person at a ministerial level responsible for reporting to the Head of

State directly who coordinates with the National Governing Council. The second structure is the NGC, which is an inclusive body of stakeholders' representatives (youth, women, private sector, academia, civil society) that leads the country self-assessment and monitors implementation of the National Plans of Action (NPoAs). The third structure is the National APRM Secretariat, which is responsible for supporting the NGC and the Technical Research Institute with the daily technical and administrative support. The fourth structure is the Technical Research Institute (TRI), which plays the role of developing the Country Self-Assessment Report (CSAR). The four categories constitute the participants of stakeholders involved in determining the degree of evaluation influence of the APRM, since they make decisions on the use of the APRM evaluation.

5.5.2 The study sample

The sample was composed of representative elements of the research subjects selected from the population of stakeholders involved in the country evaluation function of the APRM Result-Based Monitoring Evaluation and Reporting (MER) System for Uganda. Therefore, sample selection followed Teddlie and Fen Yu's (2007:77) recommendation which suggests that structures, groups and individuals are decided based on the researcher's judgment of their ability to have the required data needed to answer the research questions. To identify the sample, the study used the stratified purposive sampling procedure to ensure that the most appropriate, reliable and rich information was collected from the stakeholders' sample, whose perceptions are informed by adequate understanding and experience of the phenomenon under investigation. The APRM national structures have a population of 57 stakeholders from which the sample of 35 was drawn from different categories. In the next section is the procedure followed in selecting the sample from the targeted population identified.

5.5.3 Sampling procedure and method

Based on the structure of the national APRM system, the researcher generated a sampling frame that constituted the targeted population as the list of stakeholders. Sampling is a selection technique for identifying representative elements with characteristics of the targeted population for ease of the data collection process.

In this study, a non-probability or purposive sampling technique was applied where well-informed participants were identified in each stakeholder category involved in the implementation of the mechanism (Creswell & Clark 2011; Rule & John 2011). In the qualitative study approach, Teddie and Fen Yu (2007:77) recommend the use of non-probability sampling when the researcher is “selecting units” which may be individuals, groups or institutions based on their ability to provide answers to the research questions. Relatedly, Creswell (2013:156) recommends the adoption of a purposive sampling technique to ensure that only knowledgeable respondents with the required information are put in the sample as the basis for inclusion and exclusion criteria. Furthermore, Rubin and Rubin (2005:64) emphasise the necessary qualities of the sample, arguing that besides their position, roles and responsibilities, the sampled stakeholders should be able to articulate responses to the research questions based on their knowledge and experience. A major consideration was participant position and experience with the APRM between the first review in 2008 and the second review in 2017.

A sample of 35 participants was taken from a stakeholders’ population of 57 people in total from the different categories. Literature on qualitative research indicates that there is no specified minimum number of interviews or participants required for conducting a qualitative research enquiry, since the issue is not how large the sample should be in terms of numbers per segment (Patton 2002; Robinson 2014; Patton 2015). In qualitative studies, Creswell (2013:137) stresses that “what is critical is how best the sample of participants selected adequately provides quality and in-depth responses” from highly knowledgeable participants for a better understanding of the study phenomenon.

While qualitative research is associated with the idea of purposefully selecting the participants with relevant information going by the research question, the study observes the debate on the sufficient sample size and the consensus that there is no fixed number of respondents recommended in qualitative studies (Creswell 2013, Robinson 2014; Patton 2015; Tracy 2020). The justification for small samples for qualitative studies is further emphasised by Ritchie and Lewis (2003:38), who present three key arguments. Firstly, the thickness in detail of the information generated requires a relatively small sample size to enable thorough processing.

Secondly, concerns of whether the sample is of a sufficient scale as a basis for determining appropriate estimates do not arise since the rate of prevalence or incidences is not required. Thirdly, even with a relatively small sample, well-analysed data will sooner than later present a point where additional fieldwork units generate little value addition in evidence.

Furthermore, this study recognises the two major perspectives by Creswell (2014:239), emphasising the lack of standard sample size estimation on the number of participants in the sample. First is the argument that the sample size depends on the qualitative design being adopted with narrative enquiry, case study and phenomenology, while grounded theory and phenomenology require relatively bigger sample sizes. Second is the argument of saturation that the researcher ceases to collect data when the themes or categories are saturated and no new insights are observed. This implies that any additional input from participants comes with no new information added. This study adopts the case study design which necessitates a sample size large enough to address the research question and describe the phenomenon without risking having repetitive data.

The data collection process involved physical and electronic interaction with a purposively selected sample of two categories of interviewees, namely the internal stakeholders who are the staff involved in various decisions and implementation actions and the external stakeholders' representatives who participate in policy design at the APRM national and local government levels in Uganda. The choice of the sampling procedure was guided by the researcher's judgment in consideration of the research question, among other factors. The researcher physically reached out to the selected sites and identified the 35 individuals with the requisite experience and understanding of the phenomenon of APRM evaluation influence in the context of Uganda's policy process as a study sample.

The guiding principle in interviewing particular respondents was information power. Malterud *et al.* (2015) who introduced the concept as a real guiding principle, explains that the more information power the sample provides, the smaller the likely sample size needed, and vice versa. Lincoln and Guba (1985) proposed that sample size determination for a qualitative study be guided by the criterion of informational

redundancy, where sampling can be terminated by the researcher provided no new information is drawn by sampling more additional units. The purposive selection process of the sample as guided by Daniel's (2012:88) model where the study targeted a population of 57 participants from whom a sample of 35 respondents was selected. Due to the elite nature of the research subject, key participants were identified through purposive sampling.

The two categories of internal and external stakeholders constitute the participants involved in determining the degree of evaluation influence of the APRM, since they make decisions on the use of APRM evaluation. The process involved conducting interviews until data saturation started to emerge in the preliminary stages of data analysis, when the researcher concluded that complete and credible data had been generated from the appropriate respondents (Tashakkori & Teddlie 2008). During the data collection, the data saturation situation or point is reached when the respondents start responding to similar perceptions which suggest that no more participants are needed to respond to the issue (Gay *et al.* 2006:142). In what follows is a table reflecting selected stakeholders for the interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). Furthermore, the generated primary data was validated with documentary data from country self-assessment reports and the NPoAs.

5.5.4 Sampling method and sample size determination

Since the national APRM secretariats have similar structures, the researcher conducted purposive sampling for each stratum represented in the targeted population. The qualitative data collection covered 35 stakeholders as initially planned. Some respondents could not easily be accessed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, as they were working from home, and more was not necessary since the researcher observed that the saturation point for the required data had been realised. The data for the respondents' distribution per segment is reflected in Table 5.2 below.

Table 5.2: The sample size and selected participants for interviews and focus group discussions

	Stratum/Source of information	Type of stakeholder	Department/thematic area	Sample Size	Sampling Technique
(a)	APRM National Focal Point person/Minister	External	Focal Point/Executive	01	Purposive Sampling

			representative		
(b)	APRM National Governing Council – Representatives	External	CSOs, Academia, Women, Private Sector, Parliament/parties, Inter-Religious Council	07	Purposive Sampling
	National Coordination APRM	Internal	Manager/Staff	01	Purposive
(c)	Staff - National Secretariat Staff APRM	Internal	Democracy & Political Governance, Economic Governance, Socio-economic Management, Corporate Governance	10	Purposive Sampling
(d)	MDAs Focal point persons	External	Government Ministries Departments & Agencies	04	Purposive Sampling
(e)	Technical Institution Research	External	Consultant on National Plan of Action (NPoA) Consultant on Country Self-Assessment Report (CSAR)	02	Purposive Sampling
(f)	Regional representatives/planners	Internal	Central Region Eastern Region Northern Region Western Region	04	Purposive sampling
(g)	National Planning Authority experts for the National Development Plan (NDP-II & III)	Internal planners	Strategic Planning Macro-economics Legal Monitoring & Evaluation Information science Finance & Planning	06	Purposive Sampling
	Total			35	

Source: Researcher's own sample compilation (2020) with data from APRM Statute (2003:7) APRM Guidelines (2016:15) and Uganda Self-Assessment Report (UCSAR 2017).

As reflected in Table 5.2 above, the largest number of participants of 10 was drawn from the category of National APRM Secretariat staff who are the administrators responsible for day-to-day operations of the Secretariat headed by a manager (01). The seven members of the NGC represent each of the stakeholder constituencies

namely CSOs, parliament, academia, women, government, and the private sector who took part in both the first and the second-generation reviews. In addition was one Focal Point Minister, three experts from the NPA who are responsible for integration of APRM recommendations into the national planning framework called the National Development Plan (NDP III). Other participants included one national APRM coordinator, seven MDA focal point persons and four local government planners.

This study like other qualitative studies considers a relatively small sample size of 35 out of a targeted population of 57 stakeholders. To justify the logic of a small sample size in qualitative research, Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2011:45) argue that the researcher's interest lies in the depth of understanding gained from the detailed information. Relatedly, Ritche and Lewis (2003:83) add that in qualitative studies, the researcher is not required to ensure that the sample is statistically significant, because qualitative data is rich in detail and as more is collected and analysed, very little new additional evidence is obtained. Therefore, to enable the researcher to thoroughly process the detailed information, the proportion of the sample to the population is not a major area of focus.

5.6 RESEARCH PROCESS

To generate empirical knowledge for developing a framework for enhancing the APRM evaluation influence, a range of activities were conducted by the researcher as part of the data collection to analysis process. First, was the review of the literature of evaluation studies from which the focus was narrowed down from evaluation use and influence to investigating the symbolic and non-use as phenomena of interest that have been given limited attention. Second, was the review of different documents, reports and publications on the establishment and operationalisation of the APRM evaluation system. This involved the review of APRM country self-assessment reports, country review reports, and the African governance reports for the period between the first review in 2008 and the second review in 2017. This literature was later used as a foundation to inform the construction of the proposed enhanced APRM theoretical framework integrating ideas from evaluation literature, governance and public policy.

Third, was the generation of analytical tools which assessed the logic in the detailed theory of change framework in the APRM process by examining the nature of inputs, activities, outputs and outcomes which are interlinked by stakeholders in a given political context and the extent to which they influence policy processes. Here, the characteristics of the case context as perceived from the experiences of the stakeholders and how they influence varying outcomes and forms of use in policy were the main focus. Fourth, primary data from the case was collected through conducting semi-structured interviews of stakeholders which will be correlated with secondary data obtained through document analysis. From interview transcripts, coding and thematic analysis were conducted using ATLAS.ti 08 qualitative software for interpretation and explanation of results leading to discussions and results. It is from that analysed data that conclusions and recommendations on the APRM framework will be made to positively enhance its influence on policy design among member states. The next section discusses the data collection methods in qualitative research and then narrows down to those which were adopted by the researcher in the current study.

5.7 DATA COLLECTION

The researcher acknowledges the different data collection techniques and methods used in qualitative studies to generate the appropriate data for answering the research questions in the study. Schensul (2012:69) presents a range of methods identified in the literature including document analysis, semi-structured interviews, Focus Group Discussions (FGD) and observation, which are relevant in ensuring detailed exploration of the organisational and social characteristics as well as their meanings. Common to all the methods is the face-to-face interaction between the researcher and the study objects (Babbie & Mouton 2001:270). The choice of the methods adopted was mainly determined by the nature of the research questions and the required data for answering them. To ensure anonymity of the above participants as reflected in the methodology chapter, each group of stakeholders was given identification codes, which have been used in the rest of the discussion as reflected below.

Table 5.3: Code names given to the participants

CODES	DEFINITION
1. IDI-NGC	Indepth Interview-National Governing Council Representative
2. KII-FP	Key Informant Interview-Focal Point
3. KII-TRI	Key Informant Interview -Technical Research Institute consultant
4. KII-S-DGP	Key Informant Interview Staff
5. FGD-P-LG-P	Focu Group Discussion-Staff-Local Government Planner
6. FGD-FP-MDA	Focus Group Discussion-Focal Person for Ministries, Departments and Agencies
7. FGD-S	Focus Group Discussion-Staff
8. FGD-NGC	Focus Group Discussion-NGC

Source: Compiled by the researcher (2023)

5.7.1 Data collection methods

To gather more accurate data for understanding the APRM stakeholders' lived experiences, the study employed both secondary and primary sources which are referred to as triangulation. The researcher applied triangulation by employing more than one investigation method, theoretical perspective, or study group to collect different types of data from multiple sources (Tracy 2010:843). In order to understand different aspects of the APRM evaluation system and arrive at a more realistic and valid conclusion, document reviews and semi-structured interviews were adopted as the main data sources (Flick (2014:183), triangulation refers to. The major benefit of triangulation is advanced by Edmond and McManus (2007:1157), who argue that it helps to increase not only data validity but also the probability of theory confirmation. In addition, this triangulation in data collection, as well as analysis, contributes to the increased dependability of the research findings (Tufue-Dolgoy 2010). The study considered documents as a major source of secondary data to complement the interviews, which were the major primary sources (Flick 2009:255).

The researcher applied crystallisation and triangulation by collecting different types of data from multiple sources (Tracy 2010:843), in order to understand different aspects of the APRM evaluation system and arrive at a more realistic and valid conclusion. Document reviews and semi-structured interviews were adopted as the main data sources. According to Flick (2014:183), triangulation refers to employing more than one investigation method, theoretical perspective, or study group. The major benefit of triangulation is advanced by Edmond and McManus (2007:1157), who argue that it helps to increase not only data validity but also the probability of theory confirmation. In addition, this triangulation in data collection, as well as analysis, contributes to the increased dependability of the research findings (Tufue-Dolgoy 2010).

In conducting exploratory qualitative studies, Flick (2014:197) identifies qualitative techniques adopted in data collection to include: documentary or textual analysis, key informant interviews, historical analysis and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). This study being an exploratory qualitative study employed the interview technique through key informant interviews and Focus Group Discussion (FGDs) which was collaborated with another methodological technique of document analysis (Davis 2008; Yuen 2005). Based on the research questions, the different techniques generate views and opinions from a wide range of stakeholders with in-depth knowledge on the APRM evaluation system. In addition to the document reviews, data was collected by administering a list of questions on the nature of the APRM evaluation inputs, activities, actors, outcomes, context and the extent to which they influence policy processes and outcomes in the member states as discussed in detail below.

5.7.2 Document review and content analysis

The study considered documents as a major source of secondary data to complement the interviews which were the major primary sources. Flick (2009:255) refers to documents refer to “standardised artefacts” existing in formats like case reports, notes, drafts, judgements, certificates, expert opinions and judgements among others. The document analysis method refers to a critical examination of documents and secondary recorded information on an issue under investigation (Creswell 2008). This view is supported by Yanow (2007:411) who maintains that

“documents can provide background information prior to designing a research project and conducting interviews.” The documentary analysis involved review and extraction of the relevant information on APRM use and influence from secondary sources. In this study, the method of document analysis was applied to corroborate other evidence gathered from sources like in-depth interviews as well as field notes. This practice is in line with what Tellis’ (1997:9) affirms that the use of corroborated evidence from different sources as one of the most important benefits.

In the context of this study, the researcher conducted content analysis from the key APRM secondary sources on policy evaluation which included continental and national APRM records. To use APRM related documents, the researcher undertook an extensive review of literature to understand the APRM process, context and actors at the continental, national and local government level. Both web-based resources and materials from the Ugandan APRM and Continental Secretariat’s libraries, as well as the resource centres of various MDAs were key information sources. Technical personnel at both secretariats were also regularly contacted by both e-mails and phone calls to recommend relevant and credible sources in understanding the APRM multi-level structure, process, inputs, activities, output, outcomes, actors, contingencies and operational context.

Most of the documents reviewed were publications, reports, strategy and policy documents obtained from APRM structures at all levels, on the APRM evaluation and the refugee policy framework covering the period from the first country review in 2008 to the second country review in 2017. Key among these were: the APRM questionnaire, the Country Self-assessment Reports (CSAR) for both 2008 and 2017, NPoAs for 2010-14, minutes and reports of APRM committees for MDAs, parliament and cabinet, annual reports from the National APRM Secretariat, the National Planning Authority and the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development. Other documents include Country Review Reports, National Development Plans, Annual Reports on the implementation of the NPoA to the APR Forum, APRM Base Documents, the Standard Questionnaire for APRM Assessment, Guidelines for countries to Prepare for and Participate in the APRM, Progress reports on SDGs, the Agenda 2030 document as well as any other relevant ones. Such documents helped the researcher to collaborate written evidence for

ascertaining the generated opinions and perceptions of stakeholders on the various indicators of use and influence of the APRM evaluation.

5.7.2.1 Primary sources of qualitative data

To gain maximum benefits from the qualitative approach, Polkinghorne (2005:145) recommends that a semi-structured interview technique is preferred to obtain a rich account of the participants' "experience and perception". This was very important in this qualitative exploratory study.

(a) Semi-structured in-depth interviews

Qualitative primary data collection was largely conducted through administered semi-structured interviews to members of the NGC as the stakeholders' representatives. The researcher recognises that primary data collection takes different forms which include semi-structured, face to face interviews with staff and external stakeholders' representatives. Questions followed predesigned interview guidelines on the stakeholders' roles, perception and experience with the APRM system contextual conditions and their effects on the evaluation use and influence in policy design within their country context. Oso and Onen (2008:23) indicate that the methodology is considered appropriate in answering 'what' questions, but also due to its high confidentiality levels and potential to elicit relevant and timely information.

The collection of primary data was guided by the methodology and structure and participants were of the recent second country self-assessment. Research tools were developed to cover the different categories of respondents. In what follows is the description of the method of key informant interviews.

(b) Key informant interviews

In the context of this study, the semi-structured interview guide that was approved by the Faculty Ethics Committee was administered to key APRM internal and external stakeholders. The preference of this type of interview was due to the conversational nature and associated advantages of probing where the researcher was able to seek clarification of responses given. Interviews were administered through a list of questions referred to as interview guides which were compiled from the objectives of the study.

At the APRM national level, interviewed participants included the secretariat staff, focal point persons, members of the technical research council and the National Governing Council which is composed of stakeholder representatives from the National Planning Authority, civil society organisations, academia, the media, the private sector, political parties, youth, women and workers. These respondents were identified purposely based upon their involvement in the review process, their knowledge and their role in the use of findings and recommendations from the APRM reports to generate the National Plans of Action (NPoA). These were accessible through a data base and reports for the first and second generation country assessments available at the National Secretariat. Some face to face physical interactions were conducted alongside virtual interviews using Zoom due to the COVID-19 pandemic that required social distancing as part of the standard operating procedures put introduced by the Government of Uganda to minimise its spread. The semi-structured interview guide was an effective tool for capturing the stakeholders' perceptions, experiences and opinions of how the review process and findings influence national policies and budgets through the NPoAs.

During the interview process, the researcher after his introduction immediately sought consent to use audio recording which was granted by all participants. A total of 35 stakeholders were interviewed as per the appointments granted, but also at the time and in the venues agreed upon in advance as appropriate. To ensure consistency in asking questions, a prior approved interview guide developed as informed by the study objectives was adopted. Furthermore, the researcher sought to understand their ideas on how the APRM framework could be enhanced to positively affect use and influence of stakeholders' decisions and behaviour. Throughout the interview discussions the researcher observed the principles of ethical consideration by introduction, explanation of the study, its purpose, implication of participation, seeking consent, pledging anonymity and asking questions while probing a process which took between 45 minutes to one hour for each respondent. Finally, the transcripts compiled from the audio-recorded interviews were analysed systematically and collaborated with the field notes to get a more accurate and rich description of the findings for the study objective.

As a second method adopted in this study, key informant interviews are popular methods recommended in the collection of qualitative data (Meere 2012; Yin 2009). According to Creswell (2009:168), the technique is characterised by several elements which include firstly, structured and unstructured open-ended questions. Secondly, is accommodation of unanticipated issues that tend to emerge in the course of the interview. Thirdly, it involves the use of probing questions as follow up where considered necessary. Fourthly, recording by use of audiotapes to capture every detail is a recommended practice to supplement notes taken by the researcher. Tracy (2013:132) adds that such elements are commonly applied in social research due to associated advantages of mutual understanding, discovery, reflection and organic adaptation that develops between the researcher and the respondent.

Moreover, Creswell (2009:168) explains that it is conducted using semi-structured interview guides through face-to-face interaction with participating stakeholders and discussions in the form of a focus group. In the process, details of perceptions, opinions and experiences with associated meanings were revealed by stakeholders through probing by the interviewer. In addition, Tracy (2010:841) maintains that the technique is useful in capturing more detailed information of meanings beyond words which cannot be observed directly or put into writing. Highly knowledgeable stakeholders about the APRM actors, process structures and use of findings in policy design within their national contexts were interviewed. Since knowledge is not given but created, in-depth interviews are a common method for gathering data in qualitative research (Owen 2014; Maree 2012; Rule & John 2011).

In addition, the interviews enabled the researcher to freely gather more detailed opinions from respondents in a shorter time alongside supplemental data generated from document review. They are a popular technique that is recommended for gathering qualitative data on participant's perspectives, experiences and attitudes in order to comprehend the meanings associated with them (Joubish *et al.* 2011; Yin 2009). Such interviews were in-depth, qualitative conversations with individuals who have first-hand experience with the problem at hand. Their conduct involved the use of open ended semi-structured questions to selected stakeholders. The knowledgeable respondents through flexible interactions offer insightful meanings

into the nature of problems and make recommendations for remedies based on their understanding of the research phenomena (Onen 2014). This suggests that the technique is used by researchers when they are dealing with participants having specialised knowledge of a topic, and this is the case with the APRM stakeholders.

The interview technique is presented as more relevant in gaining data on evaluation influence, since decision-making on the use of APRM evaluation recommendations can be understood through descriptive information, to know the perspectives, behaviour, and motivations of the respondents. Cousin and Leithwood (1986:334) maintain that in researching evaluation influence, literature indicates that the technique has been most popularly preferred through longitudinal, simulation and retrospective studies to examine the use and influence of evaluation processes and reports.

In studying evaluation influence, some challenges have been identified by previous scholars to include: the challenge of documenting and recalling the occurrence and effect of evaluation over time, as well as the different forms that evaluation uses (Tri 2015:125). He however adds that a well-developed conceptual framework helps to shape the study. Since there is no preferred method, emphasis in this study is therefore placed on the researcher taking into account the situational context of the evaluation, as well as the past experiences of the stakeholder participants to enable them to construct, interpret and integrate the relevant knowledge.

(c) Focus group discussion

This method was conducted using a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) guide where thematically developed questions were administered to the respondents (Oso & Onen 2008:24). In preparation for the FGD, a list of questions was created as a guide for each FGD session before ethical approval was obtained. The discussion procedure began with establishing the primary goal and defining the important research objectives. The researcher took extreme care when selecting participants, to ensure that the group and the discussion remained relevant to the primary objective of the study. The adoption of this technique is mainly informed by based on the nature of synergistic relationships and group dynamics among participants to generate information (Nyumba *et al.* 2017). Participants were all middle level civil

servants from a relatively similar social class, to ensure access to the perceptions of those participants who would may not be free to speak up in larger group meetings (Krueger 1994). The participants were mainly focal point persons from different MDAs who are directly responsible for ensuring that policy priorities identified in the NPoAs and the recommendations from the Country Review Reports (CRR) are well integrated.

To conduct the FGD, the researcher used a round table approach to moderate the discussion by allowing each respondent to contribute to the discussion. The participants consisted of seven (7) stakeholder groups of staff and members representing external stakeholders of the NGC and MDA focal persons, who met separately. Consent for tape recording was sought from the respondents to ensure accurate capture of the details. Below is a table showing the distribution of participants in the FGDs from the different MDAs of the Ugandan Government.

Table 5.4: FGD participants from different MDAs

Respondent No.	GENDE R	TITLE/POSITION	MDA
FGD.R-1.	M	Chairperson/Advisor	Office of the Prime Minister
FGD.R-2.	F	Senior Legal Officer	National Planning Authority
FGD.R-3	M	Head of Policy and Planning Unit	Ministry of Justice and constitutional affairs
FGD.R-4.	M	Manager, Strategy and Planning	National Information Technology Authority
FGD.R-5	M	Commissioner Planning	Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development
FGD.R-6	M	Commissioner Procurement and Policy Management	Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development
FGD.R-7	M	Commissioner, Water resources Planning and Regulation	Ministry of Water and Environment
FGD.R-8	M	Senior Planner	National Planning Authority

Source: Researcher's compilation 2022.

As reflected in Table 5.4 above, the researcher carefully selected eight (8) middle level civil servants in government MDAs who perform the role of MDA focal point

persons for the APRM. The selected participants are central in policy decisions involving integration of APRM recommendations in national policies. There were four ministries and four agencies represented and gender balanced with two ladies. All of the participants had to be knowledgeable about APRM operations from the first review in 2008 through to the second review in 2017 until the 2021 NPoA reporting of annual progress.

5.8 DATA ANALYSIS AND REPORTING STRATEGY

In any scientific investigation, data generated is said to carry no meaning until it is converted into information through a process of data analysis (Hofstee 2006:117). In this study, the qualitative data analysis (QDA) was adopted typically inductive and exploratory for interpretation of meanings (Maree 2012). Guided by the themes, this process an iterative process involves organisation, reduction, coding, comparison and categorisation of large volumes of indepth data into more manageable forms to derive meanings from findings and infer (Thomas 2006; Kawlick 2004). From each interview, the transcripts generated were checked and cleaned to ensure accuracy in data content to identify emerging themes while focusing on more relevant data for the following interviews.

In addition, Bernard (2013) emphasises the significance of creating assumptions based on research or tacit knowledge and analysing the relationships between these assumptions. It also incorporates concepts or presumptions about how classifications are created based on theoretical or empirical study. According to Miles and Huberman (1994), the process of analysing qualitative data can be broken down into three steps: firstly, data reduction, secondly, data display and thirdly, conclusion. To account for the analytical processes, data display entails the reduction the complexity of the data to "manageable sizes" that can be effectively communicated to any reader. The reseacher is better able to relate to the findings when data is presented practically and graphically to highlight the patterns in the data. In this study, content analysis was adopted for secondary data while preliminary analysis for primary data started as the data was being collected and during the ceaning and transcribing of interviews as elaborated below..

5.8.1 Document review

The secondary data through qualitative research methodology was subjected to reviews using content analysis. Secondary data from the APRM and policy related documents that provides relevant answers to the research questions was collected. The researcher recognises that there are now four different kinds of qualitative content analysis. They are grounded theory, cross-case analysis, and thematic analysis and content analysis. Although strong emphasis is placed on theory-driven research, Mayring (2003:74) maintains that inductive categories can also be created using qualitative content analysis techniques.

Hsieh and Shannon (2005:1278) refer to content analysis as involving “the subjective interpretation of text data content by systematically classifying coding and identification of patterns or themes”. While the component of subjective interpretation may make it appear less scientific, systematic classification emphasises its scientific nature. Bryman (2012) presents qualitative content analysis as an approach to documents that places emphasis on the researchers’ role forming the meaning in the texts. It involves identifying the the context in which the research object or subject is being analysed, and comprehends the meaning derived from the data and also allows categories to develop it. Relatedly, Kohlbacher (2006:23) defines it as “an approach of empirical, methodological controlled analysis of texts within their context of communication, following content analytical rules and step-by-step models, without rash quantification”. The focus of qualitative content analysis is on the text's quality, including both its explicit and implicit meaning. Relatedly, qualitative content analysis can be both inductive and predicated on theories or pre-existing categories.

Content analysis addresses the how, why and when questions as well as issues involving existing theoretical conceptions. To conduct content analysis, large volumes of qualitative data are condensed using data-reduction procedures in qualitative content analysis into manageable categories that can be analysed. The methodology's validity and dependability are strengthened by the methodical approach. The approach nonetheless maintains the essential qualities of qualitative methodologies in general, including reflexivity and interpretation.

To guide the analysis, Mayring (2000) identifies the three components of qualitative content analysis. Firstly, data must be condensed and divided into useful units. Secondly, the investigator searches the divided data for patterns. Thirdly, the results were confirmed by comparing them to contradicting or other theories. According to Schreier (2012), a strategy for methodically reducing data and explaining the interpreted meaning of categories through evaluation of their environment is known as qualitative content analysis. The analysis approach followed Kuchkartz's (2012) three steps of qualitative content analysis. First was summarising the data by interpreting it and reducing it into manageable amounts. Second was explication which involved the use of additional sources to help in clarifying materials to gain deeper understanding of the cases to identify existing patterns. Third was structuring where, based on the research questions and the conceptual framework, categories were developed through coding the different sections of the text data. Some early data analyses were carried out while collecting qualitative data and transcribing interviews. During this procedure, the researcher read each interview transcript to verify word quality, richness and accuracy, of data material to get a general sense of the preliminary emerging findings. To gather sufficient rich and quality data for in-depth comprehension of the policy phenomena, the researcher chose which research themes to focus more on in the subsequent interview procedure after cleaning each interview transcript and conducting a preliminary data analysis. The researcher cleaned and organised the interview transcripts before starting intense QDA by going through each transcript one at a time.

5.8.2 Key informant, in-depth interviews and FGDs

In the context of this study, analysis began with primary data captured by electronic recorders through key informant and in-depth interviews and the FGDs transcribed into a MS-Word document. As suggested by Friese (2019:23), the transcribed primary data in the word document was loaded into ATLAS ti Version 08. Wildschut (2014:27) recommends that the software is a resourceful tool for reviewing qualitative data but also enabling efficient text and graphic analysis. The researcher adopted the programme with full appreciation of what Babbie and Mouton (2011:503) emphasise: that it is not designed to do the analysis for the researcher, but rather to facilitate data analysis. Using this software which made analysis simpler and more structured, the stored data was coded, for

identification of data content codes, categorised and content analysed for recurring themes and sub-themes relevant to the study. From the uploaded transcripts, quotes of relevant responses per research question were identified and those containing closely related or similar ideas were assigned same codes. Wesbrook (1994:246) refers to as “clusters of categories that share some commonality, ...or refer to a single issue” During the analysis, the codes in form of short phrases carrying descriptive meanings were assigned symbolically to data portions in the transcripts and documents (Saldana 2009). The objective was to generate data codes which were used to determine information themes that guided the presentation and interpretation of data.

The researcher opted for open coding of data as a method of data reduction that was done to systematically organise and group similarly coded data into categories of data content with common content ideas, characteristics, meanings, connotations and patterns from various participants (Bernard 2006; Rubin & Rubin 2005). Codes helped to identify general ideas from the data to form themes . . As recommended by Yin (2003), the generated codes were compared with each other as categories were refined, common patterns and themes identified, and interpreted while differences and inconsistencies are explored in the responses across different stakeholder categories. Phrases like “*absence of a separate budget for the APRM secretariat, dependency on an unreliable donor funding, lack of direct appropriation of funds by parliament*”, all suggesting inadequate financial inputs into the evaluation system as a theme. Guided by the research questions, an inductive process intended to condense raw data into summary form led to comparison of responses, data categorisation and identification of suitable themes for analysis (Thomas 2006). For each thematic area, emerging conceptual issues of convergency and divergency were identified for interpretation and consequent discussion (Lindqvist & Nilholm 2013).

Thematic analysis was further used to identify themes and sub-themes with similar data content in the form of significant responses. It involved focusing on the data reflecting patterns of evaluation effects, mechanisms and influencing factors at a micro level as required in answering the research question. The emerging categories were then grouped into themes. The observed themes were compared and where necessary also triangulated with data generated from

documentary review (Goffin *et al.* 2019:597). The themes according to Westbrook (1994:246), “refer to clusters of categories that share some commonality, such as reference to a single issue”. Themes, constructs and concepts from the data categories were useful in describing data for purposes of effective understanding of phenomena of evaluation influence under consideration (Fereday *et al.* 2006). These were summarised or interpreted for meanings to understand the experiences of the different stakeholders in the APRM implementation contexts at national and local government levels (Crowe *et al.* 2015). These categories and themes were later used to facilitate the stakeholders’ identification in their perceptions, similar understanding or experiences of particular policy influence realities within the generated interview data.

In addition, during the analysis process, comparisons of findings under each theme were identified to establish some commonalities and differences in stakeholders’ understandings and experiences of policy implementation. Convergence and comparisons of ideas from participants’ experiences and understanding helped the researcher in making some of the appropriate assertions from the emerging findings as knowledge contributions to positively enhance the APRM evaluation influence. As part of the output from the process, descriptive write-ups on both cases’ details were generated along with the questionnaires as well as the conceptual framework. Comparison of differences and similarities across the cases were conducted to identify and explain the observed patterns and themes.

In the presentation of findings under the different themes from qualitative results, relevant quotations were identified and cited. Rich and significant stakeholders’ quotations considered relevant to different themes were included to preserve the participants’ voices and subjective view points as reflected in similarities and differences emerging in their responses to questions. The purpose of adding them was to provide valuable support to the researchers’ arguments and interpretation of the findings on a particular issue regarding use and influence of APRM in Uganda’s policy processes. The researcher considered such evidence as an important way of demonstrating and confirming interpretive rigour for the credibility of the research findings’ emerging conclusions (Fereday *et al.* 2006; Creswell 2013). This view is supported by Hofstee (2006), who argues that

quotes in form of participants' voices not only provide both evidence of emerging findings and credibility of the interpretations, propositions and conclusions made.

The researcher recognised the importance of ensuring quality through the process of data collection and analysis. Quality control was ensured as suggested by Yin (2003) where interview guidelines were carefully developed, followed by pilot interviews, writing of field notes, use of audio taping, as well as the transcription of interviews and coding. Finally, the researcher generated the major findings and discussed them in line with the literature to show the contribution of the current study towards the body of knowledge of evaluation influence in public policy.

5.9 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

In any qualitative research process, several trustworthiness measures were ensured by the researcher for the methodology, findings and conclusions to be considered reliable. Validity refers to the process of ensuring adoption of appropriate procedures for generating correct answers to the questions. Reliability refers to the quality of measurement procedure adopted by the researcher to ensure predictable and accurate results (Babbie 2014:430).

Regarding this study, the researcher carefully followed the trustworthiness criteria to assure validity, quality, and rigor in the research process, since this is a study that was conceptualised within the philosophical paradigm of interpretivism. This is because the nature of a research project, its underlying philosophical assumptions, and the methodological procedures used all have an impact on its ability to provide reliable and accurate results (Connell 2003). This corroborates with what Anney (2014:272) stresses, namely that "each research approach employs different evaluation criteria to ensure the rigor of the inquiry due to different philosophical and methodological assumptions that guide each approach". Some scholars have further cautioned that any qualitative study cannot be trustworthy without being dependable and credible (Cohen & Crabtree 2006). Therefore, this research like all other interpretivist qualitative studies, determines the quality, rigor and validity of their findings, as opposed to

positivists, who adhere to the traditional assessment tests of objectivity, validity and reliability in the quantitative approaches (Yuen 2005; Connell 2003). The following section discusses how validity and reliability were ensured in this study.

5.9.1 Reliability

Reliability of qualitative data as well as its findings was identified as one of the requirements for assessing the accuracy, veracity, integrity and confidence of qualitative research findings. Reliability is about the stability and consistency of data or the convergence of stakeholder responses on particular constructs over time. In qualitative research, reliability centres around dependability which refers to how much a researcher can rely on a data source, data gathering techniques, data itself, and data results (Maree 2012; Pierce 2007). Literature indicates that the credibility, transferability, confirmability and conclusions greatly determine its reliability (Creswell 2014; Anney 2014; Maree 2012; Lincoln & Guba 2007; Schwandt *et al.* 2007). To achieve the required level of reliability, the researcher placed emphasis on the rigor through an in-depth research process to guarantee the value and veracity of the conclusions drawn from them.

(a) Credibility

Reliability also involves ensuring credibility of the process and findings. This is intended to assess whether the participants' meanings which they assign to their experiences reflect an accurate representation and interpretations of participant responses (Maree 2012; Bowen 2005; Connell 2003). To ensure credibility, the researcher opted for triangulation by utilising many data sources and gathering techniques, including multiple stakeholders who were questioned, field notes, and study of various APRM and refugee policy documents which were collaborated for validity checks. The conclusions from the study participants, who served as the primary source of most of the data, were supported by additional data that was cleaned from different APRM and refugee policy related literature review.

(b) Transferability

The researcher recognises that unlike in quantitative investigations where statistical generalisations are applicable to large populations, the nature of transferability frequently sought from case study contexts is the generalisation of

the knowledge generated to other contexts. Therefore, to cater to this novel concept, theoretical data, thought-provoking statements and important quotes derived from a single case study area or policy may be theoretically inferred to related studies or broadly applied across other comparable cases.

The criterion for transferability was also considered to ensure reliability. Transferability refers to the degree to which the study results of a specific qualitative case study may be generalised or transferred to other comparable contexts outside the study (Schwandt 1997; Rule & John 2011; Maree 2012). Some positivist scholars insist that qualitative study findings cannot be generalised to other similar contexts or transferable to other contexts without being credible (Cohen & Crabtree 2006). This study maintains that although the transferability criterion has drawn criticism from positivists for its inability to extrapolate findings from case studies to broad populations, interpretivists use it or apply it differently in qualitative research than they do statistically in quantitative studies. Yin (2003:23) makes the point that the results of qualitative case studies can be generalised to theoretical claims rather than statistical claims.

(c) Confirmability

Confirmability was another criterion for ensuring validity. The concept refers to the degree to which study findings are consistent with the study's objectives and have substantial backing from the data gathered, excluding the biases of the researcher (Cohen & Crabtree 2006). It is established by assuring the integrity and correctness of data gathering, and the validity of the findings drawn sense-making and data analysis (Anney 2014; Onwuegbuzie & Leech 2007; Connell 2003). In this study, the confirmability of findings was met by decreasing the information gaps and biases, giving supporting evidence for the findings and ensuring the soundness of decisions made in the research process. In addition, the researcher used data source triangulation to check for collaborated findings. As suggested by Amin (2005:23), trustworthiness was ensured through validity and reliability instruments to maintain accuracy, consistency as well as control of extraneous variables.

5.9.2 Validity

The second strategy for ensuring trustworthiness was a validity check. In qualitative studies, researchers are expected to follow appropriate procedures through which correct findings will be generated to arrive at credible conclusions. Validity refers to the process of ensuring adoption of appropriate procedures for generating correct answers to the questions, just as reliability refers to the quality of measurement procedure adopted by the researcher to ensure predictable and accurate results (Babbie 2014:430). Associated benefits include results being considered believable to other researchers, and transferable to other contexts through generalisation. The researcher ensured validity through triangulation, reflexivity and members checks as discussed in the next section.

(a) Triangulation

In undertaking this study, efforts to ensure both internal and external validity were enhanced through analysis of triangulation generated data from the primary and secondary sources. However, the researcher was cognisant of the fact that in assessing this qualitative data analysis technique, the reliability issue is at the heart of the criticism raised in literature. This is based on the argument that the "deconstruction of data into categories or codes" is dependent on the researcher's arbitrary judgments (Mayring 2004:75). In this case the researcher adopted inter-coder reliability during the process of investigation as a more crucial method of ensuring internal consistency and dependability since qualitative social science studies are frequently difficult to duplicate or reconstruct. The multiple coders helped examine the same data to guarantee consistency of coding. In addition, conclusions were corroborated by experts' views and other secondary data sources as the data analysed was reported in the chapter of findings in the research report. Validity was also ensured through reflexivity and member checks as explained below:

(b) Reflexivity

The researcher also ensured validity of the data, results and conclusions through reflexivity to guarantee the rigor of study findings in order to guard against biases that could impair the quality and validity of the research process and conclusions. Reflexivity is defined as the capacity of the researcher to analyse and reflect upon his or her views during the whole research process (Christensen, Johnson & Turner 2014; Arber, 2005). The researcher ensured reflexivity in this study by serving as

both an insider and an outsider through self-awareness and situating himself primarily as a researcher first throughout the selection of the research participants, as well as the collection and analysis of data.

The researcher ensured validity through prioritising selection of individual stakeholders who were very knowledgeable about the APRM implementation. Consideration was given to the time factor where stakeholders with rich experience in the APRM evaluation cut across the first review in 2008 through the annual NPoA assessments to the 2017 second generation review until present. This was done through the quality, veracity, accuracy and richness of the audiotaped and verbatim interview transcripts routinely checked for legitimacy (Tufue-Dolgoy, 2010; Cohen & Crabtree 2006; Yuen 2005). Consequently, the researcher was able to confirm the data validity by conducting audiotaped interviews with carefully chosen and information-rich participants. The use of the digital recorder is intended to ensure reliable quality, as well as document analysis.

To ensure validity of the methodology and findings, early data analyses were carried out while collecting qualitative data and transcribing interviews. During this procedure, the researcher read each interview transcript to verify for word quality, richness and accuracy of data material. In addition, each transcript was studied to get a general sense of the preliminary emerging findings. Conduct of preliminary data analysis also enabled the researcher to gather sufficiently rich and quality data for in-depth comprehension of the APRM evaluation influence phenomena, since it informed him of which key research themes to focus more on in the subsequent interview procedure after cleaning each interview transcript and conducting a preliminary data analysis.

The researcher also ensured expert review of tools to ascertain their appropriateness in measuring the intended research problem and objectives based on various documents for assessing evaluation use and influence identified earlier. Triangulation of data from various techniques was followed by organising, compiling and coding of data. The study appreciates the recommendation by Yin (2009;40), who adds that multiple sources are essential for case study research, since different insights are generated, to improve the research's internal and construct validity.

(c) Member checks

Finally, in ensuring the validity of the findings and the conclusions, member checks were conducted by the researcher to guarantee the accuracy of the findings and conclusions. The member checks with some of the stakeholders at the centre of the APRM operations in Uganda were intended to check the data interpretations made and its accuracy while obtain additional information and feedback to strengthen the trustworthiness and validity of the findings (Thomas 2006). During this process, the researcher secured more appointments and physically interfaced with the APRM national coordinator, and the senior planners for each of the four thematic areas to confirm the content of the transcripts and the data analysis report. He also sent mails to some participants such as the Chairman of the NGC and the consultants of the TRI, who could not be accessed physically for member checks. These in response confirmed the content captured in relation to the different objectives. In addition, the researcher also made phone calls to the Focal Point Minister responsible for APRM who could not respond to his emails promptly with requests for obtaining clarification on some issues identified within their interview transcripts. The researcher read out a summary of the key issues captured in his earlier interview and other secondary data sources which he clarified with the staff at the APRM National Secretariat.

5.10 PILOT STUDY

Upon successfully attaining the first approval certificate for ethical clearance on 24th July 2021 from the Research Ethics Committee for the Faculty of Economics and Management Sciences, University of Pretoria, the researcher moved to get further clearance in Uganda to enable him to undertake a pilot study. He secured ethical clearance through the Uganda Christian University Research Ethics Committee (UCU-REC), and the Ugandan National Council of Science and Technology (NCST) on 17th November 2021. Then further authorisation was sought from the National Planning Authority (NPA) on 17th December 2021 for the APRM-Uganda Secretariat located in Kampala, as well as the National Governing Council (NGC) in February 2022. The final letter is one that directly introduced the researcher to the different stakeholders involved in the APR evaluation processes in Uganda at both the national level and district local government level. Consequently, four appointments

from key stakeholders were secured for field pre-tests of questionnaires conducted before field data collection.

All four interviews for pilot studies were conducted involving stakeholder representatives of different categories including the national deputy coordinator APRM secretariat, senior administrator NPA, the Focal Point for the office of the prime minister, and the senior planner Democracy and Political Governance thematic area. Upon meeting the respondents in the time given for the different appointments, they all offered the researcher written consent by signing the official University of Pretoria consent forms. Furthermore, they also agreed to audio-recorded interviews after the researchers' introduction and explanation of the study.

It is worth noting that three of the four respondents in the pilot study were interviewed physically. This face-to-face interaction greatly helped the researcher to get insights about the degree of appropriateness, quality, length and areas for reorganisation of the interview guide in addition to enhancing skills for interviewing to generate additional details in guiding the interview process. It was after this interaction that the researcher polished the data collection tools and submitted them to the Faculty Ethics Committee for amendment. The request was granted and the data collection tools were approved on 20th May 2021 by the committee. The researcher then embarked on full-scale data collection among the APRM stakeholders.

5.11 ETHICAL IMPLICATIONS

This section describes the research ethical obligations and how the researcher observed them to ensure quality in the research process when confronted with moral puzzles. This study falls into the field of social sciences where humans were used as research subjects or participants, so the researcher observed Strydom's (2011:113) emphasis that this poses special ethical issues that require protection of their human rights. From the initial stages, the study went through the University of Pretoria approval process by the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences (EMS) Ethics and Research Committees, as well as the research clearance by the Uganda National Council of Science and Technology (UNCST). Consequently, the

researcher observed the research ethical principles as recommended by Babbie (2014:20); Flick (2014:49) and Creswell (2009:89). These principles include: informed consent, confidentiality and privacy, anonymity as well as the researcher's responsibility. Sufficient precaution was taken to prevent the researcher's bias, since the actions taken toward the objects when conducting research determine the validity and dependability of the results of any investigation. Such ethical considerations were made during the design of the data collection instruments, while conducting data collection in the field, as well as the management and analysis of data as explained in the following details.

5.11.1 Informed consent

In research, informed consent implies that the respondent has been informed about the objectives and procedures of the study in which they are being asked to participate (Oso & Onen 2008:25). To ensure informed consent, the researcher observed Stacey and Stacey's (2012:392) recommendation that, before administering a questionnaire, conducting an interview or moderating a focus group discussion, the researcher requested data access. This was intended to manage the ethical dilemmas from the power relations that emerge between the participant and the researcher (Mertens 2012:19). Furthermore, it helped to conduct the study with the utmost honesty to avoid any form of associated risks such as embarrassment, harm and discomfort caused by secret observation of participants and provocative questions which may affect their emotional wellbeing (Marczyk *et al.* 2005:233). To ensure that the participants' understand the study, the researcher provided relevant information as well as the reasons and purpose for the selected stakeholders to participate. In particular, the researcher secured an introductory letter from the National Planning Authority that granted permission to access the study sites, heads of institutions and the participants. This was accompanied by the invitation letters for stakeholders to participate and the consent forms which were to be signed after the participant's voluntary acceptance to participate in the data collection.

This written consent form indicated the research objectives as an academic study, the risks, benefits and possible implications to the participant, data storage and usage, and the extent of privacy, confidentiality and anonymity. The

researcher pledged to clarify the expected questions, mode of administration, behavior, and environmental context which he did during the interview. The consent request also included a provision for the participant's right to refuse to respond and even the right to stop participating in the research at any moment and any continuation could be renegotiated (Pienaar 2010:185). Respondents were asked to read the consent form designed in the standard format of the University of Pretoria, seeking voluntarily participation in the exercise. The stakeholders were requested to sign the consent page as evidence that data was collected without any coercion. Consequently, the researcher only proceeded to collect data from a respondent after obtaining consent from each one of them, including recording interviews as well as taking field notes. Additionally, participants' voices were audio-recorded throughout interview conversations with their permission.

5.11.2 Privacy and confidentiality

In research ethics, privacy means that respondents have the right to keep certain information from the public domain, and the researcher observed such relational ethics of participants' respect and dignity (Tracy 2010:847). Confidentiality is the agreement between the researcher and the respondent that the information given will not be passed to a third party without the consent of the respondent (Oso & Onen 2008:25). In this research, the confidentiality and privacy agreements were signed with the participants and ensured by the presentation of the informed consent to the respondent where the researcher renounced any right of displaying the respondent's privacy to the public without his/her consent (Stacey & Stacey 2012:393).

During data management, the researcher had to take into account the participants' confidentiality and kept their identity private, when transcribing the audio-format interviews, data analysis and the publication of some of their voices in the form of quotations as evidence to support the conclusions made. The data provided by the APRM Secretariat, MDAs, local governments and research participants through written materials and interviews was handled in the strictest confidence. Furthermore, the use of pseudonyms throughout the research procedure ensured the confidentiality of participants. In practice, the researcher avoided asking for or

recoding the names of respondents in the data collection process. Therefore, no names, titles, sexes or units were attached to the participants' questionnaires for purposes of identifying their responses; but rather tags representing those identities. For example, participants from the National Governance Council were named NGC 1, and so were the others.

5.11.3 Anonymity

The issue of anonymity in research ethics means the fact that all participants in the research have the right to remain anonymous; that their identities are not salient features in the study (Oso & Onen 2008:25). To ensure anonymity, the researcher avoided asking for any information related to the identification of the respondent such as his/her name, phone number or number of any of his/her identification documents. As Pienaar (2010:179) maintains, this helped in avoiding any possible risks to the participants' privacy, confidentiality, standing, values, positions or beliefs.

5.11.4 Researcher's responsibility

In research, the issue of "researcher's responsibility" implies that the researcher must be sensitive to participant's well-meaning and human dignity in his intentions (Oso & Onen, 2008:25). The researcher in this study ensured his responsibility by providing enough information to respondents regarding what the risks and benefits were upon deciding to participate in the research (Pienaar 2010:179). The researcher applied data management practices that respected participants' rights and took responsibility for any potential errors and omissions in the content (Tracy 2010:842). Being aware of the scientific misconduct and need to maintain the quality of the research results, all of the published and unpublished sources of literature reviewed in the study were acknowledged in the form of a bibliography at the very end of the study report (Burns & Grove 2005).

In addition, the researcher took the necessary precautions and responsibility for safeguarding participants' wellbeing, and ensuring good will, justice and respect as expected in principles governing human beings as research subjects without any form of prejudice (Pienaar 2010:179). Furthermore, going by Tracy's (2010:842) recommendation, self-reflexivity practice was a major consideration as the researcher honestly declared the strengths as well as the shortcomings in the

process, throughout the stages of the research design, data collection, data analysis and text writing.

5.12 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter presented the research process detailing how the data was collected to generate answers to the research questions. It began by presenting the research design, and highlighting the five paradigms that guide and inform public administration research which include: positivism, interpretivism, feminism, critical theory, postmodern, complexity theory and chaos theory. The two dominant paradigms were explained in detail showing their ontological, epistemological and methodological assumption. The chapter identified interpretivism as the preferred paradigm adopted to inform the study with associated justifications leading to a qualitative approach.

Furthermore, a background to all three of the approaches, qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods was provided before narrowing the focus to the qualitative approach. The characteristics of the approach, and justifications for its adoption were explained, as well as the designs in the approach which include ethnography, phenomenology, grounded theory and the case study design, which was adopted in the study. In addition, the chapter detailed the study area, case selection of APRM implementation in Uganda's first-and second-generation reviews, as well as the country's refugee policy framework and the scope. Then it presented a detailed methodology, highlighting the research process, sampling data collection methods and techniques along with their justifications. Finally, it discussed the ethical considerations, how they were observed in the study, and the pilot study. Therefore, this chapter presented the pragmatic arrangements of how data was obtained and analysed for major themes, conclusions and recommendations. The next chapter presents an analysis of the empirical data as informed by both the stakeholders and the secondary data on the effect of APRM processes, actors and context on Uganda's public policy between the first-and second-generation reviews.

CHAPTER SIX: DATA ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION

6.1 INTRODUCTION

In line with the purpose of the study being to generate a framework for enhancing the influence of the APRM evaluation system, the previous chapter presented a discussion on the implementation of the APRM in Uganda, based on secondary data. In this chapter an interpretation and analysis of the findings from stakeholders on the influence of the APRM's evaluation system on Uganda's policy process is presented. Chapter Six presents and discusses the multiple views on stakeholders' understanding of the APRM's implementation realities in the Ugandan context. The chapter analyses the APRM's influence on public policy in general and then narrows its focus on Uganda's 'generous' refugee policy regime as a best practice. In its three sections, the chapter first focuses on describing the characteristics of the study participants; then presents the interpretation and discussion of the findings' section; and finally narrowing down to the refugee policy framework in particular.

6.1.1 The empirical application of evaluation influence

Public policies are generated through a framework of governmental procedures, organisations and influences. Empirical findings from the study indicate that through the APRM, the Government of Uganda (GoU) as a major player in different policy stages is influenced by other stakeholders in shaping the policy outcome. The finding is in agreement with Hogwood and Gunn (1984:24), who argue that public policies are generated through a framework of governmental procedures, organisations and influences. To assess the influence of the APRM system in Uganda, stakeholder understanding is considered critical since it reflects how their experiences, perceptions and attitudes make sense of the policy implementation process (Singh 2014). From a sample of 35 study respondents, the section below presents empirical findings on the use and influence of the APRM on Uganda's public policy.

6.1.2 Operationalisation of data collection

As indicated in the methodology in Chapter Five, the study used a purposive sampling technique. This technique involved identified stakeholders who were those involved in the decisions and types of use and non-use of the APRM data, thereby

determining the degree of evaluation influence of the APRM on national policies and programmes. Freeman *et al.* (2007:36) distinguish stakeholders based on identities like political affiliation, roles, interests and positions committing their membership to specific groups. This is elaborated by Leung (2010) who explains that internal or primary stakeholders are individuals, groups or institutions having legal contracts in a policy under consideration, while external or secondary stakeholders are those entities without a contract but with interest in the policy. This sample selection was purposively informed by the roles and functions played by the stakeholders in the decision-making process, as provided for in the APRM Guideline (2003:34). Going by the APRM Statute (2016:23), internal stakeholders include: the staff of the National Secretariat and the NPA, the Focal Point Minister, and the NGC representatives, while external stakeholders include the consultants from the TPI, the MDA Focal Point persons and other CSOs.

The data was generated from a selected sample of 35 purposively selected representative participants out of 57 internal and external stakeholders attached to the APRM National Secretariat in Uganda. In-depth interviews were conducted with members of the NGC, consultants from the Technical Research Institute (TRI), national secretariat staff, as well as an FGD of participants drawn from Focal Point persons of MDAs as distributed in the table presented in Chapter Five.

6.1.2 Findings and data analysis of the APRM's evaluation influence

The qualitative data was collected from semi-structured interviews with 35 participants who worked with the APRM for the period between the first country review in 2008, the second one in 2017, and including progress reporting on the implementation of corresponding National Plans of Action (NPoAs). The researcher asked the APRM stakeholders to draw from their experiences and give their views, perceptions and opinions on the degree of use or non-use of the APRM evaluation process and findings in Uganda's public policy.

All of the 35 participants gave their consent to be recorded to ensure that the responses were captured accurately. Where they responded in the affirmative, they were required to classify the nature, type and level of influence with examples illustrating how elements of the APR process brought about changes in the country's

policies. For negative responses, they were asked to give reasons that explained the lack of influence. The audio recording was transcribed into word text which was analysed qualitatively using the Atlas Ti.08 software. The researcher conducted a preliminary exploration of the raw data by reading the transcripts, coding and labelling the text, bringing together themes with related codes, and identifying specific quotes that supported the codes to show the participant's perceptions (Leech & Onwuand-Onwuegbuzie 2011). This was followed by undertaking thematic analysis across the responses of different stakeholders. An in-depth analysis of the thematic factors showing evaluation influence was identified from the responses of different stakeholders. From the findings, an analysis of the participants' responses yielded three major themes which include: the evaluation implementation process, stakeholders and context, as major factors influencing use as informed by the findings. The next section presents an analysis of the findings per theme with their perceived effect.

6.3 THEME 1: THE INFLUENCE OF THE APRM'S EVALUATION PROCESS ON THE TYPE OF USE OR NON-USE OF DATA IN UGANDA'S PUBLIC POLICY

The nature of the evaluation implementation process was identified as a significant factor that affects the degree of use and influence of the APRM on national policies. The researcher established from the literature that the primary intentions of evaluation are policy learning and accountability, but suggests that the use takes various forms from conceptual, symbolic to instrumental (Hojlund 2015:32). During the data collection, he then asked the participants sampled from the APRM stakeholders to draw from their experiences and give their views, perceptions and opinions on the degree of use or non-use of the APRM evaluation process and findings in Uganda's public policy. Where they responded in the affirmative, they were required to classify the nature, type and level of influence with examples illustrating how elements of the APRM process brought about changes in the country's policies. For negative responses, they were asked to give reasons that explain the lack of influence.

6.3.1 Use of APRM data between the first and second generation reviews

During the process of data collection, participants were asked to explain whether APRM data was being used in their respective structure as a way of informing the country's national policies. Figure 6.1 below reflects a summary of how they responded in varying categories from direct use, partial use and non use of APRM data to inform public policies.

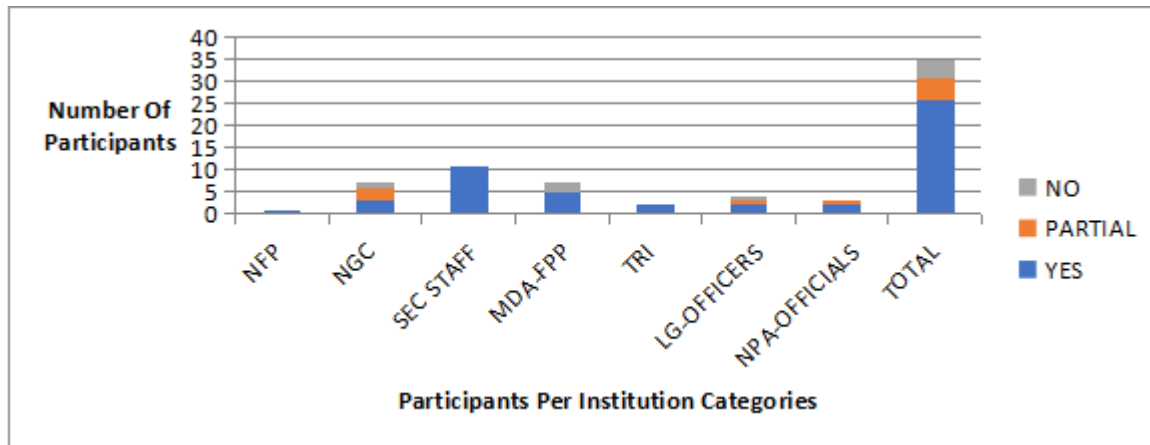


Figure 6.1: Summary of participants' responses on the use of APRM data

The above Figure 6.1 gives a summary of the empirical findings from all respondents which indicate that there was general perception of influence of the APRM on the country's policies, although in varying degrees.

(a) Different types of use of APRM data

The above findings suggest that the common response is that evaluation influences public policies. Participants' responses show that there is direct use, partial use and non use. Out of the thirty-five participants (35), twenty-four (24) responded in the affirmative that the APRM evaluations were directly used in the National Development Plan. Seven (7) participants indicated that they were used selectively, while four (4) participants responded negatively implying non-use. The researcher finds it important to note that almost all internal stakeholders gave positive responses of direct use, except the four participants that indicated partial use. This can be interpreted in the context that internal stakeholders such as the Focal Point Minister, the NGC members, the Secretariat Manager and the staff are not only

directly responsible for implementation of the APRM, but also mandated to ensure its integration into the National Development Plan (NDP). This implies that evaluation findings had a direct and positive effect on the actions and thinking of the policy actors and ultimately the policy outcome. The researcher observes that this positive perception among internal stakeholders could have been informed by their assumption that the study was like an assessment of performance in their roles. On the contrary, the findings suggest that most external stakeholders demonstrated limited knowledge of instrumental use but perceived more of selective use and non-use.

The findings also reveal that some of the stakeholders are involved in APRM implementation without adequate understanding of the how and when it influences policy, which can be attributed to inadequate feedback. The findings are also in line with Alkin and King's (2017:437) explanation of the different conditions under which influence of evaluation could take place. This may include the understandings, considerations and reactions stimulated as a result of participation of stakeholders in the process evaluation, activities and information, with evaluation being one of the cumulative or multiple influences.

Furthermore, the participants were required to give examples of how selective the influence of APRM evaluation was used, but only seven (7) out of the twenty-four (24) could articulate clearly specific recommendations used. The rest of the seventeen (17) could not do so, indicating that time had passed and they could not remember. Some voices attributed these variations in perception to a stakeholders' political affiliation and misconceptions about the APRM objectives.

When the researcher sought more insightful evidence of use, few participants could provide quick examples while others claimed to have forgotten over time. However, Participant Number 11 from the Department of Socio-economic Governance in an in-depth interview argued that the APRM is the only institution in Uganda which was purposely established to collect views from citizens and integrate them into the national development planning processes. In elaborating her viewpoint, she explained:

“...Then in the year 2003 the APRM had been formed at the continental level, but in 2004 everything about the APRM in Uganda was still in the formation process. So we (APRM Secretariat) came in to also support the National Planning Authority (NPA) that had been established in 2002. And at that point there was no government institution that was collecting development views that could infuse the opposition’s ideas as well as feeding them into the planning and policy process in Uganda (IDI-NGC 2023:11).

The above view emphasises that the APRM was the first institution mandated to collect inclusive views for use in informing Uganda’s development planning framework. This implies that the mechanism serves the intended goal of instrumental use of recommendations in national planning and policy making.

From the findings, most participants suggested that the review process had a positive effect on use and influence of the APRM which occurs through strategic planning, budgeting for prioritising resource allocation, promotion of good policies through policy learning of what works, as well as quality management and control.

(a) Strategic planning

To demonstrate the Government of Uganda’s commitment to provide the required inputs for use of APRM data, strategic planning was perceived to be demonstrated by the NPA. In this regard, a Participant number 3 from the Department of Democracy and Political Governance (DPG) stated that:

“when cabinet sat in 2004, it resolved that the country should have a plan to capacitate the National Planning Authority (NPA) and integrate the APRM Directorate with the NEPAD in the planning framework for the country” (KII-S 2023:3).

The extract above suggests that the government intended to put in place the resources for ensuring direct integration of the APRM recommendations into Uganda’s National Development Plan (NDP). The implication is that when government signed an MOU for voluntary peer review with the continental secretariat, the implementation of APRM was intended to promote instrumental use of recommendations through policy reforms in Uganda.

(b) Promotion of good policies

The findings reveal that use of APRM was reflected on the promotion of good policies. To further establish whether the APRM evaluation process has influenced policies, participants were asked to give their opinions about the nature of inputs, activities, outputs and how they influence the type of use or non-use in the context of Uganda. From the findings, participants suggested that the review process has a positive effect on use and influence of the APRM which occurs through promotion of good policies by policy learning of what works and what does not work, for quality management and control. To explain this effect, Participant Number 4, a key informant interviewee from the Socio-Economic Development (SED) thematic area informed the study that:

“In Uganda we have completed a base review, second review and targeted reviews. Each review identifies actions that must be taken, such as the government addressing specific governance issues. When we finish a review, we produce a country review report, in which we first do the country self-assessment report. Finally, we present the country review at the summit and develop the national action programme. That is the starting point for the APRM evaluation influence which is followed by tracking the actions in the country review report's National Programme of Action” (KII-S 2023:4).

The participants' responses implied that there were specific good policies promoted as a result of peer review through the National Program of Action. These were confirmed with an assessment of the existing secondary data regarding influence of the different elements of the mechanism. The findings concur with Leviton and Hughes (1981:525) present two major factors as a bottom-line criterion that must be satisfied; the first factor is the existence of a deliberate attempt to link the evaluation results to the policy issue in question. The second factor is evidence indicating that stakeholders involved in the use of data for policy decisions would have acted or thought differently if the evaluation was never conducted, which suggests its impact. In this regard, the research sought deeper insights on how each of the specific elements of the peer review process namely: inputs, activities and outputs affect policies in Uganda as discussed below.

6.3.2 The effect of APRM's evaluation inputs

This section presents stakeholders' insights regarding the nature of APRM inputs and how they influence the degree of use and non use of findings and recommendations. Drawing from the experiences of their involvement in the APRM implementation, participants were asked to give their opinions about the effect of the nature of inputs on the country's public policies. At the national level of the participating countries, there are several resource inputs into the APRM system identified in the NEPAD/APRM Guidelines (2003:20). Some of these resources include evaluation plans and best practices, financial resources, human resource experts and the questionnaire tool from the Continental Secretariat. The responses on the degree of compliance, efficiency, appropriateness, effectiveness, tidiness and how they influenced the type of use were analysed as reflected in the following section.

6.3.2.1 Plans and best practices

The plans are a major input in the APRM process which includes guidelines and schedules aimed at ensuring that implementation is conducted legally, ethically and in compliance to the standards, while the best practices include recommended actions to ensure a successful evaluation process.

(a) Communication and Advocacy Plan

Most participants' voices considered the APRM communication and advocacy plan as a major input in influencing the degree of use or non use of findings. To show how the nature of such preparation plans affected the degree of evaluation influence, Participant Number 11, a key informant interviewee from the National Secretariat, explained that:

"As part of the preparation for the first review, the NPA with funding from UNDP came up with the NPA Communication and Advocacy Strategy for NEPAD/ APRM for Uganda, to ensure effective communication and publicity of the APRM. This was intended to create massive awareness among stakeholders about their expected mandates, as different platforms were used to reach out to different state and non-state actors... However, in the second review, we did not have such extensive media activities, partly due to the limited funding from government until we got support from development partners. But at the time we were undertaking the second generation

review, the assumption was that now people know the APRM since it had been operating in the country for years and hence less prioritisation of funding the awareness, leading to reduced publicity activities (KII-S 2023:11).

Therefore, the preceeding extract indicates that without a robust strategy, the opportunity to exert more influence through improved shared understanding of the APRM and influencing stakeholders' attitudes towards utilisation of APRM data kept on reducing. As a result, some responses suggest that this leads to the increasing trend of conceptual use and non-use in influencing national policies. This is in line with Goldman *et al.* (2015:5) who point out the challenge to use and influence in either lack of developed plans, slow implementation or non-reporting by the responsible persons. The involvement of all stakeholders right from the planning stage promotes awareness and ownership which may influence one's decision from non use or conceptual use to instrumental use.

(b) Policy management and control

Another way in which APRM data is used is policy management and control. In regards to this, findings reveal that effective quality management and control guidelines for the peer review inputs is necessary to ensure compliance and consequently translation into policy reforms To elaborate upon this , Participant Number 4 in a key informant interview from the Secretariat stated that:

"When we were planning for the first review, we signed a lot of documents...But they were used to guide the new NPA Board as a country think tank that was put in place to inform Uganda's Vision 2040. So, we mainly rely on the guiding documents from the Continental Secretariat to plan and execute APRM implementation in Uganda. The documents indicate that there should be national structures as a National Focal Point, the National Governing Council, and so the president appoints members through the focal point minister. Lucky enough, there is a budget provided for under the National Planning Authority" (KII-S 2023:4).

The above response implies that APRM implementation is only informed by guiding documents from the secretariat without domesticated legal basis.

Therefore, the finding suggests that such guiding documents as inputs were intended to support strategic planning, clarification of objectives as well as agenda

setting which consequently translates into instrumental use of APRM recommendations. Contrarily to the above, some respondents especially the external stakeholders argued that while having such plans is necessary, it has not ensured use. In support of this perspective, during an indepth interview, Participant Number 20 from the NGC affirmed the different forms of use and argued:

“However, there was always that attitude among some Ugandans that those APRM things don’t bring collected views to the government table at the National Planning Authority (NPA). Some politicians would not want to listen to them, especially when we were still in the formation stage and the NPA was also trying to find its level” (KII-NGC 2023:20).

From the above submission, the researcher observes that even with the necessary plans and best practice adopted, the varying forms of use and non-use suggest the need for an enhanced framework that considers Uganda’s context to ensure that all plans translate into direct use.

6.3.2.2 Financial inputs in the APRM evaluation system

The Base Document (2003:27) indicates that ensuring ownership as an African governance framework is conditional upon internally generated funding in the form of assessed contribution as opposed to external donor sources that attract foreign conditions. The *AU Strategic Plan* (2014-2017:93) indicates that by 2016, each member state was obliged to pay USD 100,000, but a number of countries were in arrears for years owing the APRM about USD 12 million. With the low compliance rate, the revitalisation committee proposed to increase the figure to USD 300,000 to meet the competing budgetary demands. In this regard, most stakeholders’ responses questioned the adequacy of such financial inputs to influence use.

(a) Inadequate budgetary resources

Empirical findings from the key informant interviews especially among internal stakeholders revealed that the lack of adequate budgetary resources to run the review process is said to contribute to non-use in some cases by technical people in the MDAs. Some participants especially internal stakeholders perceive the declining trend of financial resources allocated to peer review as a major threat to a

effective review and use. For instance, Participant Number 20 from the NGC in an in-depth interview reported on the effect of limited financial input from government by saying:

"In a financial capacity, we don't have adequate resources to conduct a fully consultative peer review process as it is supposed to be in the guidelines. That was possible the first time, but resources have dwindled, and there is selective consultation. The choice of who to include depends on who is knowledgeable on matters of governance, and they are mostly the people working with the government... With the dwindling resources, the idea of the process being as consultative as possible and CSOs relying on their leaders for representation is gradually losing meaning to some stakeholders" (IDI-NGC 2023:20).

Therefore, the declining resources have affected the inclusive nature of the consultative process and the quality of the data collected, leading to rampant symbolic use of APRM findings.

The preceding view was substantiated by another Participant Number 1 from the NGC, who emphasised inadequate funding for the APRM's activities as a major factor towards stakeholders influencing use through their participation. He said:

"The stakeholder participation and consequently influence in policy go with funding, but where is the money? but when the country doesn't have the money prioritised for APRM, it becomes hard. So, we need to have money to support the APRM secretariat to deliver on its mandate and even pay the allowances for stakeholder representatives. When NGC representatives are invited for meetings, they expect allowances but when someone comes for the first month, second and third and fourth, without facilitation, they eventually stop. So, money is very important and also affects the morale of the people, of course, the stakeholder representative at NGC like the APRM idea it but are not motivated" (FGD-FP-MDA 2023:1).

The above statement indicates that findings from both the internal and external stakeholders emphasise that the inconsistencies in funding inputs have had negative effects on use and influence of the APRM, since it has implications on the credibility of the reports generated. Furthermore, it was argued that lack of a sustainable

internal source of funding and relying on the development partners affected the APRM's influence in the different sectoral gaps identified resulting in more conceptual and symbolic use. By implication, the researcher observes that such inconsistencies in funding call for a more enhanced framework that ensures sustainable domestic funding to safeguard the principle of ownership which in turn enhances direct use.

6.3.2.3 The human resources inputs

Stakeholders' perceptions about the nature of actors involved in implementing the review process focussed on the evaluation capacity of the actors as reflected below.

(a) Evaluation capacity

All stakeholders concur that human resource inputs are key in influencing the quality of output and consequently use but expressed varied perceptions on how this happens in the context of Uganda. To ensure instrumental use of findings, participants asserted that evaluation capacity is a key determinant. The voices of most stakeholders in this regard reveal that the capacity of human resources involved in peer review was initially good during the first-generation review but increasingly compromised and negatively affecting use of APRM recommendations. To explain this perspective, Participant Number 21 from the Focal Point stated that:

"For example, in corporate governance, there is a lady there on the NGC who was a permanent secretary and very effective with a lot of experience in managing the private sector. She would bring a lot of wisdom, and so we don't listen to the consultant that they have done it entirely. So, just know that as the NGC, we were the report producers and with good capacity, so we tried to be as independent as possible in the circumstances" (KII-FP 2023:21).

This opinion suggests that the selection criteria of NGC members not only focused on representation, but also capacity to influence credible reporting and consequently use. This collaborates with Mark and Henry 2004:46) who assert that any credible evaluation is judged on the basis of the evaluation capacity.

In addition, the findings reflect positive effects of the evaluation capacity on policy influence based on the capacity of both the TPI consultants hired. To elaborate how

the human resource inputs positively influence the quality of peer review and outcome, Participant Number 21 from the Focal Point further reported that:

"We get consultants who help us to gather some of this information and put it together. But also previously, when I was a member at the NGC, we would retreat in a hotel and spend a couple of days there reviewing our various thematic areas, and send the reports back to the consultant. So through that arrangement, we captured a lot of information; it was like we were back stalking the consultant, and we would make many changes that would cause policy reforms. So, evaluation influence on the policy depends to some extent on having the right people in those positions, who could know when a consultant would be going wrong and easily correct him/her" (KII-FP 2023:21).

Therefore, the above two extracts suggests that human resource capacity for both the NGC and TPI positively influence use of the APRM.

However, some respondents recognised that the capacity at the country level sometimes falls short of expectation. To explain this concern of the quality of the consultant's work and its effect on use, Participant Number 14 from the NGC in an in-depth interview reported that:

"...There is no longer opportunity for other stakeholders to assess what is reported to be done by independent consultants, since they simply compile data collected already by MDAs on policy implementation under the NPoA implementation, which also casts votes of disbelief on the validity of the reports by stakeholders" (IDI-NGC 2023:14).

The major attributes of perceiving a negative influence by stakeholders include the objectivity and impartiality of the evaluators, especially at the country level. The NPA-CSAR (2008:18) indicates that during the first-generation review, the TPI's expressed fears about conducting a self-assessment in a politically charged environment where presidential elections were a few months away in February 2009, while others were accused of being too close to the ruling party to generate objective data. The situation is worsened by what ECA (2018:72-73) calls the challenge of bureaucratic capture by the ruling NRM regime, leading to increased symbolic use and non-use of APRM recommendations. Therefore, the researcher identifies the

need to address the capacity gaps in the existing guidelines, which the proposed framework intends to do by emphasising a more objective selection criteria leading to independent actors to guarantee credible reporting for instrumental use of APRM recommendations.

6.3.2.4 The APRM evaluation tool: questionnaire adaptation and domestication

The APRM Base Document (2002:349) guides that the review process begins with the questionnaire as the major instrument for capturing relevant data, based on its concepts, coverage, presentation and administration. The findings from the respondents suggest that there is a positive effect of the relevancy and quality of the tool on the content of the data reported as demonstrated below.

(a) Relevance of the evaluation questions in the tool

Relevance of the questions in the tool used was emphasised by most stakeholders as the starting point of determining the decision for use or non use of findings. One respondent from the NGC emphasised that the adapted questionnaire is a major tool in determining use, since it significantly defines the relevance of the data reports and the likelihood of use. Participant Number 11 from the NGC in an in-depth interview expressed that:

“The questionnaire is one of those tools we think greatly shapes the APRM process, and output. It determines what data is to be collected and whether the lower people's voices can be heard. If the relevant issues are captured, you bank on the personal fear of peer pressure that the country will respond positively to its democratic principles, economic governance and all that, and that's why we say it's an important mechanism that some how affects policy” (IDI-NGC 2023:11).

This response suggests that the relevance of the report depends on the domesticated questionnaire's ability to capture relevant and inclusive views of the stakeholders within their country and local context.

To further provide evidence of the questionnaire's evaluative influence, the above submission seems to tie in well with that of Participant Number 21 from the Focal Point who elaborated that:

".....of course, the APRM questionnaire is a strong governance tool, and if properly standardised, you can capture a lot of comparative data that could help the reviewed country improve its policies. So, from data collected using a relevant tool, we can pick up lessons on what to do" (KII-FP 2023:21).

The above evidence demonstrates that a contextually relevant tool contributes positively towards influence of national policies by generating responsive and credible data for learning from previous experiences as well as knowledge sharing.

(b) Quality of the tool

In performing the activity of data collection, it was evident that although the tool has been appreciated for high quality data collection, certain concerns were raised about its conceptual clarity, length of the questionnaire and indicators. It is argued that while the quality of the tool is necessary in determining the issues on which data is collected, it is not sufficient to guarantee use and influence. To justify this inadequacy, Participant Number 3 from the National Secretariat argued that:

"The tool would be okay but it is limited to capturing the views of the elite. Even in local governments, it stops at the district level councillors leaving out the opinions of the grass roots people. The challenge is that it is presented in English due to inadequate finances to interpret it into the different local languages" (KII-S 2023:3).

The preceding extract is in consonance with some stakeholders' recognition that although efforts have been made by the Continental Secretariat to improve the standard questionnaire, inability to capture the views of the grass roots people defies its intention of credibility and ownership. This is in line with Leithwood (1986:332) who highlights the major barriers to evaluation use to include inadequate quality of the evaluation questions that lead to irrelevant recommendations. The researcher therefore observes that closing such gaps of enhancing the adequacy and relevancy of inputs requires an enhanced framework that this study intends to propose.

6.3.3 The effect of the APRM's evaluation activities and methods

The APRM Statute (2016:22) provides a schedule of the major activities that include the preparation and development of the draft CSAR and the preliminary NPoA, a

CRR, the country's final peer review at the APR Forum, modification and integration of the final NPoA.

(a) Stakeholders' knowledge of APRM activities

From empirical findings about stakeholders' knowledge of the activities in the APRM process, a key informant and member of staff in the Socio-Economic Development (SED) thematic area informed the study that that:

'...APRM is a tool for international development in which governance data is collected and validated through an inclusive process and used to assess a country's policies and identify the gaps to be addressed. So, the APRM's influence occurs based on assessment activities of a country's governance performance through a systematic process, several objectives, indicators and types of evaluations. It could be a base review, a targeted review, or a statutory review" (KII-S 2023:4).

This response above reflects stakeholders' knowledge of the process which is significant in determining the degree of use and influence.

(b) Management and control

In this regard, control and management of the peer review activities especially the data collection and reporting were perceived as major factors in ensuring compliance to continental guidelines. To further elaborate on how activities bring about influence, Participant Number 5 from the secretariat explained how the APRM reviews provide actions to be followed to address the key issues raised in the issue paper:

"For example, after the base review and the second-generation review, Uganda undertook a targeted review of 3 out of the 13 areas. After the NPoA, what follows is its integration in plans, budgets, frameworks, in line with the National Development Plan (NDP). This is followed by tracking actions using monitorable outcome and output indicators in the different thematic areas. In addition is the NGC Strategic Plan whose goal indicators are monitored. Also, at the departmental levels of Ministries, Departments and Agencies of government is the assessment of workplans to establish the extent to which policy recommendations from APRM reports are integrated and enforced" (KII-S 2023:5).

Therefore, from the findings, most Participant emphasised that evaluation activities in the peer review process had a positive effect, even though the degree of use and influence varied from one respondent to another.

(c) Inclusive data

The collection of data from different stakeholders was pointed out as a significant factor in influencing use since it creates a sense of ownership and responsiveness to issues affecting those constituencies. The respondents explained that positive influence occurs through objective collection of inclusive data, integration of the APRM recommendations from the CSAR and the CRR, as well as alignment of the final NPoA generated from the APRM process with the national plans. The APRM with its wide stakeholder participatory approach reported to be highly informative to positively influence policy changes. To demonstrate the implication of this participation, Participant Number 11 from the NGC during an indepth interview said:

"I think the APRM mechanism is still a unique practice in terms of its wide stakeholder participatory approach and the member states on the continent accepting to hold each other accountable. And that's why anything that survives and is recommended out of the APRM creates a peer pressure of some sort. So, So, no peer reviewed country wants to be regarded as a failed state, so that in itself becomes the main dividend that we extract from this mechanism to realise positive influence on national policies" (IDI-NGC 2023:11).

The extract above suggests that the participatory, inclusive and bottom-up nature of the activities in the APRM process is said to create a positive effect through the perception that it is different from the formal top-down government approach in which research activities' views from heterogeneous stakeholder groups are validated from national to continental levels.

(d) Objective data collection process

The attributes for instrumental use are also associated with the technicality of the activities in the APRM process and are also considered a major source of influence since credible data collection, analysis and compilation of reports are conducted by technical experts in the departments dealing with different thematic areas of governance. The findings reflect mixed opinions about the degree of the data

collection process and the data itself. In expressing their sentiments, they argued that professional people are more trusted, and their output is considered authentic and reliable by the MDA actors responsible for integration of recommendations in national policies, plans and budgets. For instance, Participant Number 7 from the secretariat during a key informant interview qualified this by saying:

"The influence of the APRM activities is strong and effective because most of the people approached here are technical people who do technical work and have prepared progress reports and have interfaced such processes before" (KII-S 2023:7).

The preceeding argument suggests that generation of objective data most likely translates into policy influence.

Moreover, to justify the objectivity in the process, most respondents emphasised their confidence in the positive effect by arguing that the use of APRM data is largely determined by the fact that its production goes through technical processes by experts in the different thematic areas. Participant Number 20 in an in-depth interview indicated that:

'...But it presents a lot of hope since consultation and validation conducted in local governments suggests that the APRM can help address local challenges, such as increasing funding from 14% to at least 30%. So, the process creates hope and expectations as a good framework that the NGC will talk to the president, although the challenge is where they wait for years, and nothing has been done" (IDI-NGC 2023:20).

Such evidence points towards direct effect of the APRM. However, certain concerns have been raised about the degree of inclusivity since APRM influence is more among the elites. Participant number 9 in a key informant interview stated

"Given the technical process, the mechanism may be largely known to people in the technical arm of government service, private sector and development partners who are invited to participate in radio talk shows and policy debates" (KII-S 2023:9). So, the APRM evaluation activities are conducted mainly within the dockets of the elites in CSOs and government technocrats.

(e) Alignment of APRM data collection with country's planning framework

To elaborate on how directly the positive effect occurs through direct integration of technically generated data, it is argued that the National Planning Authority framework guides the ministry departments and agencies when developing a five-year plan, which should ensure effective alignment with the medium-term plans of 5 years and the long-term Vision 2040 for Uganda. Regarding direct integration of APRM findings in national policy, Respondent Number 5 in the FGD guided that:

"First of all, for a country to benefit and do very well, is to ensure that the APRM is aligned to the country framework. In 2017, we had to ensure that we aligned the evaluation activities to the country's planning framework, which is now the the National Development Plan II. Once the government started implementing the NDP, they had to fund the same evaluation activities, something that made our APRM work very easy. And that's why when our president was presenting the CSAR; he was confident that Uganda could achieve the desired policy goals. Still, we are going to put more effort into making sure we achieve this one" (FGD-NGC-2023:5).

This response suggests integration of APRM recommendations into the country's planning reflects commitment towards use of APRM data to influence national policies through alignment to national policies.

(f) Nature of validation

The quality of validation was also presented as a key factor in determining the credibility of the reports and consequently the decision to use the data. Respondent Number 16 from the NGC asserted that data is collected by independent expert consultants to generate a CSAR and the draft NPoA which are submitted to the NGC as proposals to be implemented. He explained that:

"Through validation, the NPA secretariat and the mission team go to different regions of the country to create awareness and tell citizens what the report is saying. This is before validation, and they interview people about the content. After approval, it is presented to the president to inform the draft NPoA, after presentation at the APR Forum, it also comes back down to the stakeholders. We have to go again to the different regions to contact stakeholders so they can know the recommendations and how they intend to implement them. Also, annually, the NGC has to prepare the

NPoA and a progress report; how far have they implemented the recommendations of the country review report, so the national programme of action comes out to produce the country review report. So even this year's country report of the national programme of action is about the country review report which was made about 2018" (IDI-NGC 2023:16).

From the above response, it can be noted that beyond the collective level of government, the activities identified by some respondents caused a positive effect to the individual behaviour and actions of stakeholders, especially the political leaders.

(g) Lesson learning

Among most internal stakeholders, there was a general belief of changes in individual stakeholders' behaviour and thinking, which occurred as a result of learning by those involved in the activities of the peer review process. Such effect is said to be reflected at various levels from the MDAs to the APR Forum where the President presents a response to the CRR and receives additional recommendations to the final NPoA from his peers. This influence towards instrumental use is illustrated by Participant Number 11 who indicated that:

"In 2009 an APRM report was produced after the base review of 2008. When President Museveni who presented the seventh report in Africa and there was a lot of excitement and motivation as he committed to integrate the recommendations into the vision document and the National Development Plan 2010/11-2014/15" (KII-S 2023:11).

It can be noted that not all of the presidents committed to do this during their participation in the APRM activities. The researcher observes that while all responses were to be interpreted in context, some participants, especially internal stakeholders at senior levels in government, took the question of APRM influence of APRM activities as implying an evaluation of their own performance. As a result, their explanations naturally wanted to create a more positive picture, insisting on a positive effect of instrumental use.

(h) Elite based and technical nature of the APRM system

Besides the guidelines providing for an inclusive and participatory process, some respondents also expressed optimism that APRM influence is just progressively

growing to affect individual leaders' decisions and collective national policies. They argue that currently, while the APRM is demonstrating certain levels of direct effect on public policy, its influence is more among the elite. Participant Number 9 from the secretariat said:

"Given the technical processes, it may be known to the people in the technical arm.. However, they go on the radio during the reviews to talk to people and attract debates. Therefore, the perception is gradually building though it's much more in the technical people involved, and the APRM policies influence politics" (KII-S 2023:9).

The proceeding extract supports the argument is that the activities of the APRM evaluation process are mainly within the docket of the elites and technocrats, excluding the ordinary people. The predominant use of English by the NGC members and consultants from the TRI denies grassroot stakeholders knowledge of APRM objectives, participation in its activities and use of its data.

From the evidence, this study observes that while the above information reflects mixed findings on the influence of the APRM, it confirms that APRM data is to a greater extent used either conceptually or symbolically at both the individual level of the executives and the collective level of cabinet, NGC members, staff or MDA focal persons. This argument is in line with Weiss (2005:13), who argues that "pure instrumental use is not common", since those involved in decision-making must consider several other aspects beyond the effectiveness of the evaluated policy. In addition, more recent scholars maintain that evaluations rarely translate directly into policy, and as such are limited to operational levels and sometimes intentional selective use (Streicher 2017:15; Hojlund 2015:10). Therefore, while the APRM activities influence use as presented by the different participants, this such influence occurs in varying levels. This necessitates an enhanced framework with strategies to increase the likelihood of non-use translating into conceptual use and symbolic use towards instrumental use.

6.3.4 The effects of the APRM reporting and outputs

The respondents defined outputs as any products from the peer review process. When the NGC runs the peer reviews, reports produced in the form of the CSAR,

CRR and the NPoA are submitted to the government; then the president submits them to his peers in the African Union for final review at the APR Forum. The findings show key participants' perceptions about the reports to include: credibility, responsiveness, communication, timeliness and sophistication as discussed below.

(a) Responsiveness

Most stakeholders strongly suggest that the APRM's ability to cause policy influence greatly depends on the degree of responsiveness of the reports to the needs of the different stakeholders. The findings reveal that generation of evaluation reports has a positive effect on public policy, but is reflected in different types of use. The instrumental use of APRM report outputs after the base review of 2008 is well illustrated by Participant Number 9 from the APRM Secretariat who indicated that:

“Actually, in 2009 after Uganda’s base review in 2008, we had started preparing the vision document and National Development Plan 2010/11-2014/15 (NDP1) from the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP). So, this APRM report is the document that was given to the drafters of the first NDP I, and this is the faith the Ugandans were consulted. Let us pick what is here, do additional consultation and we come up with NDP 1, which constituted the vision of the Government of Uganda to transform the country from peasantry to a modern society. This factual report of the APRM evaluation was the first one and was the main document in informing the first NDP. It was given to the drafters, the Executive Director at that time of the National Planning Authority (NPA) and even the current Focal Point Minister can corroborate that” (KII-S 2023:11).

This evidence points towards instrumental use of reports having taken place.

Closely linked to the sentiments expressed above, some participants point out that the reports contain governance data collected from the various regions of the country, at national and local levels. Thus priorities of various groups were identified and integrated into the national agenda as part of the development strategy. This revelation was provided by Participant Number 9 from Socio-Economic Governance in a key informant interview. He elaborated that:

“Given that different stakeholders participate in the generation of APRM reports, at regional and national forums, the reports are taken to reflect issues the communities face. It is therefore possible for the society groups to own those through their representatives as advanced to constitute the national agenda. Thus, identifying new issues the communities face and coming back to the governing council to represent them becomes part of the agenda discussed with the focal person” (KII-S 2023:17).

This emphasises that the APRM outputs are important sources of data for supporting further innovation to improve the mechanism.

(b) Credibility

Credibility of the outputs is yet another major factor identified by stakeholder to determine the degree of use and non use of APRM data in policy matters. Some participants perceive that since APRM reports are considered credible sources of data, the APRM reports are used to support advocacy work of CSOs and data is extracted and put into the country’s strategic planning process. The gaps identified and recommendations stated in the CSAR and the CRR constitute the priority actions presented in the NPoA for integration into the National Development Plan (NDP). On the centrally, some participants raise a concern of the failure to capture dissenting views in report validation, editing of reports, failure to integrate critical recommendations in the national planning framework, or non-implementation due to politically motivated budgetary allocations. To illustrate the direct use of the APRM reports into the Uganda’s policy process as a result of their credibility, Participant Number 11 from the secretariat in a key informant interview stated that:

“...In the APRM reports, are some key important issues that at that point the president was not burdened about especially issues of population until CSOs took it up using data from APRM reports to engage government. I remember the president used to say I want my population to be big, to create a bigger market and in the APRM reports, the policy issues emerging as a result of our high population growth rate were very clear. And I recall that after the peer review process, the president also read the APRM recommendations which changed his thinking. Since then, he started saying that as a country, we can have many people but the quality matters. He told us, I read in your APRM report that there is urgent need for family planning

which 45% of the population was crying for. So when we came back from the APRM forum, his conversation in the country changed from numbers to quality population. So, that is one of the most clear examples of APRM influence not only on national policy but also on the thinking and decisions of national policy actors like the president” (KII-S 2023:11).

Therefore, the above extract reveals that such insights in the reports once backed with quality evidence not only convince the President but also collectively influence government’s policy positions.

To further justify this credibility of APRM data, Respondent Number 5 from the Economic Governance Department observed that:

“The National Planning Authority (NPA) has a positive perception because the APRM reports act as key references in developing the country's NDP. But also other stakeholders outside the APRM and NPA use the APRM data...” (KII-S 2023:5).

The opinion implies that APRM data is widely used as an authoritative source of information by a wide range of stakeholders beyond the NPA, which credibility increases chances of direct influence in informing policy process and reforms.

In addition, Participant Number 4 from the Socio-Economic Development thematic area concurred saying that:

“...As a result, the influence occurs through NDP integrations; if this does not occur on the government's technical side. CSOs, on the other hand, tend to pick the APRM recommendations and take things seriously, even questioning government and sometimes producing their separate document because they are conscious and want to hold the government accountable. On the other hand, ordinary citizens do not bother because they have no idea” (KII-S 2023:4).

Therefore, the emphasis on credibility of findings in the preceeding extracts reflects the APRM’s potential to influence policy through use instrumentally by stakeholders across sectors.

(c) Communication

The APRM's influence is well reflected through its communication and reporting ability to facilitate formulation and assessment of the performance of national policies and programmes. To further affirm the use of reports, a key informant interviewee Number 9 from the Corporate Governance thematic area at the APRM Secretariat asserted that:

"APRM has its evaluative recommendations implemented within development plans and other development phenomena that may be decided upon in governance. When we map the APRM country review report, you may not find them as divergent in the end from the National Development Plan (NDP). As a result, in some cases, the recommendations reinforce one another. For example, if I did issue a paper to inform the National Development Plan (NDP), and then later on, perhaps after subduing the NDP, or if I did a mid-term review of the NDP, then I would find something that the APRM people had also undertaken" (KII-S 2023:9).

This preceding statement suggests that evaluation recommendations are directly integrated into the NDP to bring about instrumental use.

One focus group discussants from the NGC during the FGD observed that the APRM helps in strategising the policies into the action plans which inform the government funding of its MDAs. She said:

"...We have realised that the only action is to make sure that we monitor the performance of those actions. As an NGC, we are not interested in the negative but in the areas incorporated within that. The ministry and other agencies have developed their strategic plan, so it's a requirement that we develop the strategic plan, and NPA has a framework that guides them. They have a framework for a sector they receive money, you must be a strategic plan, and this strategic plan should be aligned to the NDP. So, for example, if you are in the education sector, the National Development Plan talks about education and quality education for all; once you have it as an education, then you are funded, but to us again, the APRM we feel very happy because education is also being funded" (FGD-NGC 2023:10).

This suggests that production of quality APRM reports is not enough, but their alignment to the national development priorities is key in influencing use in policy

processes. However, contrarily to the extracts above, findings also indicate that intended use of APRM reports does not always happen instrumentally, but also conceptually and symbolically, to justify pre-determined political decisions. While the second-generation report went through the process to presentation at the APR Forum, the President was not very comfortable with the content. For instance, Participant Number 20 from the NGC explained:

“When the report was sent to Adis Ababa, despite having gone through the cabinet sub-committee that organised a government response, the President questioned its methodology and went ahead to present a different speech calling for adopting of the 13 bottlenecks in the APRM assessment” (IDI- NGC 2023:20).

This kind of reaction in the preceeding extract implied a negative effect that leads to a more symbolic use of APRM data. The findings concur with Streicher (2017:24), who argues that evaluation use may not always serve the actual intended or direct way that mainstream rationalists anticipate.

(d) Credibility

The influence of the report was greatly associated with its credibility by most respondents. Similarly, the quality of the report and its utilisation was also attributed to the challenges encountered in the process of collecting APRM data. With reference to the second generation review and the NPoA Implementation Report 2021, Participant Number 5 from the NGC made reference to the COVID-19 restrictions. He explained that:

“Covid-19 delayed these other policy actions. Still, against all odds, we will work as a country even with the corporations, the private sector, and other development partners to make sure we move to the other side” (FGD-NGC-2023:5).

This statement above suggests the need to consider other factors beyond the APRM system in assessing its influence.

Regarding the credibility of reports, some respondents pointed to the influence of APRM reports beyond the national policies of the reviewed country to other member states in the form of policy learning and knowledge sharing. Respondent Number 17

felt that as an outcome, the mechanism influences conflict-deterrent atmospheres among countries by elucidating that:

“The influence that I talked about is that the mechanism extracted its power and gave people confidence; it influences reduction of conflict among countries when assessing themselves and heads of states are meeting as APRM members of the same African Family. Countries sign MOUs with each other currently the focus is on reinforcing the trade relations through Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)” (KII-S 2023:17).

The above sentiments indicate that credibility of the reports promotes use for learning purposes even to other AU member states dealing with similar policy issues.

(e) Sophistication

Some respondents argue that from their experience, generation of reports does not have a significant effect on public policies. In defence of non-use of some recommendations, they explain that they may be captured in the report but not implementable in the practical sense. Respondent Number 20 from the NGC during an in-depth interview stated that:

“For example, it was reported that some NGC members believed that lowering the qualifications for members of the legislature and downsizing the size of parliament was critical. But the same stakeholders’ representatives differed on the practical way of how to go about it. Some proposed two representatives per each of the 120 constituencies bringing the total to 240 legislatures” (IDI-NGC 2023:20).

This evidence suggests that non-use of some recommendations may occur simply because the report does not capture more viable ways of going about the implementation of the recommendations reported. The findings concur with Head (2008:2-4), who attributes the limited effect of evaluation to the complex nature of public policy issues. He maintains that evaluation findings are just one of the multiple sources of policy advice available to decision-makers. It is argued that some findings and recommendations could have been included in the report out of the evaluators’ prejudice or out of inadequate consultations with the relevant stakeholders. To further explain the non-use of APRM reports, Participant 18 from the Technical

Research Institute during a key informant interview attributed it to the absence of the plans of action adds that:

"...if you put it in a report that somebody has been beaten up and so on and there is no action relating to that kind of finding, you will have a problem calling on such a report in the action plan" (KII-TRI 2023:18).

The above submission emphasises that while data from such APRM reports would be used as a basis for demand for government action, lack of recommended action points creates a feeling of a disconnect to push for policy changes.

(f) Timeliness

The timing for the dissemination of APRM reports was presented as a key factor in determining the degree of use and influence of a country's policies. The study also revealed that the stakeholders were increasingly concerned about the inability of the APRM process to balance between new or emerging issues and issues previously raised in the reports. This is because the monitoring of the NPoA implementation report focuses on previously captured issues in the CSAR and the CRR leaving out any emerging issues. One Participant number 18 from the TRI who was a consultant added:

"We consistently invested in monitoring the progress in the National Plan of Action, which was good because, at some point, we were able to keep the report in that. But there are several other issues that we would love to do in the report. But the National Governing Council needs an analytical arm to focus on and analyse the emerging governance issues related to the APRM process. So that some of those reports can be produced as independent thought, independent imaging policy papers, and then you can use that as the basis of having the discussions to know in time what is on the ground, because the thing is that the plan of action ties you in terms of how much you can discuss" (KII-TRI 2023:18).

The preceeding statement implies that use can be enhanced with timely reporting where monitoring of previous recommendations happens along side capturing of emerging issues. This finding on timely capture of data is in line with Alkin and King (2016:568-572), who explain that the effects of an evaluation may take a longer period to emerge through a range of indirect agents and other types of use.

In addition, some respondents question the degree of utilisation of generated reports. For instance, a key informant interviewee Number 4 from the APRM Secretariat argued that:

However, the reports written and read by the President at the summit remain there; nothing changes, influencing people's perception. At the same time, others keep reporting but report negatively” (KII-S 2023:4).

The foregoing extract implies that consistent inaction on issues raised demotivates stakeholders leading to non-use. Information from evaluation reports influences decisions of individual stakeholders. The evidence emphasises that the nature of inputs, process, method and quality of evaluation reporting are relevant in influencing the type of use of evaluations. Therefore, the APRM findings reveal varying levels of use and influence with respondents presenting mixed responses about the reports. It is observed that the findings confirm what is in the literature that while some reports can have a positive effect on public policy, even partial and negative, or no effect can occur. The researcher suggests that the above gaps identified as challenges leading to rampant symbolic use can be addressed using the proposed framework to enhance the APRM influence.

6.4 THEME 2: THE ROLE OF THE APRM STAKEHOLDERS IN INFLUENCING THE TYPE OF USE OR NON-USE OF APRM DATA IN UGANDA'S POLICY PROCESS

The APRM Base Document (2003:18-20) provides for wide stakeholder consultations to capture the views of stakeholders within and outside government. Furthermore, the APRM (2016:16) maintains that this participatory approach adopted in the APRM process provides opportunities for both internal and external stakeholders with power and influence to generate and utilise data in bringing about policy changes, through the national and regional consultations.

6.4.1 Degree of APRM stakeholders' participation in the policy process

The respondents argued that stakeholder involvement in the peer review process positively effects the public policy outcomes, but varies with convergence or

divergence of policy goals. The focus is on stakeholders' roles, participation, agency, interests, legitimacy and power in influencing policy outcomes. Mark and Henry (2004:43) identify attributes for assessing stakeholders' ability to influence use of data to include stakeholders' interest, control of assets, people and finances, as well as personal authority. These would in turn result in changes in stakeholders' knowledge, policy relevant skills and attitude, improved shared understanding of the policy intervention, policy intervention leading to support and reinforcement, incentives motivating stakeholders' performance of their roles, and promotion of accountability as discussed below.

6.4.1.1 Stakeholders' knowledge

The stakeholders' knowledge of APRM goals and the mandate of different participating stakeholders was identified as instrumental in influencing use for policy reforms. The findings suggest that awareness of the APRM had a positive effect on the use and influence of the APRM in Uganda's policy. Take for example what Participant Number 16 from the NGC stated in an in-depth interview about the adequacy of the mechanism in ensuring stakeholder involvement. She remarked:

"First of all, the Secretariat of the APRM works with a team representing different internal and external stakeholders and their views. In the second review, at the national level, the APRM used consultants to undertake a country self-assessment, a mission team and even a panel of eminent persons to do the country review report for each country review done. From the Continental Secretariat, in Uganda, we have that bishop.... a member of the panel of eminent persons who led the mission team for country review. When the country is under review, he comes, and he gets things from the Secretariat to do the work. On top of those, they have to interview national and international consultants and all that is done by the APRM Secretariat... Then, we go up country and take them to talk to the stakeholders who collect stakeholders' views using reformulated questionnaires from the standard received from the secretariat" (IDI-NGC 2023:16).

The above finding suggests that knowledgeable actors participate in the review process from an informed point of view in the consultations, validations and monitoring of NPoA implementation.

Relatedly, to explain the involvement of different stakeholders, the above view point was also collaborated by Participant Number 14 in an in-depth interview emphasised that:

“So the APRM process involves gathering opinions from different stakeholders and putting them together for better as a consultant goes around collecting beneficial information. Afterward, we go for validations as NGC members, we put questions to them on the four areas, now it will be changed of course, we are working on a new democracy, this is what we gathered, so what do you say. So we generate essential information; unfortunately, we don't have the strength as a country to decipher.... So, we form an expanded board of the NPA to bring home the planning; we bring in the Bank of Uganda, the Uganda Development Bank and UBOS so they can share some of this information” (IDI-NGC 2023:14).

So, the evidence above suggests that stakeholder involvement in APRM process not only promotes ownership but also motivation for use of reports.

However, the extent of their knowledge and participation was reported to be at varying levels. Findings reveal that two external stakeholders were struggling to meaningfully explain what the APRM is and its evaluation influence. As an indicator of this limited knowledge of APRM impact, Respondent Number 11 from the NGC during an in-depth interview asserted that:

“..... for example, I have been on the radio multiple times, and even until now I am still struggling to define APRM and how it works. If I am to ask you, what is APRM in Luganda (a widely spoken local language)? You can realise that you just gave almost a long sentence describing what it is. So now, it becomes very difficult to relate in various languages spoken by ordinary people in Uganda. Some of these terminologies that we use in public administration or governance need to be directly translated into our local languages, to gain more information especially for the different stakeholders”-” (IDI-NGC 2023:11).

Therefore, this response reflects a stakeholder's lack of or inadequate knowledge which negatively affects the APRM's influence on the country public policy.

To further provide evidence of limited knowledge, Participant number 16 from the NGC in an in-depth interview reported on the stakeholders' perception of the impact of the APRM, but stated that:

“Most people in Uganda are not aware of the APRM, the National Governing Council which has been interacting for the past three years trying to make them know, especially to create awareness so that the public can learn about APRM. And I am sure if they see the country is made aware of it, they will appreciate it. In this regard, our most significant issue is that we need to report on the general populace because it is not broad every time we visit the area to speak with the local authorities” (IDI-NGC 2023:16).

This understanding suggests that awareness affects involvement and consequently use of APRM reports. The major purpose of an evaluation is reflected in the utilisation of its findings to influence policy decisions, as well as the behaviour and attitude of the stakeholders towards the goal of good governance and development. Therefore, most participants identified the stakeholders which they consider central in shaping the use and influence in the APRM process to include: the President, Parliament, the development partners and the Civil Society Organisations (CSOs).

6.4.2 The presidents' role in providing political leadership

To start with, the president of a participating country greatly determines the degree of use and influence, by initiating and driving the APRM process along with other stakeholders.

(a) Stakeholder interest

The personal interest of the President as a stakeholder in the APRM process as a Pan African initiative was reported to have played a key role in motivating the use and influence of APRM data in the national policy process.

For instance, Participant Number 11 from the Corporate Government thematic area during a focus group discussion attested to this when he stated:

"So, to me, people are getting interested in the APRM and starting with the heads of state. If you have the political will in anything good because people have tested and they have found this system to be good...they get actively involved in it. The

foundation must be strong starting from the head, but if the head is not comfortable being assessed, and yet you want to meet him and assess him, he will not be available. ...we need to move, therefore, and disseminate information about the APRM, its activities and findings because stakeholders in other MDAs must be aware to integrate our recommendations in their planning framework..." (FGD-NGC 2023:11).

This suggests that the interest of the President in the APRM influences interests of the government officials collectively to use the APRM data. The findings seems to imply that there is a general view among respondents that if the President buys into the APRM recommendations, then essentially that informs the priorities on the national agenda leading to instrumental use. To elaborate this, Participant Number 1 from the Secretariat during a key informant interview emphasised the positive effect of the political will of the President but also the commitment of other leaders in government. He said:

"The commitment of the President and the country, stakeholder representatives, MDA officials, and the different actors involved. Many countries have ascended to the APRM but have not yet done any review. Uganda is therefore committed to the APRM programme. Other than that, there are robust structures, the finance from the National Focal Council, and the strong reputable secretariat that follows programmes and reviews—the national technical institutes are all a result of the commitment" (KII-S 2023:1).

This argument above suggests that the existence of structure and committed leadership guarantees use and influence of the APRM.

(b) Stakeholder authority

Furthermore, political commitment from the President to use his authority in championing and sustaining the APRM process is considered critical to its influence by ensuring that it is insulated from the criticism directed to it from the cabinet, parliament, and members of the ruling NRM party. To elaborate on this, Participant Number 7 from the secretariat during a key informant interview said:

"...the issues of interest to the President are given priority for planning, integration into the NPoA and annual evaluation" (KII-S 2023:7).

In line with the APRM Guidelines, the President also clarifies on the country's priorities, progress made in implementing the recommendations from the CSAR and the CRR and the gaps, but also forms the guide to the country's mobilisation of actions, resources, as well as presenting the government's response at the APR Forum.

However, centrally to the above argument, Participant Number 11 from the NGC during an in-depth interview argued that:

"Talking of stakeholder participation in the APRM and its effects, it remains a bit of tokenism because we cannot have a meaningful conversation" (IDI-NGC 2023:11).

Some respondents argue that despite the generally positive and relevant perception by many stakeholders that the APRM provides a lasting solution to the African governance challenges due to its inclusive approach, some respondents down grade its potential for positive effect. To illustrate this selective use of the APRM only when it serves the interests of the Heads of State, Participant Number 20 from the NGC in an in-depth interview reported that:

"In one case, the report was sent to the President to present in Addis Ababa at the AU summit. He had not been consulted in the process, but a cabinet sub-committee had been put in place to organise a government response. However, when he read through the report's content, the President was not happy with some issues and instead queried the methodology used in generating it, despite the involvement of the cabinet sub-committee" (IDI-NGC 2023:20).

This preceding study finding suggests that the President among other stakeholders is more influential in influencing use, yet the intention of the APRM was about equal stakeholders to check on the President's political interests to bring about symbolic use. It is therefore believed that even when objective reports are presented, fellow heads of state would still find it diplomatically hard to objectively criticise their colleagues during the APR Forum. Therefore, the absence of checks on the overwhelming influence of the President necessitates an enhanced framework that integrates checks and balances for the different stakeholders.

6.4.3 Members of Parliament (MPs)

Members of Parliament are another major set of stakeholders whose involvement in the APRM is reported to positively affect national policies. The APRM Base Document (2003) provides for the role of parliament through its APRM sub-committee interacting with members of the NGC to ensure that the reports generated from the APRM process are debated in the house. Furthermore, Angey-Ufoyuru (2012:10) details functions of members of parliament to include ensuring that APRM matters are integrated in the parliamentary agenda for government business, as well as introducing and passing legislation aimed at enhancing the APRM process and implementation of the NPoA. In addition is the dissemination of APRM information to their various constituencies, as well as budget scrutiny in support of the effective policy implementation of the APRM recommendations.

(a) Stakeholders' knowledge

The degree of knowledge by stakeholders about public policy processes was also reported to be a significant factor in determining the type of use or non-use of APRM data. To explain how members of parliament have influenced use of the APRM, Participant Number 20 from the NGC during an in-depth interview explained that:

“The members of parliament representing the ruling party and the opposition take participation very seriously in the NGC. In fact they normally provide a lot of information and guidance on most of the issues due to their being knowledgeable about the internal workings of government. They also take part in the consultations and the validation activities although they do little in their constituencies” (IDI-NGC 2003:20).

This implies that little is known about their performance in introducing and discussing APRM matters in parliament. In line with the same argument, Participant Number 15 from the NGC in an in-depth interview explained:

“There is a committee of parliament where we are required to present and discuss the APRM reports, but because of the lack of a clear legal framework made by parliament to guide our activities, they question our mandate. That affects our capacity to engage constructively” (IDI-NGC 2023:15).

It can therefore be observed that while the role of members of parliament is well elaborated, the absence of a clear legal framework affects their capacity to influence the use of APRM reports. , However, in his reaction to the above view, Participant Number 14 from the NGC during an in-depth interview concurred, stating that:

“A lot of useful information is generated but not used by parliament. For example members of parliament in the NGC should present debate and make recommendations to MDAs as per the findings from the APRM reports, but that does not happen due to lack of a legal framework” (IDI-NGC 2023:14).

The responses in the above extract suggest the urgent need for a legal framework to enable members of parliament to effectively fulfil their mandate leading to conceptual use.

Relatedly, participants presented evidence for the limited participation of members of parliament who are expected to use the findings in national decision-making. For example, Participant Number 20 from the NGC during an in-depth interview explained that:

“The last time we did the country self-assessment, we called the MPs, and the number who turned up was quite a few even...when we went to the speaker, he was there but supported by less than 20 MPs... So you are down in this sort of validation or even getting information, and also part of it not being independent NPoA plans and the workshops and 90% of the people you meet there at the regional level are regional and district members of parliament and planners, yet the issues needed a wider range of people” (IDI-NGC 2023:20).

Therefore, the above evidence raises a question of motivation to members of parliament to fulfil their mandate. The minimal involvement of members of parliament in the APRM data collection activities robs it of the opportunity to get champions that push for the mandatory use of APRM recommendations in MDAs.

(b) Stakeholders' interest

Keen interest in accessing the APRM data was however reported among some categories of members of parliament. Some respondents indicated that unlike the members of parliament who subscribe to the ruling party, opposition members of

parliament tend to be more actively involved in APRM activities. It was argued that opposition politicians from both parliament and other political parties play a more positive role but at varying degrees. Participant Number 21 from the Focal Point during a key informant interview asserted that:

“When you find people from the opposition, many of them have found it a good mechanism to talk about the leadership because they are prepared to share the information because they know it is being done and should be done. Because of the impending APRM, people have come here and spoken to the political party, giving them the chance to say whatever they want... However, sometimes you may find the remarks in these reports that the leaders do not even want to see and become extremely irritated with them. The opposition, other Ugandans who consider themselves a part of it, and those who are so patriotic as to discuss a leader and his failings, have their views captured there and you will discover the open or naked truth coming from them. So, everything the leaders don't want to see in the report, you can find it there. But on a scale of 1 to 10, I would rate the report's perception at 7, being favourable” (KII-FP 2023:21).

This finding suggests that despite the centrality of members of parliament as major stakeholders, their effect varies with more positive effect coming from opposition members of parliament who openly discuss the governance challenges of a regime in power.

It is further observed from the findings that, without the authority and numerical supremacy of the opposition MPs in parliament, their contribution stops at consultation but not passing supportive legislations and ensuring budgetary allocations to the identified issues. In addition, it was reported that since parliament is expected to play a major role in validating, implementing and monitoring the NPoA, it was in error that the oversight of APRM activities was put under the Foreign Affairs Standing Committee, instead of the Finance and Planning Committee to which NPA is accountable. This practice results in conceptual use of the APRM which translates into no effect. Therefore, the proposed enhanced framework is intended to close such gaps to enable members of parliament to play their part to influence budgetary allocations and use of APRM recommendations by government Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs).

6.4.4 The Development Partners

One of the major features of the APRM is that it is a home grown African initiative, established by African leaders to solve African problems (Maloka 2019:23). This however does not imply that doors are completely closed to the participation of development partners who have for a long time been central actors in providing technical and financial support to the African countries.

(a) Control of finances

Control of financial resources was identified as a key factor in determining the use of APRM data. The first-generation review was well supported by development partners in undertaking the review process and NPoA implementation. Findings indicate that the involvement of partners has a positive effect on the country's public policy through their funding and accountability roles. Respondent Number 13 from the NGC during an in-depth interview explained that:

“In 2004, the Government of Uganda asked the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP-Uganda) for funding to integrate NEPAD/APRM in the national planning framework. As a result, the first APRM commission of 25 stakeholder representatives was fully funded by the UNDP to conduct consultations leading to the production of Report Number Seven in 2009” (IDI-NGC 2023:13).

Thus, the above submission indicates that the funding that kick-started the APRM activities from the beginning was from development partners. In addition, development partners have been instrumental in supporting the activities of the NGC. It is suggested that the numerous financial contributions to the APRM process from the development partners especially in the early stages translated into more efforts towards direct use of recommendations. Right from the preparation, the budget of the NPA Publicity and Communication Strategy (2005) was largely funded by the UNDP. Mbaziira (2007:12) indicates that to sustain the first review, major funding from development partners came from DANIDA, DFID, the AfDB, GIZ and others, who raised over USD 1 billion from 2006 to 2008 (NPA-CSAR 2008:20).

As an indicator of the direct influence of the APRM attributed to the nature of financial inputs, findings from most participants suggest that some recommendations are directly used and integrated into the country's five-year development framework.

To justify this argument, Respondent Number 11 from the NGC during an in-depth interview stated that:

“In 2004, cabinet said let’s take the APRM evaluation to the NPA, but the institution didn’t have financial capacity, so UNDP came in and gave that capacity and from then on actually within the NPA here the institutional set up has always been that we provide an integrated approach to the APRM and NEPAD. It was agreed that we have a specific unit or department right in the directorate that handles APRM and NEPAD” (IDI-NGC 2023:11).

The above response the need for workshop trainings of TPIs members of parliament and other state and non-state actors on their mandates, public hearings and receiving stakeholders’ memoranda and submission of their views, elections of NGC members through their constituencies and financing of NPoA implementation (NPoA Progress Report 2009:34).

To further explain the influence of development partners, Respondent Number 11 from the NGC during an in-depth interview emphasised that, the availability of financial support from the development partners contributed significantly to ensuring that right from the very first APRM report, the findings directly informed the first National Development Plan (NDP-2010/11-2014/15). She stated that:

“... When we started collecting views and discussions, the APRM as the new kid on the block, funding from the UNDP was actually the vehicle to the consultation for developing the vision document intended to replace the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) of 1997 [as the country’s development framework]” (IDI-NGC 2023:11).

So, the extract shows that due to the budgetary constraints faced by the government of Uganda, the development partners were able to provide adequate funding which resulted in extensive consultations. The findings concur with Alkin and Taut (2017:437) who emphasise that among the donor dependent countries mainly located in the global south, donor funders are primarily used to mainly hold the recipient countries accountable for the resources extended to them to implement policy interventions.

It is worth noting that after the withdrawal of the donor funding, the finances provided by the government were no longer sustainable and adequate to effectively conduct all activities of the entire peer review process, as indicated in the Base Document 2003 and the APRM Statute 2016. For example, Participant Number 11 from the NGC during an in-depth interview recalled that:

'... In 2010, the UNDP ended funding and said that the government should now take over; you know the government doesn't give much money for that communication, but we moved the country to validate this report... Consequently, certain activities could not be undertaken which affected the quality and use of the report by some stakeholders' (IDI-NGC 2023:11).

From the above evidence, the researcher observes that while all respondents agree that the support from development partners has a positive effect on the national policies, some concerns were raised on the key principle of African ownership of the APRM report content and how its recommendations were reconciled with the interests of the developing partners. They conclude that the divided allegiance between African or national interests and the donors' interests may result in selective use of APRM findings in favour of the development partners. To contribute towards addressing the challenge of over reliance on financial support from development partners, the researcher proposes an enhanced framework intended to ensure sustained domestic funding.

6.4.5 National Governing Council (NGC)

The National Governing Council (NGC) establishment as a body of stakeholder representatives is provided for in the APRM and the NEPAD/APRM Guidelines/O&P (2003:17). Its mandate includes overseeing the review process to ensure that it is conducted in an inclusive, transparent and technical way to generate timely reports. Participants identified mechanisms through the different types of use or non-use which were influenced by the NGC as explained below.

(a) Stakeholders' authority

To guide the peer review process for generating APRM data, the different NGC stakeholder representatives are expected to participate in overseeing the process, collecting data, and acting as custodians for the information, which is validated and compiled into reports. Participant Number 1 from the Democracy and Political Governance (DPG) thematic area during a key informant interview qualified this argument with a more in-depth report. He explained that:

“Yes, the stakeholders affect several levels during the review and monitoring preparations. However, they cannot go beyond the National Development Plan, and the NDP can only take control a lot because that's what the council can contain, given the available budget. Other groups can later engage in stakeholder consultations in monitoring, report drafting, or preparations. In the APRM, the participatory approach is robust and adequate in several stages, even at the consultation and validation levels; the participatory approach is both at the central and local levels, including radios and seminars where citizens are called to participate in consultation workshops. I assume the National Governing Councils build their chance on those representatives and ideas which they are supposed to take back to their constituency even when you are consulting; you do so based on the constitution of the NGC” (KII-S 2023:1).

So, according to the respondents, in the preceeding extract the NGC is believed to have a positive effect on the use of APRM findings. The view is that the nature and functioning of the NGC has a positive effect on the use and influence of the APRM in public policy through the recommendations made.

However, Respondent Number 20 from the NGC in an in-depth interview supported the argument with caution, by stressing that:

“...In principle, it's an excellent mechanism, exceptionally very good in terms of methods and activities, but of course ... looking at the NGC not only in Uganda but all over the continent they have several challenges which in fact affect their ability to fulfil their mandate” (IDI-NGC 2023:20).

Some respondents felt that the way in which the NGC provides APRM leadership and is constituted may pose a negative effect on the review process and output. They maintained that sometimes, the validity of report contents is doubted due to the

fact that some individual members of the NGC have personal political objectives and look at their appointments as rewards for loyalty to the regime which they should preserve. For example, Participant Number 1 from the Focal Point during a FGD reported:

“Yes, the participation is limited but also politically motivated and more needs to be done ...There is this weakness which I have seen within the NGC members, and I think I may recommend making a change in the selection...” (FGD-FP-MDA 2023:1).

This finding suggests that the way in which the NGC is politically constituted raises doubts on the quality of the report and consequently affects their use.

(b) Stakeholders’ knowledge

Knowledge of evidence-based policy-making processes among the NGC representatives was pointed out as a strong factor in influencing the degree of use of APRM data. To explain this argument, one Participant Number 14 from the Technical Research Institute during a key informant interview stated:

“When I was a member of the Uganda National NGO Forum, which is one of the major constituencies of local and international NGOs represented at the NGC, the representative would be objectively identified without direct government interference and effectively collect the views from the constituency. We would even compile assessment forms but experience challenges of getting the audience to engage the government and the president to generate feedback. So, our recommendations would end up being used for advocacy work by the same NGOs in the membership, calling for improvement in relevant areas” (KII-TPI 2023:14).

Therefore, the researcher observes that the concerns raised suggest that there are significant challenges in the constitution of the NGC, which affects its ability to execute its mandate to influence national policies. It is hoped that the proposed framework will go a long way towards addressing the challenges to promote use.

6.4.6 Civil Society Organisations

As the key external stakeholders in any country’s development policy, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) have also been identified as key stakeholders that represent the voice of the voiceless citizens.

(a) Stakeholder authority

All respondents agreed that their participation has a positive effect on national policies, since they even go beyond their NGC representatives to participate more directly in the policy process. The claim is well illustrated by Participant Number 11 from the NGC who explained during an in-depth interview that:

“The CSOs do influence policy..... For example, in 2012, CSOs led by the National NGO Forum’s Warren Nyamugasira formed the APRM Governance Monitoring Group covering the various thematic areas. They would report the progress of policy design and implementation in Uganda, raising issues of concern and bringing them to the attention of MDAs of government for improvement. They mobilised CSOs operating in various sectors like education and health and suggested proposals for government action. So, the NGC representatives influence policy by reaching out to collect information from their constituency, presenting it in the NGC meetings and compiling reports with recommendations to be integrated into the National Development Plan (NDP)” (IDI-NGC 2023:11).

This evidence suggests that CSOs can influence instrumental use of APRM data. This is in line with Holvoet *et al.* (2012:762), who advance that CSOs provide more independent analysis from evaluations than other stakeholders.

However, some stakeholders went further to emphasise that the effect varies with the type of CSOs. Participant Number 18 from the TRI reported an account of this varying influence. He said:

“When I was sitting on the NGO Board of course there was lots of engagement with government as part of our work, but the religious members (of the Inter-Religious Council) were lukewarm. So sometimes they were engaged, and sometimes they were not, and I think during the time of the first Chairman of the NGC, there was quite a bit of heightened engagement because he was passionate about the APRM issues, and when he left, that went down” (KII-TRI 2023:18).

Therefore, the preceeding view implies that the differences in effect of stakeholders as a collective body responsible for voicing the concerns of the voiceless leads to selective use where some issues are prioritised by government depending on which stakeholder is involved.

In addition, the nature of consultation is considered elitist as limited to participants largely associated with government in political or technical offices in MDAs, local governments and to a lesser extent CSOs. To explain this concern, Participant Number 17 from the TRI raised the challenge of focusing more on political governance by the APRM stakeholders than the other aspects. He stated that:

“Then one obvious criticism I would have over these processes of the APRM is the too much focus on political governance on the assumptions that it provides an enabling environment for poverty reduction, service delivery and all the other social and economic needs of the citizens. For me I believe it's better if you address those needs first since emphasis on their implementation would make the leaders consider that we need to transform people socio-economically to eventually improve political governance” (KII-TRI 2023:17).

The above statement suggests that there are stakeholders who question the relevancy of the APRM data is responding to the immediate needs of the citizens and this may affect their decision to use or not.

The above evidence regarding stakeholders and their role in influencing use corresponds with King and Alkin (2019:432), who argue that evaluation use occurs when specific types of users’ interface with types of evaluators (committed) to undertake evaluation in a particular way in a particular context. The user refers to stakeholders who respond to the evaluation stimuli by considering the process or results in information from the evaluation. Furthermore, the findings are in line with Arroyo (2013:4), who argues that there is a strong and direct relationship between the stakeholders and public policy, since they act as incentives to drive the policy through power-interest influences. Furthermore, Strojny (2018:374) contends that this relationship depends on the degree of either the convergence or divergence between the expectations of the stakeholders, their capabilities, roles and the policy objectives. Considering the challenges in the nature of APRM elitist consultations and politically influenced election of CSOs, the study proposes an enhanced framework to inform more meaningful participation that translates into instrumental use.

6.5 THEME 3: THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE APRM CONTEXT AFFECTS THE TYPE OF USE AND NON-USE OF THE APRM DATA IN UGANDA'S PUBLIC POLICY

To explain contextual factors affecting the use and influence of an evaluation of public policy, Mark and Henry (2004:46) identify contingencies in the environment to include facilitating factors and inhibiting factors. The findings suggest that there is a mixture of both positive and negative effects of the contingencies in the environment of the APRM evaluation system. They are broadly classified as political, historical, economic and ideological factors related to the evaluation setting, political climate and characteristics of the political leadership.

(a) Political climate

Uganda's political climate was presented as a major contextual factor to explain use and influence of the APRM data on the country's policy framework. On a positive note, Respondent Number 18 from the TRI described the effect of the changing context in Uganda between the first and the second review. He explained that:

"Initially, when the APRM was being introduced with the base review, the context was more favourable than at present. The political leadership was very committed to this Pan African mechanism, the development partners were very much willing to fund this inclusive initiative, the first NGC was very committed to advancing the APRM agenda, and government would respond to the issues raised through a more constructive engagement with other stakeholders. But over time, government realised that the mechanism was such a powerful tool for political accountability as it started raising questions on politically sensitive issues like presidential term limits, managing land, calling for government transition and started its influence by determining who should sit on the NGC. This may explain why no effort was made to establish an institutional framework passed by parliaments to give a legal basis and empower the APRM structures to question government, especially in the area of Demeocracy and Political Accountability. As a result, the APRM operating context has been changing between the first and the second peer review (KII-TRI 2023:18).

This sentiment expressed above suggests that the initial environment was more supportive but increasing limitations have been emerging over time, which affects the credibility of the process and non use of its findings.

In addition, Participant Number 14 from the NGC in an in-depth interview explained the effect of this variations in context and concurred by stating that:

“The APRM is organised differently in different countries. In Uganda, there is no independent legal basis for its operations which implies that it is run by the President and all of the structure and stakeholders work for and on behalf of the President who in most cases defines the context. The NGC which is the top most organ lacks space for independent discussion, no budget, and the mechanism is more elitist and not yet well contextualised to the understanding of the grass roots people” (IDI-NGC 2023:14).

The preceeding extract implies dominance of the president’s power and influence which suggests executive capture of the peer review implementation process which may result into concerns about the intended data accuracy arising from the idea of widestakeholder participation. This has implications on the selction of review participants, quality reporting, and consequently selective use of recommendations. The findings are in line with Smith and Larimer (2009:115), who insist that while there is a need for honest numbers, there is a common tendency for politics to wilfully ignore the factual outcome from the rational evaluation process, because such decisions carry minimal probability and connection to the realities in the value-driven politics.

From the general picture of changing contextual factors, participants were asked to identify with evidence, what they considered to be major facilitating and inhibiting factors affecting the APRM’s influence on policies in Uganda.

6.5.1 Facilitating contextual factors

The contextual factors facilitating the use of APRM data are reflected in the APRM’s institutional framework. In analysing the APRM’s institutional capacity in Uganda, respondents argued that the nature of a national APRM institutional and legal framework positively affects a country’s public policy.

6.5.1.1 Institutional capacity

The operationalisation of the APRM process is informed by the guiding documents from the secretariat, key among which include the Base Document (2003) and the

APRM Statute (2016) that must be domesticated. A key informant interviewee from the Socio-Economic Development thematic pillar qualified the commitment aspect when he reported that:

“...Uganda is committed to the APRM programme, there are robust structures, finance for the National Governing Council, and a solid computable secretariat that follows programmes and reviews, all of which are a result of the commitment” (KII-S 2023:4).

The preceding response reveals the existence of reasonable structures and resources to influence use of APRM data. Relatedly, some Participants perceived a strong institutional capacity since local capacity from within Uganda’s APRM system during the peer review process is strengthened by expertise from the Continental Secretariat. In addition, Participant Number 16 from the NGC responded that:

“I think that institutional capacity is okay because they send people and these eminent persons whose integrity you cannot doubt and then the secretariat with their technical staff, and then here as the NGC we represent different public like the stakeholders, civil service and all that. So, I think this institutional capacity is good” (IDI- NGC 2023:16).

The study observes that most participants emphasising existence of institutional capacity attribute it to the fact that APRM structures have long been established in Uganda since 2005, but not necessarily their functionality in line with their mandate.

However, some respondents shared the notion that the APRM's institutional capacity is inadequate, resulting in a negative effect on the country’s public policy, since their activities are limited mainly to report writing instead of grassroots activities. To explain this situation, Participant Number 5 from the Economic Governance thematic area commented in contradiction to the above views that:

“There is not enough capacity for what the APRM could do. Initially, it was started as a project because the government had no money to run, especially for the first review we went through. The development partners were there and set up a whole unit with the Public Relations (PR) separate from administrators. By then, they were using consultants to review reports by other consultants who would do the self assessmentt initial consultants, but with time were budget limitations. Sometimes

funding is not available to facilitate flow of information from the central government to the decentralised government, which was hard because there was no strong mechanism and structure. Therefore, the challenge is that the APRM in Uganda is more focused on producing that annual progress report on the NPA, but with no other major activity being done on the ground because of the capacity. Therefore, there is need to strive to bring in professionals needed to do professional work for the APRM, for instance, in corporate governance and law" (KII-S 2023:5).

This evidence suggests that financial and technical constraints remain key factors in negatively affecting the APRM's influence.

Furthermore, other respondents insist that there are weak institutional practices, like what respondents termed as upstream and downstream, where the former has heads of states pronouncing themselves on certain issues, but the downstream, being machinery of government, should take these issues and put them into practice through the existing institutions. The above views collaborated with the opinion of an in-depth interviewee from the NGC who commented that:

"...institutions are grossly weak right from the ordinary man to the judiciary, to the police to uphold the rule of law...Sometimes I joke that they are like in the intensive care unit, and the lack of sufficient funding is like cutting off oxygen. So when you bombard them with all these different findings, they cannot make good use of it, and therefore that becomes a challenge" (IDI-NGC 2023:11).

So, it is evident from the above response that the weak institutions APRM structures generally lack adequate basis of influencing use.

In addition, the researcher observes that there are weak synergies between the presidency, the secretariat and the Focal Minister which affect the national policies. The latter is elucidated by Participant Number 9 from the NGC who revealed that:

"... You could be there then you say that the APRM had maybe say a conference in Nairobi and indeed was represented by a person from the presidency. But there's not even any communication flow" (KII-S 2023:9).

The sentiment expressed above suggests not only the lack of adequate capacity but also coordination and respect of APRM structures by the other government MDAs.

Therefore, while all respondents agreed that institutional capacity has a positive effect on the country's public policy, variations exist among the degree of the type of use and influence. With such an institutional framework participants were asked to give their opinions about the evaluation influence of the different APRM institutional structures and these are discussed below.

6.5.1.1.1 The APRM Cabinet Sub-Committee led by the National Focal Point Minister

In Uganda, the Focal Point Minister who also chairs the APRM Cabinet Sub-Committee was designated as the Minister for Planning in the Ministry of Finance.

(a) Stakeholders' authority

This study found that the cabinet of 80 members takes decisions on behalf of the APRM, and then the NGC receives them for implementation as it passes them over to the NPA board. Participant Number 20 from the NGC in an in-depth interview emphasised the importance of a committed cabinet to the APRM process by saying:

"So, eventually when the NGC comes up with a CSAR, the report is validated and also produces a cabinet paper, which includes some of the difficulties met in producing that report, and how best they can be addressed. From its content, then cabinet can defend and say no let us finance this, and the beauty of involving everyone in the country is for ownership purposes" (IDI-NGC 2023:20).

The preceding finding suggests that this location of the cabinet is intended to ensure oversight and instrumental use by directly integrating APRM recommendations into the country's development plans.

In addition, Participant Number 21 from the Focal Point in an in-depth interview emphasised the key role of the Focal Point Minister in ensuring the adequacy of the institutional capacity of the APRM by saying:

"...So you can see the level of commitment from cabinet and the Focal Point Minister who work very closely with the NGC, and the secretariat. So at least the minister has tried to create the necessary capacity by ensuring that there is funding, over the years, and now it's them (secretariat) to say we can't deliver. Cabinet sub-committee has allowed using consultants to the extent possible where they (secretariat) think

we don't have the necessary capacity, and they have been able to do that. And because of the committed leadership by the Focal Point Minister, Uganda is among the few countries that have done the second generation review" (KII- FP 2023:21).

This sentiment suggests that the Focal Point Minister has provided a supportive role towards enhancing APRM influence.

Moreover, respondents emphasised the role of cabinet in offering the necessary guidance to the APRM structures in the implementation of their activities. They argued that cabinet decisions positively influence other stakeholders, especially the technical people to integrate APRM recommendations in their sectoral plans leading to instrumental use. Participant Number 11 from the APRM National Secretariat during an in-depth interview explained that the peer review activities of the APRM are also guided by the cabinet in addition to the APRM Statute (2016) as the purpose may fit. She stressed that:

"We use the APRM Statute that has guided our work from 2016... but also the cabinet decision of ensuring that NEPAD and the APRM are implemented well for the good of the country. Also cabinet ensures that the findings and recommendations are followed up by the Focal Point Minister and the the Minister of Finance who is in charge of planning for budgetary allocation to parliament and consequent implementation in the National Development Plan (NDP...." (KII-S 2023:11).

However, the researcher observes that when a cabinet decision is not in support, then there is a possibility of non-use or symbolic use of the APRM to justify pre-determined political positions. This submission emphasises the positive role played by cabinet to ensure that the APRM process and findings directly influence policy outcome through instrumental use.

In addition, with the power of the cabinet over other APRM structures, some respondents raised concerns on the politics involved which may result in a negative effect on the use and influence of the APRM. While some of the NGC members are nominated by their constituencies, their appointment is presided over by the Focal Point Minister on behalf of the President with capacity as their supervisor to influence their decisions. This may lead to political manipulation and symbolic use of the

APRM findings to justify pre-determined political decisions. To deal with such powers of the cabinet, the study proposes an enhanced framework within which the powers of the cabinet and the Focal Point Minister over the NGC can be checked.

6.5.1.1.1 The role of the National Governance Commission (NGC)

Findings indicate that the independence of the NGC has a significant positive effect on the use and influence of the APRM in a country's public policy.

(a) Stakeholders' authority

One key informant Participant from the NGC emphasised how the way in which it is constituted ensures its independence and influence on public policy. She explained that:

"...the beauty of the APRM is that the Statute is very clear that you have to have an independent governing council that is representative of all governance players. So at that point the council was 25 people in 2005 and really included everybody with the different constituencies represented.... you can find that its' composition of the 2000-2005 was even at that time and there was a lead professor" (IDI-NGC 2023:11).

So, it is suggested that the first NGC was perceived to be more independent than the consequent ones before government had an interest in controlling it. However, the major challenge to the lack of independence of the NGC is associated with the absence of clear mechanisms to guide the selection of the NGC members. Although the composition of the NGC is perceived to reflect diversity of stakeholders nominated by their constituents, some respondents insist that the NGC membership is largely drawn from the NRM ruling party. They argue that the intention is to make the NGC play the role of insulating and defending their government against any critics. Participant Number 20 from the NGC explained during an in-depth interview that:

"The constitution of the stakeholders being largely from government agencies reflects a different perception of the NGC, since most senior civil servants tend to be loyal to the regime in power. The question is 'how are you chosen so that we can have confidence in you'? In terms of participation, some members of parliament are very active but others do not prioritise NGC meetings. The CSOs and NGOs, women,

workers, and the youth have organised structures, but are not engaged and fully utilised to serve the purpose of effective representation” (IDI-NGC 2023:20).

The above statement suggests that having structures for identification of stakeholder representatives does not guarantee independence of the NGC.

Relatedly is the accountability of the NGC as per their terms of service. With regard to this attribute, respondents advanced that its accountability to another agency of government poses a negative effect on its ability to influence a country’s policy. The NGC reports to the executive director of the National Planning Authority (NPA), which makes them invisible and a secondary agency to the NPA. Some respondents maintained that the NPA which houses the secretariat uses its control of finances and logistics as a government agency to influence the APRM process and content of reports, yet the APRM structure requires that the secretariat should be accountable to the independent NGC. Participant Number 14 from the NGC during an in-depth interview explained that:

“The NGC members lack space to operate independently, the budget is decided by the finance committee of the NPA, and allocated based on its priorities. In addition, the council does not recruit its own consultants and staff are given by the NPA where they are full time employees to serve NPA interests” (IDI-NGC 2003:14).

So, accountability of the NGC to another agency negatively affects its capacity to independently influence use of the APRM in country policies. In terms of power required to influence government policy decisions, Participant Number 16 from the NGC during an in-depth interview stated that:

“We have the power to push things to work because we even have the Minister for Planning as a Focal Point for the APRM. He even writes cabinet papers and memos sent to the cabinet, even the parliament, but there is still a gap there though they know about it” (IDI- NGC 2023:16).

The assumption here is that the minister always supports the position of the NGC, which may not be the case. However, on the centrality, some respondents insisted in their submission that the power of the NGC is deflated by appointing many representatives that are known to be close to the ruling party. For instance, a participant Number 14, in-depth interviewee from the NGC explained that:

“Appointments to the NGC are done by the cabinet minister on behalf of the President, who receives two names for each constituency and selects one. So, it’s the cabinet which approves the names from the nominees, the Minister of Finance gives the terms of service and the swearing in is presided over by the judiciary” (IDI-NGC 2023:14).

This process not only reflects the dominance of the executive in controlling the would-be independent process, but also control over the NGC members.

Besides, other respondents also maintained that even those NGC representatives with no attachment to the regime tend to ensure that extreme care is taken to avoid speaking about reality on certain issues considered politically sensitive to annoy the top political leadership. Participant Number 20 from the NGC during an in-depth interview explained that:

“Sometimes individual members of the NGC have a personal objective view which may differ from their constituencies and consensus becomes tricky. For example on issues like down-sizing parliament and how to do it, qualification of members of parliament since there was no empirical relationship between academic qualification and political performance, the issues of a national language, and removal of term limits, among others” (IDI-NGC 2023:20).

Therefore, non use of some recommendations is associated with their impractical nature to be implemented in the Ugandan context. In addition is the challenge of passing resolutions which are perceived to be different from the views of their constituencies ultimately affect the credibility of the process, the outcome and consequently translate into symbolic use.

(b) Control of resources

The location of the NGC was presented by respondents as another attribute which affects the influence of the national policies. They argue that there is a positive relationship between the location and authority given to the NGC in executing its mandate and the use and influence of the APRM. A key informant qualified the observation of limited NGC's influence leading to utilisation of the APRM data which

is driven by the political interests of the regime of the day. A key informant interviewee from the TPI emphasised the argument by saying:

"First, you see in Uganda, unlike other countries, the way we position our NGC is very limiting and if you go to countries like Ghana and a few others, they have created the NGC as an autonomous agency in the sense that it has a budget line, it does its programme, it has its activities, it has its secretariat and all that, and so it can do the work it does. Therefore, its legitimacy is not contested and, in some places, the act of parliament forms it up. The parliament recognises it as an organ that does governance monitoring in the country" (KII-TRI 2023:18).

In the case of Uganda, the legitimacy question of the NGC since it is not established by an act of parliament makes it vulnerable to political manipulation by the government. Furthermore, while some participants acknowledge that the NGC is viewed as an important structure playing the role of self-criticism for policy improvement, others raise concerns about the operational effect without effective consultation and feedback to stakeholder constituencies. A Participant Number 14nt from the NGC explained that:

"Being a member of the NGC is not a full time appointment; the members are extremely busy people elsewhere and yet represent big constituencies".

The above view indicates the inadequacy by the NGC to effectively play their mandate. For example, Participant Number 20 explained that:

"A member of the NGC from academia represents over 40 universities in the country, which not only makes consultation hard, but also the constituency to be involved in monitoring what the NGC is doing" (IDI-NGC 2023:20).

Being busy people with big constituencies causes the NGC to fail to consult their membership and give feedback from their meetings. It also creates the general perception that participating stakeholders are mainly government agencies leading to the political control by the regime and bureaucratisation of the APRM process. Therefore the need for independence, power, consultation and feedback justifies the proposed framework towards making the APRM more effective in influencing national policies.

6.5.1.1.1 The National APRM Secretariat and the National Planning Authority (NPA)

The NPA is mandated to ensure a credible and independent alignment of the APRM process with the medium-term planning process and policies, as well as safeguarding it from manipulation by political actors (NPA-CRR 2017:4).

(a) Control of resources

Respondents identified attributes like technical capacity, financial resources and the independence to present a positive effect on the national policies. Respondent Number 9 from the NPA during a key informant interview informed the study about the guiding role of the NPA in enabling multiple stakeholders' contribution, by stressing that:

"We guide agencies, ministries, and local government in developing data by giving them structure for developing the plan and the direction they should go while developing that plan which is the guideline. Therefore, these are all ways of contributing to the government because the aim is to ensure that everyone has a plan and is accountable when doing these actions" (KII-S 2023:9).

So, as a government agency created by an act of parliament, the NPA exercises full control over the secretariat which exists as one of its units. In addition, political bias is reported where the bureaucrats involved in validation and monitoring NPoA implementation at the NPA and the the selection of participants in local governments such as Chief Administrative Officers (CAOs) could deliberately choose those loyal to the government. Since they operate in a political context, it is argued that some participants are simply hand picked, others are recommended and the quality goes down. Besides, much of the work is done at the NPA and local governments which should be key participants in the APRM processes, but have been more consumers than active participants in policy design as makers of policies. For instance, Participant Number 14 from the NGC from an in-depth interview explained that:

"Participation of local governments is entirely dependent on the way the Secretariat is run by the NPA, without adequate time and a clear schedule given for planning and preparation of stakeholders. So you end up with a few district officials, academia

and religious leaders with little or no facilitation, resulting in too few people from a few sectors involved in the consultations. Also, you find that similar issues have been raised in other forums without any action from government. Now, the question is, who makes policies in Uganda when the dominant approach is top down and not participatory?” (IDI NGC 2023:14).

This preceeding extract suggests that inadequate participation of of all stakeholders negatively affects the quality of review and the ownership of the report content. Therefore, although the major facilitating factor of the APRM is reflected, its established institutional structure that has lasted for over 15 years, challenges associated with capacity, independence and legal basis of its structures reflect the need for an enhanced framework if its influence to be positively realised.

6.5.2 Inhibiting contextual factors

A major attribute in the context of the APRM identified to positively affect the use and influence of a country’s public policy is a domestic legal framework to guide the implementation of the APRM evaluation system in Uganda. The Ugandan law requires that the NGC structure like other commissions and statutory bodies involved in monitoring activities be established by parliament, and scrutinised by its public accountability committees, which is not the case with the APRM.

The accountability to parliament would not only promote public participation through committee hearings, but also parliamentary debates to enhance the APRM influence in the country’s policy process. However, until now the NGC is not legally institutionalised, and its accountability mandate is questioned. To explain the current operationalisation of the APRM, Participant Number 18 from the TRI explained that:

“The most critical component of the framework is associated with planning and budgeting as channels for facilitating utilisation of the APRM process and data. The reports from the NGC are given to the minister who presents it to the APRM sub-committee of parliament and to cabinet from where memos and recommendations for reforms are decided” (KII-TPI 2023:18).

Consequently, due to questions surrounding its legitimacy, the NGC’s effectiveness in influencing national policy outcomes is strongly weakened.

6.5.2.1 The lack of a well domesticated legal framework supporting APRM operations in Uganda

The urgent need for a well domesticated legal framework passed by parliament was emphasised by all respondents as a prerequisite towards enforcing the use and influence of APRM data. Participant Number 18 from the TRI stressed the need for a well domesticated policy framework to support the nationalisation of the APRM in the country's plans. He explained:

'If you think about the policy framework, I think the APRM was quick to realise that for it to have significant uptake, it must be anchored within the national policy framework of each country, depending on how that is on the continental level. So, in terms of actual engagement, for example, here in Uganda, to relate it to that national development plan was very important because the people needed to know, especially those in the government. But one issue about the government is, as you know, they always want to know if I am going to take on this, which policy does it relate to. So when the APRM landed here, the first thing was to say it must be part of the national development plan, it can't be implemented outside that even the national programme of action resources and financing is not additional resources financing, it is per the financing of the National Development Plan. So, in a sense, that becomes part of the national policy framework" (KII-TRI 2023:18).

From the above data collected, several respondents indicated lack of knowledge of any known national framework.

However, other participants suggested that there was already some form of existing legal framework by making reference to the domestication of the APRM implementation guidelines from the Continental Secretariat. Respondent Number 9 from the Corporate Governance Department was among those who expressed ignorance of a policy framework to inform the review process. He revealed that:

"...In Uganda, there is no document in its legal framework talking about the NGC's existence. Therefore, some government agencies are working on implementing the APRM processes but have not established with clear output... The APRM has objectives and actions, a well-structured and very instrumental framework.

Whenever there is a review, updates come under different components of the focus area, meaning it is working under a very lethal quality framework within an already defined concept” (KII-S 2023:9).

This suggests that the APRM can only work with the support of other government agencies, a context that minimises its capacity to influence national policies.

Relatedly, some respondents however challenged that position by arguing that there are existing policy documents which were domesticated upon the country’s accent to the APRM. They maintain that despite the lack of a domesticated legal framework passed by the Ugandan Parliament, there are principle documents which were developed to guide the APRM to define what the APRM does. Such constitute continental protocols that provide the benchmark and standards that inform the implementation as generally acceptable and integrated in mainstream legal frameworks of participating countries. To elaborate this argument, Participant Number 20 from the NGC during an in-depth interview explained that:

“From an international relations point of view, when a government ratifies a treaty, it is supposed to be domesticated by putting in place necessary legitimate laws and institutions by parliament or order of the President. But after acceding to the APRM, Uganda like some other countries did not put in place such a legal framework that legitimises the existence and functioning of the APRM structures” (IDI-NGC 2023:20).

So, while some respondents believed that the guidelines and statutes from the Continental Secretariat are adequate, others insisted that there is no clear policy framework which not only guides the APRM operationalisations, but also compels utilisation of data by the different actors. As a result of the presidential support, some government agencies simply work along but without a clear guiding framework, which results in symbolic and sometimes non-use of findings.

Furthermore, findings show that an unclear legal framework affects the operations of the secretariat. Without a legal basis for its activities, the secretariat has no control over the management of their staff, cannot determine their capacity or even recruit consultants. This negatively affects the potential influence of APRM activities and the

outcome. To illustrate this inadequacy, an in-depth interviewee from the NGC reported that:

"...They come and we interview them and say this one is good, but they are imposed on us, so we don't know how they are selected. Of course, they will do a formality there and do the recruitment. So, it's very weak because we don't have that legal framework to help us get the kind of person we want. We still work under a department, and even when we have a governance office called the planning officer, even though they are named ordinarily, they are supposed to govern somebody. They recruit their planners and senior planners to fit within the framework of the National Planning Authority (NPA). So it is not clear if they are recruited to serve the interests of the NPA or the Governance Monitoring work of the APRM's National Governing Council" (IDI-NGC 2023:14).

As reflected in the above extract, some respondents argued that due to lack of a clear legal framework passed by parliament to compel use of its data, some technical people recruited in the NPA and other MDAs believe it is a political project of the President intended for symbolic use where evidence is adopted to justify political decisions. So, while such continental protocols and standards coupled with the presidential support have managed to drive the APRM activities for this long, most stakeholders insist that lack of legal entrenchment of the APRM process into the Ugandan system robs it in an element of country ownership, as well as public accountability.

In addition, the study also revealed that stakeholders associate non-use of APRM recommendations to absence of a clear policy framework that informs the use of the APRM in Uganda. For example, Respondent Number 1 from the Democracy and Political Governance thematic area said:

"There is no policy framework, and we rely on the legal document from the Continental Secretariat. The documents indicate that there should be national structures as a national focal point, governing council, and so the president appoints members through the focal points. Lucky enough, there is a budget based on the National Planning Authority, and the relationship between the NGC and the NPA board is not clearly understood in accountability terms. The conduct of the APRM

reviews is ad-hoc even though the original intention was after every 5 years... The would-be key policy framework for the APRM is the National Plan of Action, which is not implemented in isolation, but by or within the National Development Plan (NDP). So, these two are integrated and become the blueprint guiding policy in Uganda. The assumption is that this NPoA is within the National Plan. The greater the integration of the NPoA in the plan; the greater the extent of implementation of the governing issues and action" (KII-S 2023:1).

As a result, its legitimacy is questioned, which ultimately explains the selective use and non-use of APRM recommendations.

Respondents also asserted that despite over 15 years of APRM implementation in Uganda, conceptual use of findings is still rampant in many Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) of government due to absence of a clear legal status of the APRM leading to more intentional but symbolic use of findings. As a result, Respondent Number 16 from the NGC during an in-depth interview reported that:

"In the thematic area of DPG, both the first and the second peer review reports recommended term limits, freezing the creation of new districts, reduction in the size of parliament among others but in Uganda there has been inaction by government on such key recommendations" (IDI-NGC 2023:16).

Similarly, the activities of the NGC are affected. Key Respondent Number 16 from the NGC adds:

"Even NGC representatives have no framework for mobilising their constituencies for both consultation and dissemination of reports which leads to selective invitations. Also few members of parliament attend consultations and validation activities to build synergy with the civil society networks in order to create a bigger impact for identified issues to be included on the national policy agenda" (IDI-NGC 2023:16).

The above extract suggests that exclusion of some stakeholders has reduced chances of credible recommendations that the NGC submits to government to

translate into instrumental use by the NPA and other MDAs. Furthermore, the participants insist that the non-binding status of APRM recommendations suggests that it is a largely presidential project associated with political partisanship, bureaucratic bickering, and corruption in selection of TPIs, field work and compilation of the reports and issue papers. Therefore, the researcher argues that addressing such challenges can only be achieved through an enhanced framework. From the perception of stakeholders, the identified implementation factors included: credibility, quality, relevance, communication and timeliness of findings, while policy setting factors were identified to include political climate, personal characteristics, competing information, and receptiveness to evaluation and user commitment. Having analysed how the APRM context affects public policy in general, the next section narrows down to examine the contextual factors influencing the refugee policy framework.

6.6 THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE CONTEXT OF THE APRM EVALUATION SYSTEM HAS INFLUENCED UGANDA'S REFUGEE POLICY FRAMEWORK

This study observes that while the APRM reports indicate that Uganda's refugee policy framework is ranked as a best practice on the continent for other countries to learn from, significant variations exist among stakeholders' perceptions. While a number of them may not be very conversant with the details of the policy framework, they argue that the APRM indirectly influences the policy framework by presenting a platform for the country to show case its best practice for purposes of knowledge sharing and learning by other countries dealing with a similar challenge as discussed in the following section.

6.6.1 Stakeholders' knowledge of the refugee policy framework

The findings indicate that stakeholder awareness of the policy has positively effects the utilisation of the APRM recommendations in Uganda's refugee policy framework. It was discovered that despite some stakeholders being ignorant about the policy and most importantly how the APRM evaluation system affects it, some respondents still concurred with the idea that the refugee policy is entirely political. Respondent Number 16 from the NGC during an in-depth interview confessed:

"I cannot confidently discuss that policy framework, and I don't know much about it...The only general thing I know about Uganda is it has open doors for refugees in welcoming them and settling them as recommended. I don't know, but there is always politics, and the social nature of Uganda can also be a factor to a smaller extent, not mainly politics" (IDI-NGC 2023:16).

This suggests that little is known by stakeholders about how the APRM has influenced individual policies, even those identified as a country's best practices.

According to most respondents, the mechanism may not have directly influenced the refugee policy because the first country peer review took place in 2008, yet the policy reforms had started earlier with the 2006 Refugee Act. To explain the country's long history of an open-door policy that pre-dates the APRM, Respondent Number 20 from the NGC during an in-depth interview emphasised that:

"Uganda's policy framework towards refugees must be understood in two contexts, with or without refugees. Firstly, until recently, Uganda has been an exporter of refugees to Kenya, Tanzania and South Sudan, whose people hosted us and expected us to pay back when faced with instability in their countries. More so, the current leadership in Uganda was in exile for many years and is expected to pay back. Secondly is President Museveni's notion of Pan-Africanism which assumes colonial boundaries as being artificial. He insists that the African peoples are similar across boundaries, implying that refugees from other African countries should not be chased away. This is the approach to refugee management that his regime and Uganda as a country has adopted and implemented since 1986 when he came to power. So the APRM may not have influenced this policy, since its establishment in 2003 found this open-door policy as the country's position towards refugees" (IDI-NGC 2023:20).

The above revelation suggests that while the APRM may have played a role in identifying the refugee policy as a best practice, it is not largely responsible for influencing the country's policy reforms.

6.6.2 The role of APRM in influencing the refugee policy framework

Some respondents pointed out several reasons to justify the indirect influence of the APRM on the country's policy reforms, since they started taking place after the

country's accent in 2003. Firstly, it is suggested that with Uganda bearing the name and membership of the APRM, the principles governing the APRM, the Pan-Africanism, and humanism, reflected in its policy framework can all be credited to the APRM's evaluation system. A case in point is what Respondent Number 11 from the NGC explained during an in-depth interview:

“Most refugees come from the neighbouring countries, and these neighbouring countries are members of the APRM, and in the APRM definitely, they talk about indicators like peace, humanitarianism and regional protection policy, which help in bringing other countries together; ... therefore the government allows in refugees because there are other countries who have joined the APRM...” (IDI-NGC 2023:11).

This suggests an indirect and supplementary role played by the APRM in influencing leaders' decisions to reform.

In addition, it has also been reported that the mechanism has influenced the refugee reforms in Uganda by acting as the source of information to guide policy changes. This implies that the APRM instead plays the role of providing a platform for learning from it by other African member countries as a best practice. A Participant Number 4 during as key informant interviewee from the Socio-economic Development Department attested to the claim saying:

“...The political angle is an issue in Uganda despite not having the required funding, because development partners fund those refugee reform processes, Ugandan leadership could use the APRM recommendations to identify the need and use its advanced strategic relations with development partners. Therefore, the President has taken the view that conflicts surround Uganda, so we have to help them because they also helped earlier on, and that's the political arm... Although the APRM process is technical, but it is also driven by the President's political leadership and the Focal Point person, a minister” (KII-S 2023:4).

This argument suggests the use of the APRM politically to advance leaders' interests.

In another thoughtful process, Participant Number 1 from the MDA Focal Point during the FGD questioned that:

“That Act was developed in 2006 and has been used since that time. So why was it not developed in 2003 when Uganda joined?” (FGD-FP-MDA 2023:1).

It is however observed that the first peer review started in 2005 and ended in 2008, implying that it was at that time that the reports generated could have informed the country’s refugee policy framework. Considering the use of APRM data as a basis for informing policy reforms, Respondent Number 5 from the Economic Governance (EG) Department clarified that:

“The findings in the Country Review Report have been used in informing the policy reforms. Initially, the whole idea of the refugee policy was based on the President and his experience of the wars during the 1970s, where many, many neighboring countries hosted refugees. Having been one of the beneficiaries in Tanzania, Angola and Kenya, he says it is time to pay back to those who took care of us when we were also refugees. Over time, the mechanism provided an opportunity and we have used the APRM reporting to identify gaps and promote improvement from the Refugee Act of 2006, the Refugee Regulations of 2010 and now several strategies like the Settlement Transformation Agenda (STA) and the initiative of Refugee and Host Population Empowerment (ReHoPE)” (KII-S 2023:5). This argument presents the APRM as a critical source of data for informing policy reforms.

In support of that argument, Participant Number 10 from the NGC during an in-depth interview explained:

“The recommendations and issues raised about Uganda’s refugee management in the first country review report (CRR 2008) attracted the attention of the President for his action since the policy area is of key interest to him”. So, such recommendations fed into policy research and innovation that explains the continuous policy reforms in the form of the Refugee Regulations 2010 after the 2008 APRM Base Review (IDI-NGC 2023:10).

Therefore, it is believed that by the APRM providing a platform for showcasing the policy framework as a best practice it has indirectly driven the country into even adopting more strategies for improving policy implementation practice. In addition, Brakamp (1982:171) emphasises that evaluation influence can be measured by conditions such as: direct use in decision-making, conceptual enlightenment where

new lessons are drawn from evaluation, changes in organisational practices and policies informed by evaluation, and impact on the organisational management.

Besides the role of the APRM towards enhancing Uganda's refugee framework as highlighted above, findings from stakeholders suggest other contextual factors outside the APRM's evaluation system, which to a greater extent are said to have a more positive effect. The attributes identified include political leadership and its Pan-African ideology, the country's long history of engagement with refugees, economic desire to attract donor funding, and the geographical location of Uganda amidst a conflict affected region. The following section presents participants' perceptions of how each of the contextual factors affects the refugee policy as a facilitating or inhibiting factor.

6.6.3 The other factors that influenced the refugee policy framework

A major facilitating factor advanced is the political leadership of President Museveni. To most respondents, the President's political leadership was perceived as a major attribute that positively affected the country's refugee policy framework even within the APRM evaluation system. It is argued that after responding to the base review report and committing to implementing its recommendations, the President ensured that the reforms regarding management of refugees were effected. A Participant Number 20, in an in-depth interviewee from the NGC explained that:

"At the continental level when the country is being reviewed at the APR Forum, the Head of State and no other person is required to present the report. In doing so, the fear of responding to similar challenges from the previous report motivates him to ensure that reforms are implemented successfully at the time of the following review" (IDI-NGC 2023:20).

This emphasises the learning function of the APRM for purposes of policy improvement. To further question the President's agenda in supporting the APRM it appears to work in its favour, while rejecting the reports when they challenge the democratic status of his government. A Participant Number 18 during a key informant interview from the Technical Research Institute (TRI) argued that:

"...There was a progress report that the President didn't feel represented Uganda's progress, and he even refused to meet with the governing council at that time. So, as

a result, there was a lot of sensitivity and sort of finding ways this can be presented as something beneficial for the state and the government, and we started having a lot of back and forth when it comes to the analysis of political governance on what should be included” (KII-TRI 2023:18).

While it was perceived as a strength in demonstrating the APRM’s influence, to some respondents it is termed as ‘presidentialism’ and the APRM as more of a President’s personal project and hence buffering it from the parliamentary oversight.

As a way of explaining the symbolic use of the APRM to where it serves the interest of the President’s political agenda, Participant Number 14 from the NGC reported during an in-depth interview that:

“I will tell you that one day when I was the acting chair, I travelled with the President to South Africa for the APR Forum, and so we gave him a report, which he read. He discovered some issues that made him uncomfortable since we did not have time. Ordinarily, we go when we have done the report, we handle the themes, and we do summary for him and all that, brief him. Actually you do a proper presentation for him, but we didn’t have that time, so we travelled, and then he read, at first it looked positive but he didn’t like the details. So we worked hard to revise the document, but at presentation, he did his own. So that’s the famous meeting where he said, “We’re leaving now to discuss these bottlenecks.” He abandoned the four thematic areas, corporative governance and democracy. Now, I think his interest is in the bottlenecks, so we need to reorganise the questionnaire around the bottleneck, which he suggested later became an important issue” (IDI-NGC 2023:14).

However, outside the APRM evaluation system, the President’s political leadership remains an important factor. Furthermore, within the APRM, findings indicate that the success of the refugee policy framework is more associated with the Pan African ideology and experience of President Yoweri Museveni in particular. Some respondents associated the reforms in the refugee policy framework with the President’s experience as a refugee having survived the past tyrannical Ugandan regimes; in the end, attracting sympathy for such refugees. For instance, a Participant Number 1 from the APRM National Secretariat said:

“The President's ideology largely informs the refugee policy of Pan-Africanism, but the country review reports help identify existing gaps based on reforms. In addition, although they contribute to the reforms, the APRM reports generate information used by individuals and groups in MDAs where planning and tracking progress on the refugee policy implementation takes place’ (KII-S 2023:1).

To many respondents, the President's ideology is the key defining factor that explains the use of APRM data in influencing the country's refugee policy framework.

Relatedly, a key informant interviewee from the Focal Point collaborated that:

“Acceptance of the refugees is a decision which the President of Uganda as a leader took influenced by his Pan-African ideological orientation to host from the neighbouring countries which is a hospitable gesture that any country can do with the spirit of Pan-Africanism to host the refugees... Therefore, the President has taken the review that conflicts surround Uganda, so we must help them because they also helped earlier on, and that's the political arm... For Uganda, politics has a very big influence in the current refugee policy because they were one-time refugees” (KII-FP 2023:21).

This viewpoint is based on the argument that since the President is interested in promoting the country and his interests at the regional and continental levels, his commitment matters. The respondent added that his involvement drives the responsiveness of other stakeholders like civil servants that attracts the awareness of the broader public. The above response is in line with what was stressed by Respondent Number 4 from the APRM Secretariat who insisted that:

“Acceptance of the refugees is a political decision that Uganda as a country took to host from the neighbouring countries ...with the spirit of Pan-Africanism...” (KII-S 2023:4).

Consequently, to ensure economically self-reliant refugees, the Comprehensive Refugee Response Plan (CRRP) based on the New York Declaration was adopted in 2018, together with other development assistance frameworks like the Refugees and Host Population Empowerment (ReHoPE) Framework, the Settlement Transformation Agenda (STA) and the UNHCR (2019:7). To address the challenges

of service delivery and infrastructure in the settlement areas, the STA was integrated into the district plans, and the National Development Plans II and III, to create a bigger impact on host communities with funding from the United Nations and the World Bank.

However, some respondents insist that despite the direct and active participation of the President, the politics inherent in the peer review may not allow direct use and influence to occur, but gives room for symbolic use. Respondent Number 20 from the NGC explained during a key informant interview that:

“At the APR Forum, when the Head of State is finally reviewed by his peers, they also tend to be very careful to avoid attacking one another. In doing so, striking a delicate balance between diplomacy and objectivity becomes very important. From a diplomatic angle, focus is put more on the successes than the challenges. Furthermore, the President is expected to present a report of about 200 pages in 10 minutes, which may be too little to ensure meaningful resolutions on a country’s governance performance” (IDI-NGC 2023:20).

With such a situation where other presidents are careful not to be seen to be hard on one of their colleagues, this results in more of symbolic use and the country is credited for undergoing peer review even without tangible changes in its governance.

The findings also reveal other facilitating factors which include diplomatic factors stemming from international law, historical as well as economic factors. In the 1990s, the country’s efforts to comply and align with the international refugee standards in light of the increased inflow of refugees informed the 2006 Refugee Act (RLP 2006:2). International law to which Uganda is a signatory stipulates the need for countries to open borders for those seeking refugee statuses, and highlights the welcoming nature of Ugandans. Respondent Number 21 from the Focal Point reported that:

“... Naturally, Ugandans are very welcoming, and they know how to live with other people; they don’t discriminate; they co-exist, especially in places like Kampala, a cosmopolitan area where you find all tribes, including refugees settling in, including the tribes of KUKU whose origin is from South Sudan...

Uganda is getting so many refugees, and the people there know that the safest and most welcoming country is Uganda. Each time they try to go back and riot again, they come back to Uganda, and many of them settle here, and sometimes you wonder how far we are going to go but then leave it to God” (KII-FP 2023:21).

This argument goes beyond the influence of the APRM in Uganda’s refugee policy reforms to international law.

Moreover, historical factors were presented by respondents as central in determining Uganda’s refugee policy framework. To explain this argument, Respondent Number 14 during an in-depth interview pointed to the historical refugee experience of political leaders in the current regime in Uganda while they were refugees for years. He stressed that the friendly policy framework instead comes as a reciprocation for the kind gestures extended to them while they were refugees in the neighbouring countries, especially in the 1970s. He remarked:

“I think our leaders have been, for example, mostly former refugees, and I think from that experience they needed to put in place an arrangement, a framework that could give dignity to the refugees because they were former refugees and who knows, they need to create an environment that can also guarantee them. But having such experience of what they went through, how they were looked after, how Tanzania supported them and certainly yes, they learnt from that experience, and it's not surprising that we have good enforcement” (IDI-NGC 2023:14).

This suggests that the reforms in the refugee policy framework can be attributed to more historical factors that pre-date the establishment of the APRM in Uganda, which needs to be considered in an enhanced policy framework for the APRM.

Another argument concerning the location is that Uganda is geographically located in the centre of a conflict affected great lakes region. This situation necessitates that as a country which has enjoyed relative peace and stability for the last three decades, it

welcomes refugees from its unstable neighbours by implementing a friendly policy framework. To explain this factor, Respondent Number 18 from the TRI, during a key informant interview, reasoned that:

“Uganda is one of those countries that have always existed in a volatile region, conflict-prone; you have the DRC which is always in and out, you have Burundi, Rwanda, South Sudan in and out, and even parts of Kenya maybe not so much, Tanzania maybe not, but if you think about that 75% of our borders have got this in and out refugee movement perpetually. Rwanda we have the historical roots of the 1930s and 40s and even the DRC and South Sudan” (KII-TRI 2023:18).

Relatedly, Respondent Number 20 from the NGC, during an in-depth interview explained Uganda’s location as a major factor. He explained that:

“Besides South Sudan, DRC refugees are experts in failed states as the western part of Uganda has many small ethnic groups in different provinces. The fighting among them has resulted in persistent conflicts leading to an influx of refugees into Uganda. Similarly, geographical proximity to Rwanda explains the many refugees from Rwanda since 1956 who fled with cows and have settled in Uganda since then. So generally, Uganda has been hospitable, not just to the political establishment but also from a cultural angle. Ugandans have been very receptive since colonial times” (KII-NGC 2023:20).

This argument places the emphasis on the political and geographical which are to a greater extent historical in nature, having existed before the establishment of the APRM. Therefore, the findings from stakeholders indicate that in fulfilling its evaluative functions of learning and accountability, the case of Uganda’s refugee policy framework suggests that it serves more as a platform for member states sharing best practices than promoting instrumental use and influence of policies among member states.

6.7 STRATEGIES PROPOSED FOR ENHANCING THE APRM PROCESS AND UTILISATION OF FINDINGS FOR PUBLIC POLICY IN AU MEMBER STATES

The study respondents identified politics as a major challenge that has a direct negative effect on the use and influence on public policy throughout the peer review

process. Findings show that politics is manifested in the appointment of the Focal Point Minister, stakeholder representatives at the NGC, budget allocations to the Secretariat, staff and consultants' recruitment, selection of participants and areas for consultation and validation, as well as at the APR Forum. Respondent Number 3 from the Department of Socio-Economic Governance explained this situation by saying:

“At the level of the NGC, the appointments, mandate and financial resources are all from the executive. This leaves the NGC in its work to generate reports which are considered politically correct to avoid the embarrassment of the President and his government” (KII-S 2023:3).

This authority from the political leadership over the institutional structure of the APRM not only affects the independence of its operations, but also results in more symbolic use for political interests.

From the above challenges, respondents proposed several strategies towards enhancing the use and influence of the APRM. The major proposals from the stakeholders included: strengthening the capacity of the institutions within and, more importantly, how the national secretariat works with the other decentralised points; building capacity for the National APRM Secretariat as well and having more of the Continental Secretariat in supporting the National Secretariat, to ensure enhanced coordination between the National Secretariat and the APRM continental Secretariat. The next section analyses the proposals made towards improved utilisation and effect of APRM data in national policy outcomes.

6.7.1 Funding

Firstly, stakeholders recommended independent funding of the peer review implementation other than government to minimise degree influence in favour of its political agenda. To elaborate the negative effect of lack of an independent source of funding, Participant Number 2 from the National Secretariat, during a key informant interview stated that:

“The NGC is sponsored by the Government of Uganda and cannot rebuke or objectively document its practices, especially in the thematic area of Democracy and Political Governance” (KII–S 2023:2).

Stakeholders believed that other thematic areas could possibly be reported on objectively in black and white, but the political theme has very sensitive indicators whose data may spoil the relationship between government and the NGC. This recommendation becomes more important, especially with the reduced funding from the donors between the first and the second reviews. Another in-depth interviewee from the NGC, during an in-depth interview explained that:

".....some donors stopped and others reduced funding towards the APRM because they did not see the possibility of the government changing and implementing the major reforms and recommendations to give the process momentum" (IDI-NGC 2023:20).

From the above statement, acknowledging that the state is very powerful, the participant recommend studies on how the European Union (EU) does its assessment, since the panel of eminent persons and NGC members could as well be a part of the deep state.

Like wise, funding should be adequate to facilitate not only independent but also extensive structures and activities of the NGC across the country to all local governments. They added that adequate funding ensures that all activities are done by the NGC as opposed to government public servants, who undertake validation and monitoring of the NPoA simply because the NGC does not have its own resources. To explain this challenge, Participant Number 11 from the National Secretariat stated that:

"Monitoring the implementation of the NPoA is fully conducted by public officials from government agencies as a technical process instead of the NGC which must assess and present objective reports in the interest of all stakeholders" (KII-S-2023:11).

Therefore the role of the NGC is relegated to simply ensuring that their constituencies are represented and instead wait to receive the draft report. Furthermore, availability of finances helps in facilitating and enabling more interactions with the secretariat and the MDAs to increase the opportunity of the work of the NGCs to regularly give updates to the stakeholders, as opposed to simply attending meetings and waiting for the next review.

In addition, adequate funding of the NGC budget will ensure investment in research and development. This implies that the NGC through the NPA will not hire the consultants as and when it is time for the ad hoc and once-off review activities, but also maintain a research department for studying the peer review context and ensuring continuous improvement. This will go a long way in promoting a knowledge generation system, and researching key emerging issues that exist between the country self-assessment reports and the progress reporting through the NPoA and ensuring an independent NGC to manage all elements of the mechanism.

6.7.2 Massive awareness

In addition is the proposed strategy of investing in massive awareness strategies for re-awakening the public on the APRM and making it known for the reasons that it was brought about and how Uganda benefits from it Respondent Number 3 from the National Secretariat argued that:

“The APRM is mainly known in the NPA where the secretariat is located, but other MDAs may not know much of what it does” (KII-S 2023:3).

This becomes a serious challenge to ensuring use and influence on a countries’ policy when the agencies directly responsible for integration into their work plans have limited knowledge of the availability of its data and its quality. Therefore, respondents proposed the opening up of some regional offices in the local governments.

Secondly, in terms of the awareness strategy for promoting use and influence of APRM findings, respondents suggested the need to invest in a regular awareness strategy that covers both the national and lower local government level stakeholders. There is lack of adequate awareness of the different stakeholders about their leadership and how to benefit. Massive awareness for the wide population of stakeholders to know what APRM is, what it does, the roles of different stakeholders, the process and spaces for participation, as well as their representatives, is required. Similarly, Participant Number 16 from the NGC, during an in-depth interview proposed:

"The main one is to create awareness among the people. So the people there, especially in the ministry, should also create awareness so that people know and even finance we don't understand. So we should create more awareness in whatever we do so that we connect, and I am looking forward to the NGC's budget, which is minimal" (IDI-NGC 2023:16).

This response above suggests that awareness is a major factor not only to ensure active participation of stakeholders, but also mobilisation of the required resources to influence use.

In addition is the need for improved dissemination for engagement. The improvement in awareness strategy includes suggestions for digitisation of the mechanisms' protocols. For example, a respondent suggested:

"I think there is one thing we need to enhance the whole stakeholder engagement and communication strategy using the digital platforms, because now many people are not reading the newspaper and everybody's attention is online, so we need to find ways of disseminating that, and that, of course, requires to see how we can reach that person who holds a Kabiriti [old model/non-smart] phone because the way I see MTN and AIRTEL they send me messages. If they were my suitors I would have already run away. Like three times quarterly in a day, and if we can send these messages through phones, I think we can reach many people. People often read their messages, so to me, that's something I think about how I get out" (KII-S 2023:11).

The preceeding extract suggests that there is a big deficit in creating awareness which requires an elaborate strategy as proposed in the enhanced framework.

6.7.3 Legal framework

Secondly, national parliament need to put in place a legal framework to provide guidance and regulate the political intentions of the different stakeholders using the APRM to justify pre-determined political decisions. Doing so can result in institutionalising the findings and implementation of recommendations through the NPoA and preparing a quality framework so that it is grounded and can enforce compliance by any AU member state. Furthermore, it was urged that there is need

to enforce APRM set standards to ensure checks on the leaders and avoid coups. To explain this strategy, Participant Number 21 from the Focal Point proposed that:

"So that's a principle that should be cherished within the network of the APRM that you are a leader, you are subject to lead democratically, and there is no space for a military coup among the members of the African Union, and the African Union should have a regular and non-regular military force should such a thing happen in any member country, so that people know that should we take power by force, the African Union will step in, the member country will constitute a team and fight you. So Africa will set a standard so everybody must comply with that, in that you cannot become a leader unless you have been democratically elected" (KII-FP 2023:21).

From the above argument, it was also observed from the findings that the plans, methods and output reports are perceived to have no effect on evaluation use and influence, without an effectively established institutional capacity and legal framework. With specific regard to the refugee policy framework, findings confirm that influence is largely driven by the contribution of the powerful political stakeholders like the President as informed by their ideology as opposed to other factors.

6.7.4 Institutionalisation

The findings indicate that with availability of resources, there is need for splitting institutions to work separately to enable the APRM's plan as a proposed strategy. A Participant Number 11 from the NGC in-depth interview supported such a move of establishing separate institutions by claiming that:

"So right now that fact that we are the APRM is a programme under the National Planning Authority with the manager and the board. It would be slightly different if we had the Secretariat rolled out as an independent institution of its own with its governance structure, instead of having it answerable to the board of another agency called the NPA. That would change the dynamics of influence. Maybe with its independence, the budget vote would be slightly bigger to enable the NGC to do its work. Maybe the secretariat would have more resources for it to organise quarterly meetings, but right now I think we are operating with a

stringent budget and that's as the NGC because we are like squatters in the NPA” (IDI-NGC 2023:11).

The evidence from the proceeding extract reflects the need for an independent APRM institutional structure to ensure greater influence of use, as opposed to the current arrangement where it operated under the Boarsd and budget of the NPA.

Therefore, availability of independent funding would go a long way in ensuring efficient operations of the APRM which would lead to instrumental use. The researcher observes that the evidence from the above findings concur with Johnson *et al.* (2009) who present factors that influence use of evaluation data positively to include: individual decision makers’ commitment, effective communication between stakeholders and evaluators, evaluators’ credibility, stakeholder participation and persistent advocacy. The researcher proposes an enhanced framework which is intended to accommodate the recommended strategies to ensure enhanced influence of the APRM in Uganda’s public policy in general and refugee policy framework.

6.8 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This section presents a discussion of the current study’s key findings, highlighting the implications and contributions within the context of the existing literature of evaluation use and influence in public policy. Guided by the themes from the data collected, it analyses the perceptions of the stakeholders involved in the APRM implementation regarding the influence of the, evaluation process, stakeholders and context on Uganda’s public policy.

6.8.1 Theme 1: The effect of the APRM evaluation process on Uganda’s Public policy.

In Chapter 3, the APRM evaluation system at the continental level was presented while Chapter 4 analysed to implementation in Uganda in light of the extent to which it is causing policy changes. From the literature discussed earlier, Mark (2011:23) emphasises that by focusing on the process, through a mechanism based approach, possible influence pathways can be identified to enable researchers to come up with

concrete predictions regarding relations among components constituting the logic of evaluation. The study finding indicated that most stakeholders acknowledge the existence of some form of influence from APRM implementation but the perceptions regarding ownership of the APRM system and the extent to which it affects policy reforms varied (IDI NGC 2023:11; KII-S 2023:3;NGC 2023:20;). This finding is in line with Banda (2022:249) who revealed that in Africa, the change processes are weak and so is the participation and ownership of evaluation by stakeholders. This is attributed to the under developed evaluation culture which does not recognise the significance of evaluation as an accountability mechanism. From the Schematic theory of evaluation influence in Chapter 4, this situation is also associated with the nature of evaluation inputs, activities, outputs, out comes, as well as contingencies in the evaluation environment, which constitutes an evaluation system (Stritcher 2017:145; Hojlund 2015:45; Mark & Henry 2004). Besides, Goldman & Pabari (2021:14) observes that by focusing on the input and out without giving adequate attention to the process, even the generation of high quality data does not necessarily translate into use. They add that focus should be directed to putting in place incentives that drive policy makers to appreciate the value of participating in evaluations and how the process can be promoted more consciously. This is also ties in with Banda (2022:207) who insists that the process is not a reliable indicator of use of evaluation since the reports can be discussed and adopted but without evidence that the identified action points were implemented. As a result, the limited support and commitment to participation is said to have led to selective, partial, *ad hoc* and some times none use of findings

(a) Selective use of findings and recommendations

Drawing from the literature reviewed, the researcher in Chapter 4 discussed the various types of use in Uganda, reflecting more of symbolic and conceptual use. From the current study, empirical evidence indicates that on the one hand, majority of the internal stakeholders perceive instrumental use and demonstrated how the first APRM report and Plan of Action (POA) was among the 23 studies and the main document given to the drafters to inform the strategic planning document of the first NDP.I (KII-S 2023:4;KII-S 2023:9;IDI-NGC 2023:20;KII-S 2023:17;FGD-NGC 2023:5). The participants explained that the deep insights, backed by quality evidenc, produced in time enabled the integration of POA into the 5-year NDP

2010/2011-2014/2015. However, most participants could not provide more examples citing time which has passed and therefore unable to remember. This finding contradicts with Paine Cronin and Sadan (2015), who in a study involving South African policy makers established that 45% of senior managers intend to use evidence but about only 9% are able to translate it into reality. To further explain this, Head (2010:10) identifies other factors other than use of evidence in influencing policy-making to include ideology and beliefs, value systems, judgement and expertise of policy makers. In addition, Rutters (2012:18) emphasises that the policy-making is sometimes value driven as opposed to being outcome-based, and this seems to be the case with Uganda's refugee policy framework.

On the one hand, the APRM process was reported to have influenced use of data in public policy through: strategic planning, management control, promotion of good policies among others (KII-S 2023:3; KII-S 2023:7; KII-S 2023:9). Likewise, the findings resonate with literature that evidence can be used in decision making, designing and negotiating large investments, demonstrating progress (Goldman & Pabari 2021; Parkhurst 2017). In addition, the findings are in line with the different actions identified by Alkin and King (2017:439) as key elements to which potential use of evaluation may relate. They include: formation of attitudes, decision-making, justification of prior actions and decisions, as well as evaluation capacity building.

The major reason was identified as strategic planning purposes. It was revealed that the cabinet in 2004 resolved to integrate the APRM directorate in the country's planning framework to collect citizens' views, generate data and capacitate the National Planning Authority, in its mandate of developing the first National Development Plan (NDP I). Other reasons included policy learning, accountability, and promotion of good policies as well as information generation. The APRM recommendations into the National Plan of Action were not only integrated into the NDP but are also monitored annually to establish the degree of implementation among the government MDAs. In 2021, a web-based evaluation system as a key action point for ensuring timely assessment of government performance for NDP III was launched for the years 2021-2025 (NPA-APRM 2021:181). This finding ties in well with Cairney (2016:2) who explains how evidence-based policy making occurs

through diagnosis of policy issues, agenda setting, planning, selection and designing of interventions as well as monitoring during implementation.

On the other hand, most external stakeholders reported more of symbolic use where APRM recommendations were selectively applied, leaving out politically sensitive issues (KII-S 2023:9;FGD-NGC 2023:3;IDI-NGC 2023:20) . They cited examples like restoration of presidential term limits, reduction in the size of parliament, calls for transition governments, electoral and land reforms which were never acted upon. Evidence also indicates that some four participants out of the thirty five perceived non use, asserting that peer review was never intended for policy reforms geared towards improving governance. To them, implementing the process was intended to simply to make the regime appear democratic and secure the country's membership as an AU member state without focusing on the intended governance reforms. This argument is supported by Alkin and King (2017:440) who explains that the commissioning an evaluation may occur for purposes of delaying action, a political show, or simply for justification of an already made decision. Relatedly, in a study of policy makers in Uganda, South Africa and Benin, Goldman, Olaleye, Ntakumba, Makgaba and Waller (2021: 57) established that 40% to 50% of the managers rarely use evaluation evidence as intended. The major challenge raised is non compliance to established evaluation requirements, which leads to slow or sometimes no reporting and consequently non use Samuels *et al.*(2015:8). By adopting a mechanism based approach, this study explores how the process can be improved for increased use of APRM data.

6.8.1.1 The effect of evaluation inputs of the type of use or non use of APRM data in Uganda's public policy.

The nature of evaluation inputs and their potential to cause policy changes were analysed in Chapter 4 as informed by the literature. From the findings, participants' major concerns about the inputs into the peer review focused on the: limited participation of most stakeholders in the preparation of peer review plans and strategies, inadequate resource capacity, and the technical questionnaire that captures data in the English language only (KII-S 2023:3; KII-FP 2023:21;IDI-NGC 2023:14;IDI-NGC 2023:11). The next section discusses the findings in light of the literature.

(a) Limited stakeholder participation in the development of peer review plans

In chapter 4, the philosophy of widestakeholder participation was recognised as a great African initiative but the practicability of its implementation in all the processes starting with preparation of peer review plans was questioned. From the findings, it was reported that although the first-generation review was characterised by a robust communication and advocacy plan, which created massive awareness (KII-S 2023:11). However, they cautioned that the preparation lacked input from a wide range of stakeholders, since plans are developed by the NPA in liason with the continental secretariat. This is said to result into adhoc public participation in peer review activities, where sometimes some major non state actors are left out. This situation is worsened by the lack of a similar awareness plan in the second-generation review as well as feedback yet the idea of an inclusive review was intended to ensure relevant and responsive policy reforms that enhance the lives of ordinary citizens (KII-S 2023:4). Such limitations to wide stakeholder participation partly explain the lack of ownership which leads to conceptual and non use of findings. This collaborates with Goldman *et al.* (2015:5) who points out the challenge to use and influence in either lack of developed plans, plans without stakeholders' input, slow or non-implementation by the responsible persons, and sometimes poorly or non-communicated plans to the awareness of all stakeholders. This reflects a gap between the APRM idea of stakeholder participation and the practice which is perceived to limit a sence of ownership.

(b) Inadequate resources towards effective peer review

In Chapter 4, the resource capacity and independence to domesticate the questionnaire and effectively conduct objective peer reviews through the activities of data collection, validation and reporting were discussed lacking (IDI-NGC 2023:20). In terms of effectiveness of the evaluation input, the findings from the study revealed that the intial challenge of inadequate financial, human, and other technical resources was solved with support from development partners during the first-generation review. Consequently, these had significantly declined by the second-generation, which negatively affected the compliance to the

standards, quality of the report as well as the potential to influence policy outcome (FGD-FP-MDA 2023:1). The finding is in line with Goldman & Pabari (2021:13) who assert that in Africa with pressing social problems but limited resources, the use of evidence in policy process remains elusive and challenging despite the rhetoric associated with its importance.

Regarding the financial inputs, the findings indicate that dwindling financial resources which are attributed to lack of a sustainable source of domestic funding and reliance on donor support resulted into non compliance of some standards that require extensive stakeholder participation. Relatedly, evidence shows that the competence and professionalism of national evaluators was negatively affected by the political influence in the selection coconsultants for the TPI, and NGC members. This is because by laws, the NGC is appointed by the executive and in turn it appoints the consultant. The perception among many participants that due to the lack of clear guidelines, competitive procurement was disregarded in favour of single sourcing to reward those close to the ruling party (KII-F 2023:21). This was reported to have negatively affected the credibility of the process, and consequently affecting use of findings. With the reported political and bureaucratic capture, the evidence is supported by Legorreta (2015:64) who emphasises that any raising of validity concerns about the process or results of the evaluation may instead of use be associated with misuse or non-use.

(c) A highly technical and bulky questionnaire

In Chapter 4, the researcher examined the centrality of the questionnaire as a tool that determines the relevancy of data collected and the likelihood that it will be used. The evidence indicates that the relevancy of the evaluation tool was in terms of coverage, presentation and administration was pointed out as a significant factor in affecting the the use and influence of APRM data in national policies. Most participants raised the concern of the questionnaire being too bulky, highly technical, with repeated questions some of which were perceived not to be actionable (IDI-NGC 2023:11; KII-FP 2023:21; KII-S 2023:3). It was argued that inappropriate evaluation questions would result into irrelevant recommendations that have no connection with the needs of the public.

In addition, the questionnaire was administered only in the English language which suits only the elites while excluding the views of majority grass root citizens. This finding is supported by extant literature from Leithwood (1986:332) who highlights the major barriers to evaluation use to include inadequate quality of the evaluation questions that lead to non responsive and irrelevant recommendations. Banda (2022:214) attributes this to inadequate technical capacity among the staff or consultants but recommends the development of an organisational check list to guide independent consultants in the domestication of relevant questions. Therefore, the study recommends capacity development of staff in questionnaire domestication and wide stakeholder involvement in questionnaire administration through translation in local languages to ensure useful, relevant and actionable recommendations.

6.8.1.2 Effect of the APRM activities and Methods

The process of the APRM implementation was analysed in both Chapters 3 and 4, showing the guiding principles in each activities and the extent to which compliance is registered. The responses from most stakeholders indicate that the APRM's participatory consultation, inclusive data collection and validation activities were appreciated as unique to guarantee use of data to cause policy influence (KII-S 2023:4; KII-S 2023:5; KII-S 2023:7). This evidence collaborates with Mark and Henry (2011:115) who indicate that there are a set of mechanisms in the form of change processes of relationships, events and structures into policy outcomes that may take place due to an evaluation. Herbert (2014:396) explains that the linkages constitute the influence mechanism that provides a comprehensive understanding of the various complex processes that lead to policy change or lack of change in a particular context.

However, the researcher observes that despite the availability of the APRM (2003;2016) guidelines from the Continental secretariat to inform the management of peer review activities, the data management research process remains complex and unclear on who participates from the identified stakeholder categories and at what stage for inclusion (IDI-NGC 2023:11). As a result, the efforts to comply in the collection of objective data were largely affected by

inadequate funding, technical capacity and influence from political and other groups. This finding collaborates with Banda (2022:212) who points to a major limitation of the absence of a clear theory of change which is appreciated by the stakeholders involved in the implementation of the evaluation. It is this which determines whether the right actors are involved, appropriate questions are asked and relevant findings generated. The lack of an existing or reconstructed theory of change is said to result into irrelevant recommendations, which may be out of context and un implementable as discussed below.

(a) An elite based complex research process with limited grass root public participation and feedback.

Making reference to the philosophy of widestakholder participation, the researcher in Chapter 4 explained how the technical nature of the APRM implementation methodology limits inclusive participation in favour of the elites. Further, evidence suggests that given the technical nature of the process, most participants were selectively drawn from the top government MDAs, private sector and civil society elites leaving out the grass root citizens. Where the local level actors were involved, they were limited to data collection, and the participants' selection was conducted by top local government official who are loyal to the ruling party.

Besides, many local actors were excluded from validation and feedback which reduced a sense of ownership, interest and consequently utilisation of data (KII-S 2023:9;IDI-NGC 2023:11). In line with this, Goldman and Pabari (2022:19) identify the four major obstacles to collection and use of data in Africa to include: inadequate incentives for accurate data production, limited capacity to access and generate and access useful data, limited autonomy in data production due to reliance on externally funded budgets with associated political interests and pressures as well as dominance of donor driven initiatives and priorities. Relatedly, a study by Fraser and Rogers (2017:74) revealed that there were low levels of collaborative effort from the external stakeholders in the evaluation process. This implies that loss of ownership and independence reduces chances of instrumental use, while increasing the risk of non use.

Related to the above, the findings reveal that despite the attempts to apply a scientific methodology, evaluation being a political and value laden activity, the APRM data is to a greater extent used either conceptually or symbolically at both the individual level of the executives and the collective level of cabinet, NGC members, staff or MDA focal persons (KII-S 2023:11). This argument is in line with Weiss (2005:13), who argues that “pure instrumental use is not common”, since those involved in decision-making must consider several other aspects beyond the effectiveness of the evaluated policy. Likewise, Mark and Henry (2004:46) contend that evaluation methods are not just a necessary condition, but also provide an important guide to ensuring evaluation use. This implies that strong mechanisms for enforcing compliance to the peer review guidelines should be put in place, supported with well domesticated legal framework to enforce use of findings as one of the performance measures among MDA officials.

In addition, more recent scholars maintain that evaluations rarely translate directly into policy, and as such are limited to operational levels and sometimes intentional selective use (Streicher 2017:15; Hojlund 2015:10). Relatedly, the misuse of evaluation activities was pointed out through single sourcing of subjective consultants and selective identification of participating stakeholders based on their political affiliation to the regime as well as editing out of dissenting views. This collaborates with Alkin and King (2017:440) who explain that during the evaluation process stage where the user may intentionally subvert the evaluation process by either preventing access to the necessary data or even cutting funding. In addition, Banda (2022:234) advocates for the establishment of evaluation systems in MDAs with units, technical committees, resource persons, evaluation groups and expertise trainings to actively drive the evaluation process regularly, audit evaluations and ensure use of generated information in decision making.

6.8.1.3 Effect of the APRM reporting and output

The evidence presents major issues raised from the perception of the participants regarding the APRM reports to include: accuracy of the reports,

alignment of the report findings with national plans and the timely as well as implementable recommendations.

(a) Questions regarding the credibility and access of the reports

The dissemination of reports to potential users under the APRM system was examined in Chapter 4. While the findings reflect mixed perceptions of stakeholders, they suggest that even where credible reports were generated, they were not disseminated on time to all stakeholders and therefore mainly used by government itself (KII-S 2023:11; KII-S 2023:17). Regarding the quality of the evaluation reports, most participants emphasised that the reports are generated through a technical process managed by a team of consultants working with technical staff of the NPA. They add that as a result, they provide deep insights, backed by quality evidence, which led to the integration of POA into the 5-year NDP 2010/2011-2014/2015. In addition, it was reported that as a result of their credibility, the data is used by many CSOs in their advocacy work and engagement with government. An outstanding example of how the president was convinced by the APRM data to change his mind regarding advocating for a big population as a market to focusing on the quality and purchasing power (KII-S 2023:11). This instrumental use of reports is in line with Mark and Henry (2004:37) who argued that relevant evaluation findings translate immediately into “specific actions leading to continuation in policy implementation, revision or even termination”. Furthermore, it is characterised by observable evidence of the direct transfer of findings and recommendations from evaluation into reconfiguration of the subsequent policy (Hojlund 2015:55).

However, findings indicate concerns of access to such reports since they are shared by e-mail to selected MDAs and some times take so long to be uploaded on the NPA website. This concern is shared with Banda (2022:207) who cautions that such limitation associated with keeping evaluation reports as confidential negatively affects access and contribute to persistent non use of findings. Therefore, timely publication of reports to all potential users across the state and non state actors in many languages using various platforms would go along way in enhancing uptake, jointly coordinated evaluation and consequently policy influence.

The misuse of APRM reports was also pointed out as a major challenge where data is used to justify pre-determined political decisions especially in the sensitive thematic area of democracy and political governance (IDI-NGC 2023:20; FGD-NGC 2023:3). This revelation concurs with Alkin and King's (2017:440) assertion that misuse of the findings may involve the users' intentional modification of the report content, actively misrepresenting the evaluation findings through distributing incomplete results, or even changing the evaluation information. Other forms may also include deliberate use of inaccurate evaluation information, or purposeful ignoring of findings for self-interest.

(b) Non alignment of report content with national plans and budgets

Drawing from the literature, the researcher explained in Chapter 4 that while quality data is necessary to influence use, it is important to be aligned to the national plans and budgets. Empirical evidence from participants indicates that production of APRM reports is not enough, but the alignment of implementable policy recommendations to the national development priorities is key in influencing use in policy processes (FGD-NGC 2023:5). In line with the finding, Banda (2022:230) emphasises the necessity of timing and decision making where the evaluation must follow the budgeting calendar, or else the evaluations recommendations may not be allocated finding. The findings from the NPA compliance assessment of the budgeting and planning process for the year 2019/20 indicated that 58.4% of the MDA has strategic plans aligned to the NDP (NPA 2020:26). To support this finding, Goldman *et al.* (2021: 57) indicates that 25% of the managers of government departments are never honest in reporting about their performance, question the degree of accuracy of the negative reports about their performance, while 30% never document learning to improve their consequent results. Banda (2022:208) attributes the non-alignment or mis-alignment to the non-participation of the strategic planning unit in the evaluation process. This necessitates clear guidelines and enforcement of strategic planning team to always be involved to integrate plans and budgets with evaluation recommended priorities.

(c) Non implementable and untimely recommendations

In Chapter 4, the nature of the reports and the factors for the non use of recommendations were analysed as reflected in the literature. From the findings, the

non use of recommendations was reported to occur especially where simply because the report does not capture more viable ways of going about the implementation of the recommendations reported (KII-S 2023:4; KII-TRI 2023:18). The findings concur with Head (2008:2-4), who attributes the limited effect of evaluation to the complex nature of public policy issues. He maintains that evaluation findings are just one of the multiple sources of policy advice available to decision-makers, and hence the need to recognise other forms of use covered under the evaluation influence concept. In addition, Johnson *et al.* 2009:23), attributes the non use of some recommendations to lack of proper alignment with the government plans, difficult, irrelevant or too many recommendations.

6.8.2 Theme 2: The role of stakeholders in influencing use of APRM data

Evidence from the study findings indicates that except two out of the thirty five stakeholders who confessed struggling to explain what APRM is in a local language, almost all stakeholders were knowledgeable of the requirement for their participation as representatives of their constituencies with the purpose of influencing pro-citizens public policies. With reference to the stakeholder theory, (Flak & Rose 2012:657) further explains that stakeholder influence depends on the divergence or convergence of their expectations with policy objectives which may be in form of support, opposition or neutrality.

(a) Varying influence of stakeholder groups

The differences in stakeholders' interests, legitimacy and power to cause influence in policy were discussed in Chapter 4 as key factors affecting their mandate, since they are not equally empowered to operate on a levelled ground. Similarly, in Chapter 2, the degree of convergency or divergence of stakeholder's interests to the policy were analysed under the stakeholder theory, showing how it affects their potential to cause policy changes. The findings indicate that they all stakeholders participate in consultations, data collection and validation during peer reviews and the annual monitoring of the NPoA but with varying capacity and legitimacy (IDI-NGC 2023:16; IDI-NGC 2023:14). Likewise, Goldman and Pabari (2021:23) explains the how different stakeholders influence and use evidence. The ministers use it to monitor progress towards manifesto targets, parliament for oversight of national plans and targets, CSOs to hold government accountable, public managers to decide on policy

choices, implementation strategies and budget lines to prioritise. Relatedly, Preskil *et al.* (2003) emphasises the importance of top management support in promoting the use of evaluations. In addition, Johnson *et al.* (2009) calls for the existence of evaluation champions as key individuals who persistently advocate for evaluation use in decision making.

However, several participants emphasised the elite based nature of the APRM activities by involving technical people in government and the CSOs, which denies the grassroot people in local governments to secure ownership. The differences in power and legitimacy among stakeholders denies some an opportunity for equal representation and influence on policies on the decision making table (IDI-NGC 2023:11). This finding is in line with the emerging literature in stakeholder theory that challenges the conventional assumptions of a rational and technical policy process without considering other factors such as power and influence of stakeholders that characterise political bargains (Mulyaningrum *et al.* 2013:158; Flak & Rose 2012:657; Bryson (2011:3). This study observes that recognition of sensitivities in power, legitimacy, agency and salience among stakeholders in APRM implementation will go along way in ensuring more inclusive participation and consequently use of data. This corroborates with Preskill *et al.*, (2003) who emphasise that the nature of stakeholders' attitudes, interests and perceptions are central in influencing use.

(b) Dominancy of the president's political influence and executive capture

The political capture of the APRM implementation process by the executive was highlighted as a major issue affecting their independence and credibility of their reports in both chapters 3 and 4. In the context of APRM in Uganda, the study findings show that the president is perceived as the most influential stakeholder through his political will towards signing a MoU for technical assessment as well as presentation of the government response at the APR Forum (FGD-NGC 2023:11; KII-S 2023:7). The reasons for his commitment and personal interest are associated with his political ideology of Pan Africanism which informs his decision for buy in and support to the APRM as a Pan African body (KII-S 2023:1). The finding is supported by Preskil *et al.* (2003) who emphasises that top management support in key promoting the use of evaluations. From the empirical evidence, it was reported that he has used his authority to establish the national secretariat, championing and

sustaining the APRM implementation, ensuring that it is financed, insulated from the criticism directed to it from the cabinet, parliament, and members of the ruling NRM party when it reports areas for improvement (IDI-NGC 2023:20). While providing a good indicator of using political authority to champion generation of evaluation information, APRM is perceived by some as a personalised presidential project, used for public relations in pursuing his foreign policy goals (KII-S 2023:7). Without collective buy in and consistent participation by all stakeholders, ownership is undermined and consequently symbolic use.

However, in contradiction, some participants pointed out cases of selective use of APRM only when it serves the political interests of the Head of State. They add that it is for that reason that APRM lacks a well domesticated legal framework to support its operations, which points towards symbolic or political use. As a result, the NGC as a body of stakeholders which is mandated to oversee the peer review process has its authority relegated to serving the political interests of the appointing authority (IDI-NGC 2023:15). Some perceive it as tokenism since stakeholder representatives are nominated by the president through the Focal point minister, not to engage in any meaningful conversation (IDI-NGC 2023:11). The perception of such appointments as rewards for political loyalty, negatively affects the independence of some members in their judgements and decisions. In line with this, Markiewicz (2019) cautions against the political pressure from some stakeholders or commissioners of the evaluation since it compromises the evaluators' objectivity leading to misrepresentation of the findings, loss of credibility of the reports and ultimately conceptual or non use.

The researcher observes that while parliament as the policy making organ of government is ideally expected to be the most influential since it passes the public policies, passes the legal framework for APRM establishment and appropriates budgetary resources for its implementation, its participation was very limited attending consultative meeting and receiving reports. It is in such forums that, a few opposition parties use the forum to raise policy challenges unattended to by government (KII-FP 2023:21). Further, In terms of engagement with parliament, the evidence suggests that it was in error the oversight of APRM activities was put under

the Foreign Affairs Standing Committee, instead of the Finance and Planning Committee to which NPA is accountable (IDI-NGC 2023:14). Therefore, despite the higher levels of authority and legitimacy, the practice results in conceptual use of the APRM which translates into no effect or conceptual use due to lack of an existing supportive legal framework. The findings concur with Rich (1977:200), who argues that this type of use involves “influencing a policy maker’s thinking about an issue without putting any information to any specific documentable use”. There is the absorption of evaluation information as a frame of reference to decision makers in the form of common knowledge (Herbert 2014:390). It involves utilisation of evaluation data to influence the thinking of policy makers with the purpose of changing actors’ levels of understanding, attitude and knowledge, but not necessarily integrating findings into policy documents (Peck & Gorzalski 2009:141; Weiss 1977:534). In addition, Weiss (1990:22) emphasises that an evaluation may shape what actors think about what it is, contributing to changing their ideas as a factor that may translate into programme reform in the long run.

(c) Dependency on declining funding from development partners

In Chapter 4, the researcher drawing from the literature and secondary documents indicated that while limiting external funding for APRM activities is considered a core principle in promoting ownership, reliance of funding from development partners remained a major issue. The empirical findings reflect a trend where development partners began as major stakeholders through their funding and accountability function to APRM in its early stages but have been withdrawing gradually (IDI-NGC 2023:11; IDI-NGC 2023:13). The reason for declining support is that they had hoped that the mechanism was to contribute significantly to prodemocracy policy reforms, the first review. It is argued that that development partners perceived APRM the new kid on the block (innovation) in promoting consultative development process (IDI-NGC 2023:11). So, it was sustained with major funding from development partners came from DANIDA, DFID, the AfDB, GIZ and others, who raised over USD 1 billion from 2006 to 2008 (NPA-CSAR 2008:20). However, the gradual decline in their funding has resulted into budgetary constraints and inability to conduct all the activities as indicated in compliance with the Base Document 2003 and the APRM Statute 2016 (IDI-NGC 2023:11). The findings concur with Alkin and Taut (2017:437) who emphasise that among the donor dependent countries mainly located in the

global south, donor funders primarily tend to use evaluations as a means hold the recipient countries accountable for the resources extended to them to implement policy interventions. Similarly, using an example of reviewing the procurement regulations in Uganda to minimise corruption, Kawooya, Lubanga, Muwanika, Muhumuza and Mijumbi-Deve (2021:129) assert that donors have become central in funding the generation of evidence among lower-income countries. However, they caution that this can have an adverse effects on the ownership, and independence of the findings. In addition, it can be observed that while donors can influence compliance to standards, the unsustainable external funding does not only affect the quality but also the sustainable use of generated data.

(d) Unfavourable legislations to support effective CSOs participation

The role of CSOs in using APRM evidence to engage with government through their advocacy work was analysed in Chapter 4. Regarding the role of CSOs, generated evidence indicates that despite the high levels of interest and knowledge in participatory approaches to development policy, with limited level of legitimacy and authority, their role is relegated to participation in consultations with mainly urban elites and use of APRM data for advocacy purposes. The evidence indicates that CSOs in Uganda use APRM data for advocacy purposes in their engagement with government (IDI-NGC 2023:11; KII-TRI 2023:18). This is in line with Holvoet *et al.* (2012:762), who advance that CSOs provide more independent analysis from evaluations than other stakeholders. In addition, Kawooya *et al.* (2021:119) explains their high interest in transparency and financial accountability which results into sustained pressure for public finance management policy reforms

Besides, NGOs participation also depends on the regulatory policy environment and the extent to which the civic space is free for engagement. In the context of Uganda, findings indicate that well as the Access to Information Act 2005 grants them the right to access public information, the reforms in the NGO Administration Act 2003 restricts activities of policy engagement, referring to it as political leading to a declining trend in use of APRM data to influence policy (KII-TRI 2023:17). This finding contradicts what Lawrence, Gullickson and Toal (2007:275) emphasise that the evaluation must be conducted in a way that fosters the easier implementation of findings by involving a wide range of stakeholders. This argument is in line with

Arroyo (2013:4), who argues that there is a strong and direct relationship between the stakeholders and public policy, since they act as incentives to drive the policy through power-interest influences. Furthermore, Strojny (2018:374) contends that wide spread use of evidence among stakeholders depends on the degree of either the convergence or divergence between the expectations of the stakeholders, their capabilities, roles and the policy objectives. In addition, Mandondo (2020) explains that stakeholders' personal preferences, interest, beliefs, traditions, values as well as the over all context, go along way in influencing their use of evidence. However, the lack of legitimacy and authority undermines the ability of some stakeholders to use the available evidence and demand for accountability. There is need for institutionalised mechanism, to change the culture of non compliance to performance standards. Therefore, the DPME (2023:35) emphasises forging partnerships, and strengthening coordination with other departments, CSOs and the private sector to promote a robust system with accurate data.

6.8.3 Theme 3: Effects of the APRM context on the type of use and non use of APRM data.

The contextual factors and how they affect the use of APRM data in Uganda are well explained in Chapter 4. The evidence on how the environment of the APRM evaluation system affects national policies, reflects a mixture of positive and negative effects. The common facilitating factors have been identified to include the institutional capacity, the legal framework, and the timing, while inhibiting factors include limited domestic financial resources, politics and the other sources of data informing national policies other than the APRM evaluation (KII-TRI 2023:18; KII-S 2023:4; IDI-NGC 2023:16; KII-S 2023:5; IDI-NGC 2023:11; KII-S 2023:9).

The most commonly cited contextual challenge was budgetary constraints required to effectively comply with the guidelines of an extensively participatory evaluation approach. Concerns were raised about the NGC lacking an independent budget line but operating under the NPA, a government agency whose budget is politically determined. With reference to the political system, this evidence concurs with Birkland (2011:28), who asserts that the context of a political system is characterised by firstly the structural environment which includes a formal framework of legal structures that define the rules and the process of policy-making and facilitating

accountability. While inadequate funds available to the NGC affected its ability to acquire other resources like human resource expertise, the limited budget for the country generally affected its ability to implement the MDA strategic plans and the recommendations identified in the NPoA (KII-TRI 2023:18;KII-S 2023:9). In addition, some participants insist that in undertaking peer review, striking a delicate balance between objectivity and diplomacy remains a challenge. They insist that in the context of APRM, where there are no sanctions but relying on peer pressure to undertake policy reforms, even when objective reports are presented, fellow heads of state would still find it diplomatically hard to objectively criticise their colleagues during the APR Forum (IDI-NGC 2023:20). This revelation implies weak institutions which may not effectively enforce the use of data to inform policy as per their mandate (IDI-NGC 2023:11). The findings with the DPME (2023:22) which highlights the challenges in use of evaluations to include: fiscal constraints, insufficient skills and capacity to support implementation of government plans, inadequate alignment between planning and budgetary allocations, inadequate legislations to support evaluation, Under-developed culture of performance evaluation, unreliable data, and fragmented reporting.

The evidence points out that one of the most outstanding contextual challenge is the changing political context which has translated into a declining influence of APRM in Uganda between the first-and second-generation reviews (IDI-NGC 2023:20) It is reported that during the base review, the political leadership was very committed to this Pan-African mechanism, supported an independent NGC and committedly respondend to the governance issues raised through a more constructive (IDI-NGC 2023:14). However, the findings suggest that with increased raising of politically sensitive questions like presidential terms limites and calling for transition, the government observed that the APRM was emerging as a strong tool for political accountability that needed to be controlled through influencing who becomes a member of the NGC (KII-TRI 2023:18).

The above findings are also supported by emperical work regarding the importance of contextual factors as facilitators and barriers to influencing use of evidence is increasingly growing (Banda 2022;Goldman and Pabiri 2021; DPME 2020; Goldman et al.2018; Cairney 2016; Parkhurst 2017; We-rauch et al. 2016; Chilisa 2015). In

their analysis, Langer and Weyranch 2021:44) identify the six dimensions of context which influence the use of evidence to include: the macro-context (economic, political cultural and social factors), organisational capacity, inter and intra-institutional linkages, culture, resources and management processes.

(a) Inadequate legal and institutional framework to support APRM operations

The researcher explained in chapter 4, that Uganda has an established APRM institutional structure that has been operational since 2005 when the first-generation review commenced. However, it is only informed by the continental guiding documents and political support of the president without a domesticated legal framework established by Parliament. This resulted into weak structures without adequate capacity and capabilities to support effective peer review beyond the planning stage. Findings indicate that while there are robust structures established and national human resources supported with expertise from the continental secretariat, most participants perceive that without a well domesticated legal framework, their activities are limited to report writing. The absence of a legal requirement undermines the legitimacy of the NGC as an accountability structure, an independent budgetary appropriation and engagement with parliament as a major policy making institution.

In addition, without a legal framework, there is no tool for enforcing the use of APRM recommendations by the cabinet and government technical officials in MDAs is lacking, leading to symbolic or non use. It was also evident from the findings that the lack of a well domesticated mechanism robs the NGC its independence from political actors while undertaking its oversight mandate. Unlike countries like Ghana where the NGC is autonomous with its own budget, in Uganda it is under the NPA budget line which is a government agency. In addition, the NGC reports to the executive director of the National Planning Authority (NPA), which makes them invisible and a secondary agency to the NPA. Some respondents maintained that the NPA which houses the secretariat uses its control of finances and logistics as a government agency to influence the APRM process and content of reports, yet the APRM structure requires that the secretariat should be accountable to the independent NGC.

(b) Inadequately developed evaluation culture

It was stated in Chapter 4 that Uganda was not only among the pioneer countries to embrace APRM in 2003, but it was also among the first countries in Africa to establish a national evaluation system for tracking government performance. This would imply that over time, evaluation units in all government agencies have been established and the strategic planning units experienced in driving the performance based and evaluation culture. However, the participants point to the weak or absence of a collectively shared culture of performance and learning where the evaluation ideas, values, beliefs and practice do not have the full support of the senior managers to enforce use of APRM data in government MDAs. While Preskil *et al.* (2003) emphasise the importance of top management support in promoting the use of evaluations, it was reported that many top officials don't respect or ignore evidence based decisions in favour of those which are politically motivated. To support the above finding, Cronin and Sadan (2015:7) identify the contextual barriers to the effective utilisation of evaluation evidence to include: limited time arising out of a culture which does not value learning, mistrust between the technical officials in government and the political leadership, rigid attitudes, weak capacity, vested interests among others.

Similarly, a study by Phillips and Goldman (2020:6) rated the evaluation culture in the South African Provincial and National departments at 40%. The above findings are in consonance with Goldman *et al.* (2021:56) who emphasises that a strong evaluative culture is characterised by institutional practices, tools, procedures, policies, incentives and senior management support which translates into the use of the generated information to influence policies through reporting accountability and learning.

(c) Political influence

In Chapter 4, it was indicated that the micro-politics in Uganda is one of the major inhibiting factors affecting the use of APRM data in influencing policy outcomes. Relatedly, the findings show that some participants point to a deliberate political intention of ensuring that with only guiding documents from the continental secretariat, it remains under political control of the executive. From the evidence, it is reported that while the composition of the NGC is perceived to reflect diversity of

stakeholders nominated by their constituents, some respondents insist that the NGC membership is largely drawn from the NRM ruling party. The NGC representatives are appointed by the focal minister on behalf of the president, by taking two names from each constituency to the cabinet for approval. This denies it the capacity to play the role of self criticism but vulnerable to political manipulation. The evidence suggests that the intention in this procedure is to make the NGC play the role of insulating and defending their government against any criticism. In advocating for a shift in focus from the four original thematic areas to his idea of evaluating the 13 bottlenecks, some participants questioned the president's motive. They claim that he seems support the APRM, when it appears to work in his favour, while rejecting the some report content when they challenge the democratic status of his government (KII-TRI 2023:23: IDI –NGC 2023:14).

The finding collaborates with Cairney's (2016) work that emphasises the core role of political contextual factors in influencing the use of evaluation evidence. Similarly, Goldman *et al.* (2018:8) asserts that political will is a major factor in the establishment of the three evaluation systems in South Africa, while at the same time explains the continuity of its champions of National Evaluation Board in Uganda and National Council for Evaluation in Benin. However, the challenge remains, slow or selective decision making and lack of feedback to stakeholders. More recently, Banda (2022:227) explains the argument of political priorities by indicating that in some cases, certain policy positions are already buttressed in some political international, regional or national commitments associated with ideological values of political parties and individual leaders and therefore 'evidence proof'. So, in such a political environment, the use of APRM information in the Ugandan policy context is said to be more symbolic than instrumental.

In the case of the APRM evaluation system operating in such a controlled political climate (Sore 2014:24), the findings collaborate with Smith and Larimer's (2009:115) argument, that while there is a need for honest numbers, there is a common tendency for politics to wilfully ignore the factual outcome from the rational evaluation process. This is attributed to the assumption that such evaluation recommendations tend to carry minimal probability and connection to the realities in the value-driven politics. Furthermore, Peck and Gorzalski

(2009:141) are of the view that this type is considered in the evaluation use studies as the most adopted; where utilisation is done selectively with the purpose of justifying and legitimising already made decisions and defending certain vested interests.

6.9 Extent to which the APRM evaluation system affected the refugee policy framework

In Chapter 4, the role of the APRM data in influencing Uganda's refugee policy framework as an identified best practice was discussed. From the literature, it was observed that the APRM's contributed to a lesser extent in promotion of good policy for lesson learning by other AU member states. The empirical study findings indicate mixed opinions on the influence of the APRM on the refugee policy framework. While some participants expressed limited knowledge about it, majority of the participants insisted that to a lesser extent it can be associated with APRM. Most of them argue that such refugee policy reforms are more political, while others attribute them to historical and economical factors as discussed in light of the literature in the next section.

(a) APRM as a platform for showcasing best policy practices

The Chapter 4 discussed in details how according to literature, APRM a role in informing the refugee policy framework in Uganda played. The evidence indicates that the first APRM report could have been a potential source of data the led to the introduction of the Refugee Regulations 2010 and later reforms as the STA, and ReHoPE among others. In addition, the respondents indicate that as a result of Uganda's membership, the principles governing APRM of Pan Africanism and humanism are reflected in the policy reforms with the purpose of promoting a sence of African brotherhood, communalism and humanitarianism (IDI-NGC 2023:11; KII-S 2023:4; FGD-FP-MDA 2023:1;KII-S 2023:5; IDI-NGC 2023;10). Therefore, this implies that in promoting APRM as a home grown innitiative and its principles, the mechanism could have informed the Ugandan leader's decisions to undertake extensive reforms. It is argued that as a recorgnised agency of the AU, the APRM as a source of governance information for the continent, plays the role of providing a platform for learning from it by other African member countries as a best practice. This finding is collaborated

with (NPA-APRM 2021:41) in which Uganda's best practice of a progressive refugee policy is recognised. Uganda's settlement model integrates the services of the refugees with the government public service delivery system which promotes self reliance and inclusion. It states that "By including refugees in the National Development Plan, Uganda is championing the principle of 'leaving no one behind' in line with the commitment to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the African Union Agenda 2063 aspirations" Further, it is praised for a continued record of providing a hospitable living environment for refugees in 31 settlements of 14 districts where refugees are hosted (UNHCR 2022). This evidence is also in line with Sebba and Zanker (2022:8) who emphasise the country's development proach which focuses on the self-reliance of refugees by guaranteeing their access to land and basic public services. He adds that in the financial year 2020/2021 the Ugandas state increased its budget towards refugee programs by 80.25 Billions

On the contrally, some participants raised the issue of timing when the policy reforms started, and went on to argue that the first peer review started in 2005 and ended in 2008, implying that it was at that time that the reports generated could have attracted the president's attention as a former refugee, thereby informing his interest for the country's refugee policy reforms (KII-S 2023:5). This implies that the APRM reporting is perceived to have identified policy gaps and recommended areas of improvement which the country's leadership adopted. Besides, other participants emphasised other political, historical and economic reasons insisting that the key legislation the 2006 Refugee Act pre-dates the first peer review which was completed almost two years later in 2008. Therefore, the findings from stakeholders indicate that in fulfilling its evaluative functions of learning and accountability, the case of Uganda's refugee policy framework suggests that it serves more as a platform for member states sharing best practices than promoting instrumental use and influence of policies among member states.

(b) The long history of refugees

Chapter 4 reflects the role of history in shaping the nature of Uganda's refugee policy framework and how it has evolved as informed by literature. From the

findings one of the major reasons advanced is that Uganda has had a long history of importing and exporting refugees due to its location in a conflict prone great lakes region. They insist that the country's refugee policy reforms are largely attributed to President Museveni's sympathy drawn from the experience as a former refugee who survived the past tyrannical regimes of the 1970s in Uganda, coupled with his Pan African ideology that assumes that African people are the same while disregarding the artificial colonial boundaries. This finding is in line with the literature which traces the country's long history of hosting Polish refugees from 1940s, as well as Rwandese and Sudanese in the 1950s and 60s (Logo 2021; Sebba 2021; Khasalamwa-Mwandha 2021; Lingelbach 2020; Idris 2020). The findings concur with Head (2010:10) who identifies other factors other than use of evidence in influencing policy-making to include ideology and beliefs, value systems, judgement and expertise of policy makers. In addition, Rutters (2012:18) emphasises that the policy-making is sometimes value driven as opposed to being outcome-based, and this seems to be the case with Uganda's refugee policy framework.

(c) Political economy factors

Literature indicates the central role of political and economic factors in informing Uganda's refugee policy framework as discussed in Chapter 4. From political angle, some participants argued that the country's leadership over time exploited the presence of conflicts in the region to host refugees, establish strategic relations with the western development partners to secure funding for promoting the regimes national programs while attaining international recognition. Like wise, the findings also reveal other facilitating factors which include diplomatic factors stemming from international law, historical as well as economic factors (IDI-NGC 2023:2023). This evidence on the political interests in the refugee protection ties in well with Sebba and Zanker (2022:16) who argue that " on the level of external politics, refugee governance continue to play an important role for Uganda's standing in the international community and as a diplomatic tool in external politics"

In addition, it is argued that in the 1990s, the country's efforts to comply and align with the international refugee standards in light of the increased inflow of refugees informed the 2006 Refugee Act (RLP 2006:2). International law to which Uganda is a signatory stipulates the need for countries to open borders for those seeking refugee

statuses, and highlights the welcoming nature of Ugandans. In a final analysis, evidence points towards attributes identified to include political leadership and its Pan-African ideology, the country's long history of engagement with refugees, economic desire to attract donor funding, and the geographical location of Uganda amidst a conflict affected region. In support of this evidence Sebba & Zanker (2022: 23) explain the win-win situation in Uganda's refugee hosting status and the donor community where the country gains international support while the donors its cause of refugee protection in response to their restrictive policies in the western world. It is further argued are more international forces driving the reforms in the country's refugee policy reforms including the creation of a positive image as a refugee protector that goes beyond the APRM recommendations (Titeca 2022; Mugabi 2021; Alexander 2021; Logo 2020). This implies that while APRM data may provide insights and identify gaps for improvement, state's making at the international stage, maintenance of a positive image for fundtraising, diplomatic tool to the humanitarian donors and the UNHCR, to a greater extent influence the country's success story as alternative explanations for the identified best practice.

6.10. CHAPTER SUMMARY

In conclusion, while the findings reveal differing opinions about the degree of evaluation influence of the APRM in Uganda, they all suggest that it is established, and has had some form of effect. What is reflected commonly in the findings is that the APRM implementation enjoys a lot of support from the political leadership, championed by the president but its influence has been on a decline, and occurs more selectively as and when government desires. Firstly, while the inputs are put in place, their influence is affected by limited involvement of all stakeholders through the process, as well as financial and technical inadequacies. Regarding activities, a lot of effort is put into implementing them, but they take an elitist form and are negatively affected by political manipulation and lack of compliance to standards. Instead of directly aligning it with the national evaluation system, the APRM system operates parallel to the national one but its NPoA implementation is also evaluated annually and some actions integrated into the NDP. The outputs in the form of reports are provided, but

used selectively and symbolically to justify pre-determined political decisions. In relation, while other reports are produced out of consultations and validation processes involving all stakeholders, the NPoA is largely compiled through a bureaucratic process involving only government official in MDAs.

Secondly, regarding the role of stakeholders, while diversity appears to be observed, the selection of participating representatives from both state and non-state actors is politically influenced to ensure membership that buffers the regime from criticism. Besides the development partners whose involvement significantly reduced between the first and the second generation, the other structures are more controlled by the executive in terms of decisions, budgets and human resources. This situation is worsened by the under developed evaluation culture reflected in the negative attitude to performance evaluation by all stakeholders involved.

Thirdly, the major contextual factors facilitating the APRM influence are its institutional structure, which has been established, but their capacity to influence national policies is weakened by the absence of a well domesticated legal framework. The lack of a legal basis to guide their operations leaves them vulnerable to political manipulation and at the mercy of the executive, which also has powers to appoint and reward loyal party members on the NGC. Fourthly, the analysis of the influence of the APRM context on the refugee policy frameworks suggests that it plays a more indirect role of providing a learning platform for sharing best practice as opposed to direct influence on the reforms, except for being a source of data. Factors other than the APRM have also been highlighted to include the Pan-African ideology of the political leadership, the external pressure to observe international refugee standards, historical as well as geographical factors. Considering the above findings, the researcher acknowledges that they are in line with Kirkhart's (2000:5) argument of a multi-dimensional nature of evaluation utilisation. Findings confirm that instrumental use rarely occurs, but is influenced by the stakeholders and context leading to symbolic use to justify pre-determined political decisions, conceptual use but also non-use.

Therefore, the findings discussed in the Chapter revealed that the variations in use of APRM data are attributed to both the nature of the policy and the policy setting, in collaboration with other supporting factors which necessitates the proposed framework to enhance the influence of APRM. It is noted that the APRM evaluation system does not necessarily on its own influence the reforms in the refugee policy framework, but provides a platform for showcasing a best policy practice for purposes of knowledge sharing for improvement among AU member states. Such findings provide very important lessons, which the researcher integrated into the proposed framework, to realise the intended purpose of APRM as a catalyst towards realising Agenda 2063. The next chapter presents the proposed framework, highlighting the major elements, and stages constituting the APRM evaluation system and the strategies towards enhancing the implementation of the APRM to influence Uganda's public policy.

CHAPTER SEVEN: A FRAMEWORK FOR ENHANCING THE INFLUENCE OF EVALUATION IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE APRM

7.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter six discussed in detail empirical findings about the major elements of the APRM evaluation system, influence on Uganda's public policy, and the strategies for addressing the inherent weaknesses. The findings presented in Chapter Six largely confirmed that the existing APRM systems assume a rational technical process, where stakeholders use the data in the reports to directly influence public policy. Through this input-output approach, the APRM system ignores the inherent politics within the middle range routinised activities, as well as the other contextual factors within the APRM environment. This chapter focuses on responding to the central question that this study sought to answer: How can the APRM's evaluation system be improved to positively influence public policy among AU member states? Using a mechanism-based approach, the study presents a summary of the findings and recommendations in the form of an adapted framework to address identified shortcomings within the missing middle of the APRM system.

The chapter is composed of three major sections. The first section analyses the strategies for enhancing the APRM evaluation influence as informed by the empirical data. The section further presents detailed explanations for enabling factors in each of the elements identified in the APRM evaluation system covering the inputs, activities, outputs, and the mechanisms through which the different types of use occur. The second section presents the description of the adapted framework by combining insights from three theoretical frameworks discussed in Chapter Three. The theories were Mark and Henrys' (2004) schematic framework of evaluation influence, Edward Freeman's (1984) stakeholder theory and David Easton's (1952) political systems theory, as contribution towards improving the use and influence of the APRM, which is in line with the purpose of this research. The third section in Chapter Seven details the proposed APRM evaluation process with emphasis on the original philosophy of multiple stakeholder participation, and highlights the major recommendations intended to enhance the APRM's use and influence. In each of the peer review stages, the chapter presents practical strategies towards addressing the

politics and contextual factors affecting evaluation influence of the APRM system. Lastly, the chapter presents a proposed framework for purposes of enhancing the influence of evaluation in the implementation of the APRM. The section below discusses strategies for enhancing evaluation influence of the APRM as presented from the empirical data, to constitute the basis for developing the proposed policy framework.

7.1.1 Enhancing the use and influence of the APRM

In conducting this empirical study, the intention was to establish the different types of use and explore the possible solutions for non-use and misuse of APRM data. The chapter is in response to Sore (2014:24), who insists that “the APRM is fundamentally a political process”, yet the existing APRM guidelines assume a technical process and ignore the partisan political environment which negatively affects the mechanism’s influence. The section presents a framework in which recommendations from the study are integrated. The identified strategies discussed in detail as enablers of evaluation use and influence and informed by the empirical data included:

- The continental panel of eminent persons and peer reviewed governments should enforce guidelines for ensuring an inclusive peer review process and stakeholder ownership from planning to the monitoring of the NPoA.
- The National APRM Secretariat should ensure that evaluation activities are integrated and aligned with government systems for easy tracking of use and influence.
- The National Planning Authority should establish a system for government wide monitoring and reporting requirement on the implementation of the National Plan of Action (NPoA) across all government MDAs and local governments.
- The National Governing Council and the National Secretariat should ensure effective dissemination of APRM reports to clearly identified primary and secondary users across the state and civil society.

- The President and Focal Point Minister should establish a legal framework through an act of parliament to empower APRM evaluation structures and enforcement of its processes.
- The NPA and the National Secretariat should institutionalise an accountability system to deal with contingencies in the APRM environment (facilitating, inhibiting and competing factors).

Figure 7.1 shows an illustration of the enabling factors for enhancing the APRM evaluation influence:

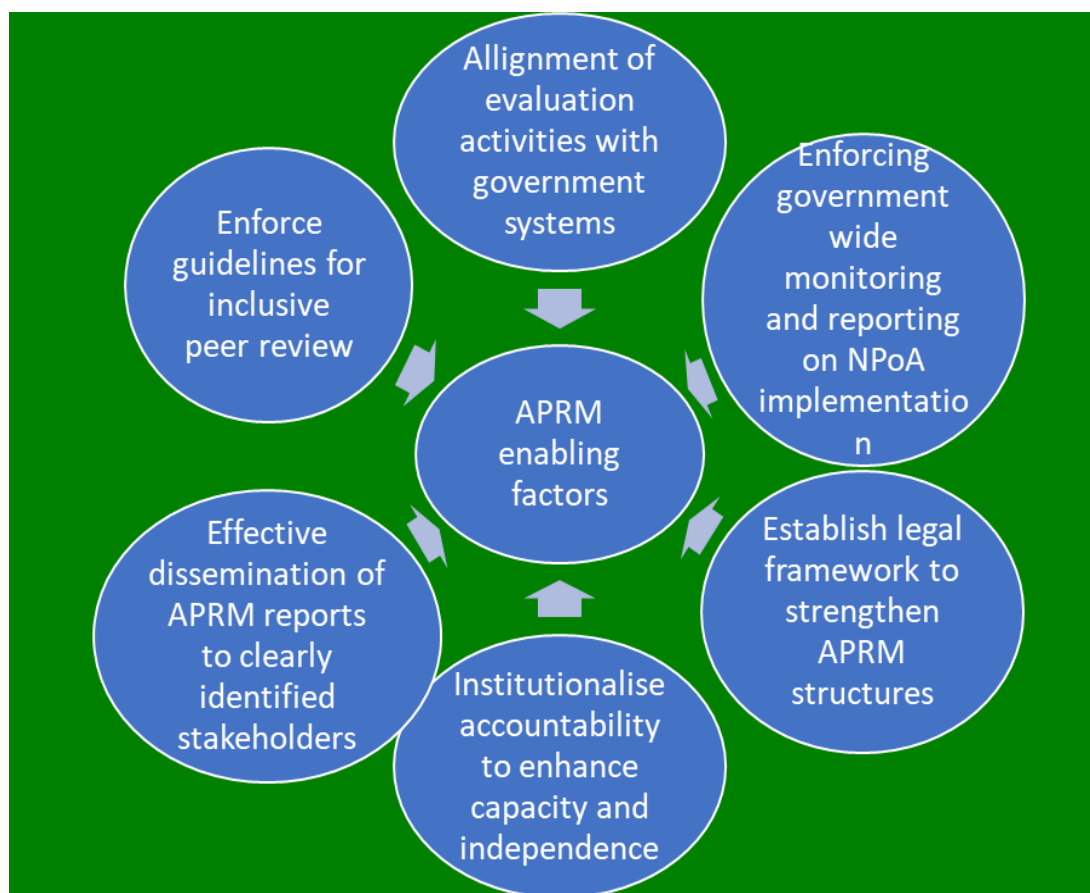


Figure 7.1: An illustration of the strategies for positively enhancing the evaluation influence of the APRM

Source: Researcher's own compilation 2023.

As reflected in Figure 7.1, the study draws from the empirical data, to discuss recommended solutions towards improving the evaluative effect of the APRM

process through the inputs, the activities, the outputs and the contingencies in the environment. Each element of the APRM system is discussed as reflected below.

7.1.1.1 APRM inputs

The key recommendations from the participants regarding the APRM inputs included: a well domesticated legal framework to guide and enforce use of findings, enforcement of guidelines for inclusive participation, as well as ensuring independent and sustainable funding as explained below.

(a) Establishment of a clear domesticated legal framework by an Act of Parliament of Uganda

A legal framework goes a long way in providing guidance beyond the continental protocols and APRM guiding documents to support the entire APRM process and structures from vulnerability to partisan political manipulation, bureaucratic bickering and corruption. Findings show that the practice in Uganda is that the key decisions, plans and recommended appointments are issued by the President or Focal Point Minister on behalf of the President (FGD-FP-MDA 2023:1). This increases executive control over the whole peer review process and its implementing structures, as the President is empowered by the NPA Act (2004) to appoint, reappoint and disappoint the NGC leadership, which takes away its independence. The legal framework strengthens the APRM evaluation structures, by guiding on the selection of the NGC representative, safeguarding its independence and that of the Secretariat, ensuring budgetary allocation by parliament, as well as enforcing bureaucratic integration of APRM recommendations. Without a legal framework, the NGC as a core institution in the peer review process lacks the freedom and legal mandate to independently play their roles of oversight to the review process.

Emperical findings show that lack of a specific budget line and allocation by parliament to the National Governing Council (NGC) undermines its capacity to mobilise, consult their constituencies, as well as give feedback to their constituencies outside the NPA control (IDI-NGC 2023:20). The NGC is currently answerable to the Board of the NPA and the Focal Point Minister, since its funds are drawn from the NPA's budget line. The Focal Point Minister provides political oversight. This dual and unclear accountability relation further stifles the NGC's authority to make

independent decisions regarding financial and technical capacity, which is necessary in promoting uptake of APRM information. Therefore, a legal framework goes a long way to provide guidance on the composition, selection and operations which motivate the members with the necessary confidence and security of tenure to perform objectively. Furthermore, this increases the credibility of the reports and the motivation for potential users to increase the uptake of APRM information.

The framework should reflect clear incentives for stakeholders to perform their roles, coupled with empowerment to build their capacity to perform their mandates. When established by a legal framework, the NGC is recognised as one of the accountability institutions answerable to an appropriate committee of parliament. This will then enable MPs to debate APRM reports and make recommendations to MDAs, introduce bills for supporting APRM operations and approve budgetary allocations to the APRM. Findings indicate that if the NGC has its own budget, its independence from the current bureaucratic control by the NPA and the political control by the Focal Point Minister improves (KII-TPI 2023:17). Furthermore, a legal framework also enables the NGC as an independent entity to build synergy through collaboration with other government and non-government entities like development partners, that can go beyond extending funds, but also jointly participate in oversight roles of the various APRM activities (KII-TPI 2023:14).

(b) Establishment and enforcement of detailed guidelines to ensure inclusive peer review process and stakeholder ownership

In Chapter Six, it was demonstrated that while stakeholders' participation constitutes the foundation principle upon which peer review was established, the practice is not implemented throughout the stages of the peer review process. The findings reveal that stakeholder participation is implemented mainly during the data collection stage and presentation of reports at the APR Forum. The study observes that this inconsistency negatively affects the use and influence of the APRM, which is largely dependent upon the participation, buy-in, commitment and support of the stakeholders in the peer review activities. The study recommends that the NPA institutes a system for developing an evaluation culture through an institutionalised accountability mechanism in the following ways:

The NPA should ensure inclusive planning, implementation and reporting of the peer review activities. There is a need to minimise on the existing bureaucratisation of the peer review process, in which schedules of planned activities are developed by technocrats within the NPA. Thus, it is important that as part of the strategic planning, all potential users and beneficiaries should be included in the dissemination plan, if not the entire review process, irrespective of their position and direct responsibility. Findings indicate that even in the NGC which is expected to provide leadership and oversee the process, much of their role includes planning which is taken over by the NPA which is a government agency (KII-S 2023:4). Complete schedules are then communicated to the rest of the stakeholders which negatively affects their motivation to participate and use APRM findings. Furthermore, findings show a major concern that in the last two peer reviews, participants in the consultations largely serve as sources of information without any forum for receiving feedback. They add that the peer review team is again seen when it comes back to collect another set of data, which leaves them with little or no motivation to continue participating (KII-NGC 2023:20). With inadequate involvement, concerns emerge of limited awareness, untimely communication and delayed reporting on progress.

The National Secretariat should ensure timely communication of planned evaluation activities enabling the different stakeholders, especially the non-state actors, to prepare for constructive engagements. The respondents raised the concern of ad hoc activities, in which they are informed at the last minute resulting in their participation just being a formality. They suggest adequate notice to mobilise and consult their constituency for effective representation in the consultations, to avoid a situation where a few representatives connected to the local government officials are identified to participate. Responses mainly from the external stakeholders operating in non-state structures expressed dissatisfaction with the delayed and non prioritised invitations to participate from the planning stage (KII-S 2023:11). The delay in communicating APRM planned activities denies the stakeholders the required sense of ownership of the review process and motivation to use findings.

Therefore, to there is need to address the challenge and improve stakeholders' attitude, an inclusive process of developing plans creates a sense of ownership of

peer review activities towards more instrumental use of reports. Furthermore, establishing comprehensive guidelines and conditions for revision of planned schedules to deal with competing processes like elections, divert the resources and attention from the APRM. Therefore, enhancing the use and influence of the APRM in Uganda requires timely communication of plans to all stakeholders, MDAs and local governments by the National Secretariat. A more inclusive strategy for tracking the NPoA implementation by considering all actors across the state and society is needed. CSOs and government need to share resources for monitoring NPoA implementation and reporting, other than leaving it to only government technical officials in MDAs without any form of consultation and validation by other stakeholders outside government.

(c) Establishment of unconditional, sustainable and/or independent funding to ensure compliance with all standards

The study recommends an independent source of funding from parliamentary budgetary allocations to support the secretariat (FGD-FP-MDA 2023:1). This motivates stakeholder participation and extensive consultations, as opposed to selective funding by the regime intended to cover up areas where its practice is below standard. Participants argued that it is impossible for government to fund a process and expect objective criticism of its actions. Some of the politicians belonging to the ruling party feel that they can use the mechanism to sanitise the image of their government at the continental level. The legal framework ensures that in providing the political oversight of the peer review process, Cabinet and the Focal Point are guided not only to defend ownership of the reports and provide a government position, but also to provide adequate technical and financial capacity for quality report production without simply sanitising government image.

7.1.1.2 APRM activities

The evidence from the study participants reflects major issues concerning the nature of APRM activities to include: integration of APRM into the national wide planning and evaluation system, detailed guidelines for TPI, massive public awareness, and capacity development of all stakeholders in credible APRM implementation as discussed in this section.

(a) Integration of evaluation activities with the government planning and evaluation systems by the NPA.

The peer review activities which include desk research, field consultations, validation and reporting not only require clear understanding, but also technical and financial capacity. To ensure that all activities in the peer review process are effectively conducted, timely communication of planned activities, a massive awareness strategy, training workshops on methodology and monitoring of all activities to ensure compliance to the continental standards and guidelines are important (KII-S 2023:4).

Emphasis was put on establishment of built-in accountability systems by the NPA to support and motivate stakeholders to perform their mandate. The findings also suggest that compulsory requirements should be put in place so that all administrative units have a section in their plans evaluating the extent of integration and tracking implementation performance as part of the accountability mechanism (IDI-NGC 2023:14). In addition, internal controls and performance agreements for their activities need to be put in place to ensure objective data collection and thematic reporting requirements which are important for quality data management. Participants reported that the reports generated by the consultants are never verified but taken as truth without any form of auditing. They expressed fear that a consultant hired due to their connection to the regime may leave out critical dissenting views and such practices go unchecked. Those stakeholders who question the report as a public relations tool continue to doubt its content resulting in non-use.

In addition, was emphasis on strengthening of the monitoring mechanism to ensure inclusive collection of objective data without necessarily making it entirely technical or subjectively influenced by politics. From the empirical data, participants identified the need for such an intervention as a way of enhancing credibility and use of APRM recommendations. From the findings, participants recommended the use of independent experts appointed by the Continental Secretariat from countries with best practices and successful innovations to support the capacity of the NPA, TPI national consultants and the NGC (KII-F 2023:21). While the country review mission team is sent to validate the CSAR, it comes mid-way in the process, and works for a few days on a schedule of activities determined by officials of the reviewed country.

(b) Massive awareness

The Continental Secretariat should make a massive awareness strategy a prerequisite in any country's peer review schedule, before undertaking any country self-assessment. Public awareness of APRM goals, activities and processes is an important activity, through multiple communication strategies to enable actors to understand their roles and the benefits of their participation (KII-S 2023:11). Participants noted that while the first peer review had an elaborate communication strategy; it was not the case in the second review, based on the false assumption that people were already aware of the APRM. It should therefore be included among the requirements for peer review preparations to have public sensitisation activities in the schedule.

(c) Guidelines for TPI consultants and capacity development

Clear guidelines should be made available for recruitment of the Technical Planning Institute (TPI), based on objective criteria to ensure evaluation capacity. This is intended to go beyond consideration of diversity to enforce a rigorous and objective criteria based on competence and free of political manipulation. In addition, findings indicate the need for continuous training on methodology in consultations, validation and reporting (KII-FP 2023:21). Evaluation capacity is central to influencing use of the APRM, and concerns from stakeholders of the ruling party influencing selection of NGC and TPI's who are close to the ruling party.

The National Secretariat should regularly organise training workshops on methodology and monitoring of data collection activities during desk research, field research, consultation, reporting and tracking the NPoA implementation (KII-S 2023:5). This becomes very important due to the changing context in which data may be collected. Participants gave an example of the first peer review where data was collected in a politically charged environment in preparation of the 2006 general elections. Another example was the NPoA annual progress reporting and the targeted reviews on the three bottlenecks that took place during 2020 and 2021 during the COVID-19 restrictions, where data was collected virtually.

The NPA should ensure that the TPI reformulate context sensitive evaluation questions, to collect relevant data from the different categories of the population. The public officials involved in service delivery as implementation vehicles of national policies would provide meaningful information which is in line with the country context, if appropriate evaluation questions were asked, with clear concepts and interpretation for grassroots participants. Clarity on objectives, questions and indicators with questions interpreted in local languages to accommodate the participation of the grassroots people would avoid an elite-based approach (KII-S 2023:3). Findings from participants indicate that due to budgetary constraints, limited efforts have been made to translate the domesticated questionnaire into the different languages in the various regions of Uganda. Participants from the TPI responsible for questionnaire domestication also complained about the nature of the questionnaire as being too long, repetitive with over-lapping questions (IDI-NGC 2023:11). This has implications on the relevance of the data collected and consequently use and influence in national policy.

Independent experts on methodology should be hired to participate in the entire peer review process from the preparation and planning phase, monitoring of the selection of TPI consultants and their activities, all the way through to the reporting stage. This would go a long way in minimising the degree of appointing consultants due to their connection to the regime without going through the process of advertising and competitive assessment. For example, in the first peer review, it was also reported that the Focal Point Minister had decided to appoint members of the NGC until the leader of the mission team intervened, insisting that to secure independence of the process, the NGC membership should be nominated by their constituencies and the Minister should only issue appointment letters. This helped in minimising the political influence that results in biased reporting that leads to non-use of reports by some stakeholders.

Validation is another major activity in which continuous training is required. Findings suggest that it was not appropriately conducted by the original participants who were initially consulted. Participants raised a concern of validation where different participants are invited, making it hard to verify the actual data that was originally submitted (KII-S 2023:9). It was observed that even where consultation was

conducted regionally, one central validation may be conducted which defies the intention of validation.

7.1.1.3 APRM Reporting

The quality of the reporting process determines the credibility of the outcomes. To enhance influence, empirical evidence suggests improvements through enforcement of government wide monitoring and reporting requirements.

(a) Enforcing government wide monitoring and reporting on NPoA implementation by the NPA and all MDAs.

To promote use and influence of APRM data, an integrated reporting system as a requirement on progress should be made across all of the public sector MDAs. This should emphasise fixed timing, quality of report content, frequency of reporting as well as dissemination of reports. Appropriate timing of reporting should be identified so that reports are released on time for the development of medium-term and annual plans for MDAs where integration of recommendations is made possible. From the empirical findings participants gave an example of how the favourable timing in releasing the first peer review report and the APRM Plan of Action (PoA) were two of the 23 studies that informed the NDP-I in Uganda (KII-NGC 2023:10). In addition, continuous reporting to capture new and emerging issues affecting the country, as opposed to tracking those previously captured in NPoA, also helps to address emerging challenges affecting the country. Participants questioned the practice of continued tracking of NPoA implementation action for five years without paying attention to emerging issues, which may sometimes have more serious consequences to the countries' governance.

There is a need for balanced reporting to capture issues identified in all of the thematic areas, instead of concentrating on some and ignoring or editing out others due to their political sensitivity. The findings indicate that certain recommendations on sensitive issues in the thematic area of Democracy and Political Governance were given limited attention, while more focus was given to issues related to Social and Economic Governance. One participant was concerned that from the first-generation review, issues of presidential term limit, land and creation of new districts were raised and repeated in the second review, but no action was taken (KII-S

2023:17). A mechanism for tracking implementation of action points with the purpose of avoiding selective integration where politically sensitive recommendations are avoided should be established.

Decentralisation of APRM structures by creating parallel units in the local governments not only increases APRM awareness to the grassroots population, but also demonstrates more relevance to the immediate service delivery needs of the community (KII-S 2023:4). Uganda can learn from a similar innovation adopted in South Africa, where functional provincial governing councils and APRM offices were introduced for effective coordination of peer review activities. Unlike Uganda where the focus is on the NPA and integration of APRM recommendations into the NDP and MDA work plans, decentralised structures ensure that the recommendations from the reports are integrated as well into the local government planning framework. Under the leadership and oversight of the national APRM secretariat at the centre, the different units are empowered with financial and human resource capacity to ensure quality reporting and make relevant recommendations to their local governments. As a result each provincial unit plays the role to ensure regular reporting on NPoA implementation as a means of enforcing more regular utilisation of the APRM in public policy processes.

Clear identification of primary users of APRM reports will ensure effective dissemination of APRM data as a strategy to enhance its use and influence. As a major recommendation towards enhancing use, publication of APRM country reports after the APR Forum need to go beyond the NPA website, regional and continental body to include other national and local government platforms for debating of major governance issues captured (IDI-NGC 2023:20). For example, parliament debating APRM reports and making recommendations to the MDAs, making budgetary allocations and ensuring oversight of all APRM activities such as independent consultations, validation and reporting.

Besides NGC representatives of various stakeholder constituencies, and officials in MDAs which serve as implementation vehicles, institutions like academia and think tanks would go a long way in using APRM data to undertake research for policy improvement. In addition, participants reported that CSOs generally use APRM reports in conducting their advocacy work on key governance issues reported. This

makes it necessary that they not only receive regular updates, but also for government to ensure a favourable policy environment for CSOs to use APRM findings in their work.

7.1.1.4. Context and managing contingencies in the APRM environment

(a) Institutionalise accountability to enhance the technical, financial and legal capacity, independence and legitimacy of the established framework.

Report content should be aligned to a country's budget and priorities in the NDP. Ensuring reporting content which is directly relevant to the citizens such as in service delivery, motivates the grass roots people into participation when they begin to see changes. The findings in Chapter Six indicate that there is no clear alignment of the peer review process and outcomes with the country's budget cycle (KII-S-2023:5). While the NPoA is costed reflecting the planned government allocations for addressing the identified gaps, the actual releases by government tend to fall below the projected figures. This implies that budgetary and funding decisions are not informed by the evaluation outcomes from peer review, which reduces the motivation for use.

To promote use, performance of the MDAs can be assessed on the basis of the extent to which they implement the relevant areas as extracted from the NPoA, and funding for the following year determined accordingly. Therefore, the peer review time frame needs proper alignment with the national budgeting cycle, so that recommendations from annual peer review reports on NPoA performance are used to inform the national, MDA and local government budgets (IDI-NGC 2023:11). The adoption and integration of such a performance management system and evaluation-based budgeting as an accountability mechanism would go a long way in promoting use and influence of the APRM in the country's policies.

Institutionalisation ensures that the NGC and the National Secretariat are independent entities with separate budget lines from the NPA. This makes it easy for the National Secretariat to guard the APRM from political manipulation without overtaking its mandate and running the risk of bureaucratic capture of consultations, validations and tracking of the NPA.

7.2 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED FRAMEWORK

Based on the reviewed literature on evaluation use and influence, the practice of implementation of peer review in Uganda, and the empirical findings discussed in this Chapter Seven, the study presents a framework for enhancing the use and influence of the APRM in Uganda's public policy. The study observes that while the APRM Statute (2016:22) indicates the rules of procedure for internal regulation of APRM structures and process, the assumption of a rational approach where APRM findings are expected to translate into policy offers limited explanations for non-use or varying degrees of use. Taking a mechanism-based approach, the proposed framework enhances use by closing the gaps cited in the APRM process by focusing on the elements in each phase. The proposed evaluation framework draws insights from three sets of theoretical frameworks to reflect a theory of change for the APRM evaluation. They are Mark and Henry's (2004) schematic theory of evaluation influence, Freeman's (1984) stakeholder theory and David Easton's (1953) political systems theory. Below is the proposed framework showing stages in the APRM evaluation process which are intended to enhance its influence on public policies.

Figure 7.2: Adapted APRM evaluation influence framework

Source: Adapted from Mark and Henry (2004:43)

Figure 7.2 above reflects a proposed framework with insights drawn from three theoretical bodies of knowledge in the form of a multi-disciplinary approach to understanding the evaluation influence of the APRM.

(a) The first stage

To construct an adapted framework, the first component of the framework is drawn from Mark and Henry's (2004:43) schematic evaluation influence framework as evaluation inputs which are integrated with their attributes that include: communication, human resource expertise, instructions, financial resources and time.

(b) The second stage

The second component is stakeholder participation from the stakeholder analytical framework. Instead of including the stakeholder identification and participation as one of the activities as reflected in Mark and Henry's (2004) schematic theory of evaluation influence, the adapted framework instead integrates stakeholder analysis from Yu *et al.*'s (2011:8719) public policy analytical model for systematic stakeholder identification, management and analysis.

According to Lawrence and Weber (2011:23), there are three major ways through which stakeholders exercise influence on public policy. First is the information strategy where they influence policy makers' decisions through the kind of information they provide to them. Second is the financial incentive strategy through which stakeholders contribute to support the political activities of government policy makers. Third is a constituency building strategy by stakeholders forming coalitions through which they enhance their influence upon government policy makers in a way that appears more favourable to them. Furthermore, stakeholders not only have varying interests, but also power influences over the policy process and outcome, with some having legal powers while others do not. Stronjny and Jedrusik (2018:376) identify several sources of stakeholder influence to include: knowledge control,

people control, asset control, finance control, legal supervision, personal attributes and participation in organisation activities.

However, in the case of the APRM, there is need for a legal framework to give legal powers to the different stakeholders instead of operating at the mercy of political and bureaucratic authority.

From Yu *et al.*'s (2011:8718) framework, four major element stakeholders are analysed, namely: stakeholder attributes (power, legitimacy and urgency), stakeholder salience or importance (expectant, latent and definitive), attitude towards a policy (support, opposition and neutrality), and stakeholder type (dormant, dependant, demanding, definitive, discretionary and dangerous). From the analysis, Flak and Rose (2012:657) assert that strong allies among stakeholders are characterised by compatibility of their expectations, with the policy goal leading to maximum support and cooperation. Weak allies are characterised by lack of support policy implementation and the neutral stakeholders have little or no clear roles to play in ensuring policy implementation. In the APRM context of Uganda, findings reflect strong allies in the executive, but weak allies among the CSOs, the bureaucracy, parliament and the development partners.

(c) The third stage

The third component of the proposed framework is the evaluation activities, which are also adopted with their attributes as evaluation planning, data collection and analysis, development of conclusions and recommendations, as well as generation and dissemination of evaluation reports.

(d) The fourth stage

The fourth component adopted is the evaluation outputs. It focuses on the process of generating reports and dissemination of the findings. The details of the participants and their roles in validation activities, compilation, editing and dissemination strategy are analysed with their implications of the use and influence of the APRM on national policies. The quality of the reports is assessed against attributes that include: responsiveness, credibility, sophistication, communication and timeliness.

(e) The fifth stage

The fifth component adopted is contingencies in the environment/policy setting which includes: facilitating, competing and inhibiting factors with attributes such as micro politics, culture of evaluation, administrative/management support, information needs and resources, among others. The study emphasises that such factors pose a significant effect on the type of use adopted.

This element is expanded with insights from Easton's (1953) political systems theory. According to Ile (2009:65), the theory provides an excellent framework for understanding evaluation influence by recognising that political behaviour and process are interdependent and influenced by the environment, through inputs, support and outputs. Birkland (2011:28-32) explains that the environment of a political system is characterised by firstly the structural environment, which includes a formal framework of legal structures that define the rules and the process of policy-making and facilitate accountability. Secondly, the social environment includes the demography changes in terms of the population structure and composition covering attributes such as gender, age, ethnicity, labour force participation, migration, income status and inequalities among others. Thirdly, the political environment where political actors use opinion polls and related data to assess their likely policy options since they reflect policy agendas of public interest on issues such as the economy, security, health, education and employment, among others.

Fourthly, the economic environment includes the distribution of wealth, sectoral composition as a share of the total national GDP, growth rate of the economy, inflation, national debt, tax expenditure and income distribution, among others. Based on the systems thinking, inputs into the government from evaluation information in the form of proposals, negotiations, adaptation, implementation review and feedback are converted by subjecting them to the opinion of actors within the political system into discernible outputs in the form of policy decisions (Anyebe 2018:12). To contribute to the adapted framework, the contingencies in the APRM environment are adopted as structural, social, political and economic, which act as facilitating, inhibiting and competing forces to the use and influence of the APRM.

The fifth component is adopted from the general mechanism through which the outputs translate into outcomes with attributes such as: justification, persuasion, salience, skill acquisition, policy deliberation, coalition formation and standard

setting. These are the core change processes and linkages that constitute evaluation influence. Therefore, the environmental factors, mediated by the mechanism, determine the type of use which may be instrumental, symbolic, conceptual or even non-use. The study findings also reveal that with improved contextual factors, it is possible for use type to gradually improve from non-use, to conceptual use, to symbolic use and finally to instrumental use, where direct integration of APRM recommendations leads to adoption of people-centred responsive policies. As a result, good governance will be realised and ultimately socio-economic transformation as the ultimate goal.

The potential challenges associated with the proposed framework are provided as inherent within the study limitations on the use of a Ugandan case study whose findings may not be generalisable. As a way of addressing this weakness, the study recommends future research to use a comparative analysis involving several countries to enhance its robustness. Besides, with emphasis on using pathways to analyse details of the APRM process, the study finds it appropriate in contributing positively towards enhancing the use and influence of the APRM evaluation system.

7.2.1 The APRM Evaluation context

The supplementary documents to the APRM Guidelines for informing Country Review (2003:4), detail the APRM national structures including the Focal Point, the NGC, the Secretariat, and the Technical Research Institute. This study however emphasises that the assumptions on which the system was built tend to ignore the inherent political factor in the APRM routinised activities as well as the contextual factors. This section analyses the implications and proposes innovations for integration into the new framework as discussed.

7.2.1.1 The location of the Focal Point Minister

The Focal Point for the APRM besides being a minister is more likely to influence use of APRM data when strategically located in the Presidency. The APRM Statute (2016:15) identifies the function as being to coordinate the APRM activities between the continental structures and the national structures and reporting directly to the Head of State. Literature indicates that in different countries however, the appointments have been varying with some from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs,

Trade and Regional Integration, Finance and Planning and Public Service, while others are from the Presidency as a way of demonstrating the commitment of the Head of State. The empirical findings suggest that more use and influence of the APRM on national policies has occurred in countries where the Focal Point is located within the Presidency.

However, there has been a general tendency of deliberate political control of the APRM country review process by the executive branch of government (APRM 2017:23). This executive control is facilitated by several provisions within the guiding documents. Firstly, the powers to appoint members constituting the National Governing Council/Commission (NGC), the Focal Point Minister, and the panel of eminent persons are all granted to the executive. Secondly, the Focal Point Minister who controls the budget approvals and releases is appointed by the President and expected to be at a cabinet ministerial level or a presidential advisor. Thirdly, is the alienation of the NGC powers to the executive branch by locating the national APRM secretariat offices directly under the Focal Point which directly serves the executive's interests. In doing so, the researcher observes that the Focal Points tend to work towards saving their governments from being criticised at the APR Forum, leading to the unintended symbolic use of APRM data.

7.2.1.2 The National Governing Council

The second structure is the NGC, as an independent body from government, which is expected to be representative of society, with a non-state factionary chair. It is expected to be of inclusive membership for all key governance stakeholders within government, civil society, the private sector, women, youth, the judiciary, the legislature and academia. The APRM Statute (2016:22) indicates that it is probably the most critical structure in the review process, with functions of providing strategic policy direction to the APRM implementation, ensuring its credibility, independence, professionalism and technical freedom from political manipulation.

However, there is a need to balance accountability with learning. Adeke-Jinadu (2019:25) notes that as a result of varying interpretations of the external accountability role by different NGC stakeholder representatives, some actors opposed to the regime become too confrontational, perhaps manipulative, with the

intention of discrediting the government. This forces government actors to deliberately manipulate the process to equally maintain its image leading to symbolic use of APRM data.

In addition, the location of the NGC in the NPA as the country's planning agency, was intended to shield it from political influence and ensure that its findings feed directly into the NDP. Control of its financial and human resources by the NPA makes it vulnerable to bureaucratic capture. To address the challenge of bureaucratic capture by the regime, ECA (2018:72-73) calls for integration of safeguards to save APRM evaluation processes from becoming bureaucratic routines and an extension of the state-driven policy devoid of meaningful popular participation. Firstly, it is necessary to have the National Governing Councils/Commissions (NGCs) established by legislation or constitutional provisions as a means of minimising executive control over their appointment and operations. Secondly, it is necessary to provide free spaces for locating the NGC secretariats outside the ministries which are under direct control of the executive branch. Thirdly, it is necessary to ensure that financial and administrative independence of the NGCs similar to that enjoyed by the legislature and judiciary is present in all member states. Fourthly, is the establishment of APRM standing committees within the national legislatures of member states to support the NGC in strengthening the intended oversight of the APRM evaluation processes. Fifthly, is facilitating the capacity building of the civil society organisations to enable them to play a more effective and sustainable role with the APRM country review processes. With such interventions integrated into the new framework, the changes will go a long way in ensuring effective functioning of the NGC to enhance the use and influence.

7.2.1.3 The National APRM Secretariat

The third structure is the National Secretariat, which is mandated with providing administrative and technical support to the NGC. According to the APRM Operating Procedures (2012:16), it consists of the staff responsible for providing the day to day secretarial, technical and administrative services to support the NGC. Such responsibility requires both technical and budgetary capacity to regularly prepare and update the country's documentation, tools and work plans, as well as an issue paper on country challenges. This calls for independent budgeting with the secretariat having its own budget line as stipulated in the standard APRM guidelines.

However, in different countries, the secretariat is organised differently. In some countries, it is directly funded with its budget under a government ministry, agency or the presidency, while in others it runs an independent budget. Such differences in location within the governance structure have implications of power relations and consequently an influence on national policies. Furthermore, the CRR (2017:7), emphasises the lack of independence from the executive, since the NPA leadership from the chairperson and other four top members are presidential appointees who uses his or her discretion to reward them another five-year term based on political loyalty. The NPA Act (2002) gives powers to the president to remove a board member from office, which influences top civil servants who are loyal to the regime to bias the process and reporting, especially when the outcome appears unfavourable. Such questions on the attitude of the actors and methodology undermine the influence of the review outcome. As a result, continued concerns of unclear accountability relations and adoption of a more state-centric approach to the functioning of the secretariat and the unclear accountability relations creates fertile ground for a more symbolic use of APRM reports.

7.2.1.4 The Technical Research Institute

The fourth structure is the Technical Research Institute (TRI), which is responsible for the execution of the APRM questionnaire. The APRM Guidelines (2016:23) explain that it is appointed by the NGC for technical competence and capability in undertaking research on the four thematic areas of the APRM. Its responsibility includes comprehensive collecting and analysing of data in the form of public views which are validated for compilation of the Country Self-Assessment Report. While the APRM (2016:3-5) guidelines detail its operational functions, Aketch (2019:11) emphasises that the effectiveness of those structures depends on the genuine stakeholder participation, which should be facilitated by the government.

7.3 THE APRM QUESTIONNAIRE

As a major input, this tool serves the purpose of collecting data during the country self-assessment which is used in all of the consequent processes and decisions. It covers major elements and sections for each thematic area, with corresponding evaluation questions, objectives and indicators. The APRM Base Documents

(2002:349) guide that the review process begins when the questionnaire from the Continental Secretariat under the direction of the APR Panel is sent to the member country to be reviewed. Following the APRM Statute (2016:22), the questionnaire as the major tool is used to capture national data, based on the identified indicators in the five governance thematic pillars when conducting the self-assessment of the country being reviewed. This questionnaire serves two major purposes. Firstly, it provides the format and checklist used by participating countries to establish whether the different stakeholders have been engaged and have also responded to their desired concerns. Secondly, it provides a summary of the self-assessment results.

To operationalise the questionnaire, the APRM Research Protocol (2017:11) requires a pre-test of the tool to establish whether there are any challenges with its concepts, coverage, presentation, administration or even translation into local languages. It guides that some issues may require secondary data generated through desk research, while others may require primary data generated through field surveys, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and Expert Panels. The APRM Base Documents (2002:349) indicate that the results generated using the questionnaire are summarised and analysed to formulate the draft programme of action which are consequently submitted to the Continental Secretariat to guide the process of country review.

The study observes the need for triangulation by adopting a mixed method approach. It can be observed that most of the country review data has been of a qualitative nature only. To emphasise this need, Maloka (2019:7) indicates that “sound and reliable quantitative techniques should be employed to measure key governance objectives and indicators in the two agendas, a pathway that has been taken by the mechanism in its three-year strategic plan (2019-2021)”. Therefore, although the changes have not yet been embraced, triangulation in data collection of both qualitative and quantitative data leads to high validity levels. The approach improves the tracking of governance in a more measurable and sustainable way. Furthermore, findings reflect calls for review of the APRM questionnaire to widening its current “narrow minded scope” to cover the home-grown knowledge embedded in the African culture.

The study observes that efforts to undertake questionnaire review towards enhancing its influence have been going on since 2007 through NEPAD dialogues, in 2009, 2010, 2012 and 2015. The final review was concluded in 2021 with integration of emerging cross-cutting issues like elections, natural resource management, xenophobia and diversity management. The most outstanding addition after the deep impact of the Covid-19 pandemic was the inclusion of the fifth thematic area, which assesses existing state legal and policy frameworks for state resilience, adaptability, warning and response systems against shocks, diseases and disasters.

Over time, persistent challenges associated with the questionnaire have included its inability to capture the views of the grassroots people which defies its intention of credibility and ownership. Although it has been appreciated for high quality data collection, certain concerns were raised about its conceptual clarity, length of the questionnaire and indicators. It is argued that while the quality of the tool is necessary in determining the issues on which data is collected, it is not sufficient to guarantee use and influence limited to capturing the views of the elite. Even in local governments, it stops at the district level councillors, leaving out the opinions of the grass roots people. “The challenge is that it is presented in English, due to the inadequate finances to interpret it into the different local languages” (KII-S 2023:3).

This makes the study capture views from mainly the elite who understand English, leaving out the rest of the would-be participants due to inability to translate the tool into their local languages. As a result the degree of representation of the reports is questioned leading to non-use.

7.4 THE PROPOSED APRM EVALUATION PROCESS

The APRM evaluates governance performance through review of policies and practices in AU member states for the purposes of improving state capacity (APRM Statute 2016), as explained in detail in Chapter Four. It was embraced as a home-grown and Africa led evaluation framework for peer learning, experience sharing and self-assessment, with a focus on public policies and governance practices for replication across the continent and acceleration of Africa’s integration. The voluntary self-monitoring initiative is informed by the standards and codes covered in

the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (ACDEG) and the Declaration on Democracy, Political, Economic and Corporate Governance (APRM-MOU 2003:9). Based on the African relational philosophy of “Ubuntu”, it operates by using data for mutual evaluation on a non-adversarial basis involving interdependence and accountability among stakeholders (Chilisa & Mertens 2021:23). The purpose of the participatory approach is highlighted in the APRM Statute (2016;15), being to promote a form of governance that empowers citizens in decision-making processes, as opposed to the asymmetrical and hierarchical command and control structures.

The type of evaluation carried out by the APRM is what Mark *et al.* (2000:3) refer to as performance monitoring which is conducted with the purpose of ensuring both oversight and compliance to the mutually agreed governance standards. These are set in the key guiding documents, which include: the APRM Base Documents (2003), the APRM Statute (2016), and the APRM Guidelines (2016) among others. The emphasis is on assessing the country’s policies by collecting data on the five thematic areas based on objectives, questions and indicators from the domesticated questionnaire, reformulated to suit the country context. Khupe (2014:74) explains that this home-grown approach of peer review is informed by the assumption of a systematic information exchange which is supported by experts, facilitating a mutual learning process by equal stakeholders through collegial assessment of progress.

To perform its functions, it undertakes a number of activities which the adapted framework intends to enhance to bring about a more positive influence on policies among AU member states. At the national level, which is the focus of this study, it operates through a national level structure established upon the country signing an MOU with the Continental Secretariat. The APRM Guidelines (2017:4), require that preparations for base review are conducted which involve establishing the necessary structures that constitute the APRM institutional context for stakeholder participation. The preparations include designating the national APRM focal point reporting to the head of state, putting in place the secretariat for technical and administrative support, a representative, diverse and autonomous National Governing Council/Commission, as well as selecting the technical research institute, which in turn leads the assessment.

This type of multi-phase participatory evaluation process is made up of four major stages spelt out in the APRM Base Documents (2002:349). The first stage is conducting the country self-assessment guided by the questionnaire from the APR Continental Secretariat to generate a CSAR and the draft NPoA. This is followed by the country review visit and consultation, validation and submission of the final PoA. The third phase is the generation of the CRR to the APR Panel, while the final phase is the country's peer review in which the report from the CRV is discussed and by the APR forum composed of heads of state and governments. The head of state of the reviewed country presents an official government response and gives commitment to address the issues raised. The APRM Statute (2016:22) indicates the rules of procedure which constitute the mechanism for internal regulation. This study focuses on detailing activities in the process at the national level, to establish the theory of change for the mechanism and the extent to which it influences the different types of use and non-use of the APRM. The justification for emphasising the national level is that it is the stage where data is managed and its outcome greatly shapes what is tabled, the discussion and the decisions made at the APR Forum. To positively enhance the influence of the APRM, the study proposes the following process.

7.4.1 The country self-assessment process

The first stage in a country's peer review process is the preparation for country self-assessment (APRM Guidelines 2017:4). Being a voluntary undertaking, the decision to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the APRM from a country's head of state is considered to be a significant indicator of the country's readiness to undertake self-assessment. In addition, it reflects commitment to provide funding and logistical support to the process, as well as to observe the principles governing peer review. The phase starts with the establishment of the national APRM structures to administer the peer review as explained in Chapter Six, followed by a planned schedule of the implementation activities. The APRM Base Document (2003:12) sets the requirement of the start for country self-assessment at 18 months after a country becomes an APRM member. This provision is not normally observed due to challenges associated with resources and political will. This study intended to focus on the process and proposes a framework to address the identified gaps in the

inputs, activities, outputs and the contextual dynamics of the APRM environment as analysed in this section.

7.4.2 Inputs for the country self-assessment process

The major inputs into the peer review process include: a planned schedule of the peer review, a public awareness and sensitisation strategy, a financial mobilisation strategy, a domesticated questionnaire and the human resource expertise in the form of the TPI. In this section emphasis is placed on the extent to which each of the inputs into the peer review process influences the use and non-use in Uganda's national policies.

(a) Peer review plan

According to Aketch (2019:13), the preparation for the country self-assessment should include generating a planned schedule for the various activities to be undertaken during the peer review process. The major requirements which should be covered in the plan include: Public awareness and sensitisation, selection of TPI, and domestication of the questionnaire activities. This is followed by the data collection activities which include: desk research, field research, sensitisation and consultation of stakeholders (field work interviews, national survey and FGDs). Reporting activities include: compilation and validation of the draft CSAR and NPoA, submission of the CSAR and NPoA to the APR panel and preparation of the issue paper. To enhance use and influence of the APRM inputs, the following recommendations have been advanced for integration in the adapted framework.

(b) Inclusive generation of the APRM planned schedule

The generation of the plan should be inclusive of all stakeholders for ownership and commitment of stakeholders. While the APRM was built on the philosophy of a participatory approach for equal and multiple stakeholders, in practice certain activities in the process are fully managed by government agencies leading to bureaucratic capture of the process. Planning happens to be one of the activities exclusively managed by the NPA, NGC and the Focal Point, but many MDAs, CSOs and local governments are always recipients of the planned schedule without their input. The findings show that when the APRM was introduced, it was the first and

only institution aggregating government and opposition ideas to feed them into the country's planning and policy process (IDI-NGC 2023:11).

(c) Enforce the activity durations indicated in the APRM standards

Timeliness being a major factor in influencing the type of use, specific time lines for each activity should be agreed upon, as per the standard guidelines from the Continental Secretariat. For example, the NEPAD/APRM/Guidelines (2003:20) indicate that the base review is expected to take place normally after 18 months of a country's ascent to the mechanism. Consequently, the country review visit is expected to last about 2 weeks. Relatedly, the writing of the country review draft report and editing by the review team, panel validation through panel meetings, as well as engagement with government is for a period of about 21 days (APRM Base Document 2003:19). In addition, the preparation of the issue paper after the CSAR and the submission of the preliminary NPoA to the Continental Secretariat are expected to take place from between 9-12 months (NEPAD/HGSIC 2003:12). The non-compliance to such timelines and non-use of APRM data when it is of relevance to the planning and development framework has been overtaken by events. As a result, the users opt for other sources such as the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) among others.

(d) Specification of responsible agencies for all activities in the planned schedule

Furthermore, responsible agencies should also be clearly indicated for accountability mechanisms, as well as the amount and source of funds required. In addition, a monitoring section should be included in the plan document, to ensure that all actors are compelled to observe them. However, without a participatory planning process leading to a detailing of scheduled activities, the country's readiness for peer reviews is questioned since it presents higher chances of non-use or conceptual use of the findings and recommendations from the APRM reports. To confirm a country's readiness may necessitate a check list that all of the required activities are included and the schedule is discussed and agreed upon by state and non-state stakeholders, as well as the peer review mission team.

(e) Financial inputs

The second input is a financial mobilisation strategy that reflects how the country intends to fulfil both its financial obligations with the Continental Secretariat, but also how to finance the review process. According to the AUC (2015:8), there is a need for Africa to take full responsibility for financing the APRM, for the purposes of ensuring ownership and sustainability. While each member state is required to pay a subscription of USD 300,000 per year to the Continental Secretariat for the purposes of ensuring ownership of the mechanism, defaulting countries are required to first clear their arrears before being peer reviewed. The APRM Statute (2016:18) indicates that participating countries shall finance their review processes. The financing could be from domestic sources, the countries' strategic partners or jointly shared where a number of donor agencies have been supporting the NPoA implementation. The APRM Guidelines (2003:9) clarify that external partners can be welcomed, provided that they respect the APRM African ownership and its processes.

Findings indicate that while the first review received a lot of funding from development partners, the contributions towards the second review suggest a declining trend where the few partners that contributed were limited to the implementation of the NPoA (KII-S 2023:11). As a result, certain key activities like validation were not conducted as procedurally required, due to limited finances which affected the credibility of the report leading to non-use by some stakeholders. Therefore, there is a need for a sustainable resource mobilisation strategy from domestic resources, instead of relying on development partners which may attract conditions that work against the principle of ownership. A legal framework empowering the NGC enables it to have a budgetary allocation, and a vote to enable it facilitates its operations without depending on the NPA controlled budget (FGD-FP-MDA 2023:1).

Moreover, participating countries are encouraged to rely more on internally sustainable sources to minimise reliance on externally generated funds that would come with external conditions. The study observes that budgetary allocations towards both the subscription and the peer review became political and were considered very costly. Countries would thus prefer to mobilise resources from the development partners. Political will is manifested through the willingness of member

states to guarantee sustainable financing of APRM activities which in turn must be responsive to the interests of the African people (APRM 2016:21). As a possible solution to the principle of African ownership and funding is a constitutional provision for establishment of the national NGCs with an independent budget which is allocated as a sub-item within the supervising ministry's budget. Therefore, there is still a need for an enhanced, robust and broad based-resource mobilisation campaign to be launched for generating secretariats' finances and their function.

(f) Human resource experts

At the national level of the participating countries, are several human resource inputs identified in the NEPAD/APRM Guidelines (2003:20) to include the focal point person, the NGC members, the staff of the national secretariat headed by a CEO or executive director, and the TRI consultants. According to the supplementary document of the APRM Guidelines for Country Review (2003:6), the secretariat should consist of technical and administrative staff responsible for providing the day-to-day support services to the NGC, and organising local and national level sensitisation programmes. The APRM Statute (2016:9) stipulates that a national TRI is appointed by an established NGC at least for each thematic area who identify appropriate data collection techniques for the different issues in undertaking the review exercise. The NEPAD/APRM Guidelines (2003:20) provide for technical expertise drawn from a pool of African consultants to support the minimal capacity of the APR panel and secretariat in conducting the assessment, dissemination of findings to different stakeholders and which consequently influence use of outcomes. Findings from the first review suggest that the appointment of the first NGC considered more than representation to also include expertise of the members in matters of governance. To justify the capacity of the NGC, one participant explained that the appointment of one NGC member who was a former permanent secretary helped in easing the NGC work, because she applied a lot experience from the private sector in supporting the consultant from the TPI (KII-FP 2023:21).

The national Technical Research Institute (TRIs) spearheads the development of a draft Country Self-Assessment Report (CSAR). This activity starts with data collection through the APRM questionnaire as the major tool to collect data from across the five pillars covered by the mechanism (APRM Statute 2016:21).

Preparation involves generating up to date background documentation by the APRM secretariat using materials from international, regional and national institutions. According to Maloka (2019:4), the review is strengthened by respected African technical expertise working in collaboration with other relevant advisory capacities at the national level of the country conducting self-assessment. It has been recognised that this capacity at the country level sometimes falls short of expectation. The national TRIs are also expected to build capacity to observe the guidance notes provided below each assessment area and objective as one of the ways of ensuring national ownership. While the NGC uses consultants, the credibility of the information and the quality of their reports needs to be verified. Findings indicate that the review process provides no opportunity for independent consultants to assess the validity of the information collected from the MDAs and reported by the TPI (IDI-NGC 2023:14).

(g) Public awareness and sensitisation strategy

Aketch (2019:13) emphasises that in preparation for peer review, the country is expected to undertake stakeholder sensitisation prior to the field consultations, government engagements and validation of the draft Country Self-Assessment Report (CSAR). The strategy has been identified as necessary prior to every review to educate all stakeholders about the goal of the APRM and their roles. The NPA-CSAR (2007:2) reports that initially, there were many perceptions of NEPAD among Ugandans which had to be corrected through a robust strategy covering various media platforms.

The NPA Communication and Advocacy Strategy for NEPAD/APRM-Uganda (2006:2) states the objectives of the strategy. Firstly, there is a need to promote appreciation and in-depth understanding of the NEPAD objective and message to the wider public. Secondly, to secure buy-in and commitment of the various stakeholders, especially the development partners for funding support, and policy makers to support policies in line with this new development agenda. The NPA-CSAR (2007:21) identified the publicity activities for the process to include “newspaper placements in national and regional (Vernacular) papers, over 30 interactive radio and TV programmes, radio advocacy messages, announcements and jingles on most FM radios and national stations, printing of publicity materials, eg brochures, posters, billboards, banners and branded apparel among others...”

(CRR 2009:14). In doing so, participating stakeholders were equipped with the relevant knowledge of the APRM and informed of the appropriate roles expected of them. In comparison, the South African CRR (2007:23) equally attributes the success in the first generation of its peer review process to such extensive wide media coverage. However, although to some extent publicity and outreach efforts were registered, a concern of limited publicity and late submission was raised. Tindifa and Luutu (2011:37) argue that some stakeholders reported that the media's role remained marginal and was limited to message transmission.

7.4.3 The APRM activities

The practice of peer review in the APRM may take several forms depending on the purpose for which it is commissioned, but the common activities among them all are data collection, analysis, reporting and dissemination. The APRM Base Document (2002:3) identifies four distinct types of reviews, namely base reviews, periodic reviews, targeted reviews and special reviews. The base review is an initial assessment undertaken in a country upon its accession and signing of an MOU with the APRM. It is based on the recognition that the AU member states are at different levels of development and hence the need to establish the level at which each is, the best practices, capacity and areas where they can be supported for improvement. This study focuses on the process of the base and periodic reviews, as well as the cross-cutting activities of the targeted and special reviews. To guide implementation of peer review, the APRM Statute (2016:9) stipulates the core guiding principles, objectives, standards, criteria, indicators and actors. The activities undertaken include identification and selection of stakeholders, data collection and analysis, validation, reporting and dissemination.

7.4.3.1 Stakeholder participation

The founding documents for the APRM present a robust participatory review process involving selection of multiple stakeholder representatives drawn from the state and non-state segments of society for a consensus-oriented assessment (NEPAD/HSGIC/03-2003/APRM/MOU, 2003:20-23). Among the major weaknesses identified in the APRM implementation is the tendency to focus on the outcome without giving adequate attention to the integrity of the process, especially the nature of stakeholder selection and its degree of compliance to the standards (Adeke-Jinadu 2019:26). To address the increasingly identified gap in understanding the

missing middle within the adopted input-output approach to evaluation, the current study focuses on using a mechanism-based approach to examine among other processes the identification and selection of stakeholders.

While Mark and Henry's (2004) framework identifies stakeholder participation as one of the activities, the current study instead adopts it as an independent activity. The innovation is intended to close the gap between the current practice and the original APRM philosophy of the communal participation of equal stakeholders for peer learning and experience sharing. It is in response to calls for review directed to widening the current "narrow minded scope" to cover the indigenous and home-grown knowledge embedded in the African culture. This study emphasises the need for the NGC as a forum for all stakeholder representatives to identify all of the primary stakeholders and intended users of APRM data. According to Maloka (2019:4), participating stakeholders consulted by the peer review team should include but not be limited to: government officials, legislators, political parties, civil society organisations, representatives from academia, the media, business, professional bodies and trade unions, representatives of CBOs, as well as international organisations. The study identifies the most influential stakeholders as the Head of State, the NGC representatives, and the civil society organisations. The findings indicate that when the Head of State himself presented the government response at the APR Forum and committed himself to implement the recommendations, it acted as a big motivation for ensuring use by himself individually, but also collectively as government (KII-S-2023:11). The motivation is attributed to the desire to avoid responding to the same weaknesses, which leads to instrumental use.

To enhance use and influence of the NGC, collective deliberations and agreement is important so as to agree on the relevant evaluation questions, the theory of change, appropriate data collection methods, and the likely implications. Therefore, in addition to consideration of expertise in the appointment of NGC representatives, an external expert can be identified to support the NGC in the selection process of the TPIs to drive the process, and enhance credibility in reporting, leading to more instrumental use. In addition, a parliamentary sub-committee of the APRM should be established to regularly interact with the NGC to ensure timely debate of issues

raised in the reports, since parliament is one of the major stakeholders, ensuring that APRM matters are integrated into the parliamentary agenda for government business, introducing and passing legislations aimed at enhancing the APRM process and implementation of the NPoA. Consequently, more APRM matters will be integrated into the government agenda, reports disseminated to various constituencies, while ensuring budgetary support towards APRM reviews. For that to happen however, it is necessary for a legal framework to back up the APRM structures, lack of which may hinder effective involvement of the parliament.

(a) Participation of development partners

Regarding the participation of development partners, they are central actors in providing financial and technical support. Besides financing meetings and training workshops, it is recommended that significant funding be directed towards key areas like massive awareness, data collection, validation and supporting the implementation of NPoA action points, which may be left out due to budgetary constraints. However, to avoid divided allegiance between the country's national interests and those of the donors, evidence of available domestic resources should be mobilised at the start of the peer review process.

(b) Civil Society Organisations

The current practice of monitoring the implementation of the NPoA is carried out by technocrats in MDAs where the data is collected, and there is a need for effective participation of both state and non-state actors in monitoring NPoA implementation. Holvoet *et al.* (2012:762) advance that the CSOs provide more independent analysis of the influence of evaluations than other stakeholders. However, under the current arrangement, only state institutions are involved in collecting data in MDAs to compile the NPoA monitoring report without participation of other stakeholders. This not only defies the intended principle of multiple stakeholder participation, but also translates into bureaucratic capture of the APRM process. Furthermore, beyond the selection criteria for CSO participation, certain concerns have been raised about the operating environment for CSOs where restrictive legislations like the National NGO Administration 2004 are gradually enforced to curtail their civic and advocacy work. The NPA-CSAR (2017:358) indicates that "there is very minimal effort that Government has put in place to ensure that the capacity of CSOs is built". This not

only negatively affects CSOs' capacity to participate in the consultations and validation activities, but also use of APRM data in their policy advocacy work, which implies non-use. To ensure sustainable participation of the different stakeholders, there is a need for a shared basket fund to support the activities of CSOs operating in various sectors to undertake monitoring the NPoA implementation in those areas and suggest proposals for government action (IDI-NGC 2023:11). To create a more favourable environment not only requires challenging the restrictive legislations but also revival and sustainability of the APRM Governance Monitoring Group (GMG) that had been established by the Uganda National NGO Forum in 2012 but closed its operations with the end of funding from the donors.

7.4.4 The selection of consultants for the TRI

The study findings indicate that more attention is placed on confirming that the consultants of the TRI are in place, without analysing the process of their selection. Although the composition of the commission appeared to reflect broad representation of different stakeholder constituencies, Tindifa and Luutu (2011:x) argue that it was also perceived to have been drawn from the NRM ruling party to play the role of insulating and defending their government against any critics. Concerns raised included not following the procurement processes in government institutions, suggesting that no advertising or interviewing was done, but a few consulting firms close to the regime were asked to submit their conception reports and were awarded appointments.

Some stakeholders opine that the ruling party supporters had the majority representation on the National Governing Council, thereby insisting that it lacks true independence. As a result, there were reported attempts to control the APR process to the extent of editing the self-assessment report to simply reflect a positive image of their party and government. Such allegations of selecting TRIs who are allies of the regime had effects on the data quality, legitimacy and use. The criteria for appointments, roles, ethical standards and evaluation of TRI performance should be entrenched in a well domesticated legal framework. The absence of which continues to undermine not only sustainability, but also independence of the institutional structures of the APRM leading to symbolic use and non-use of APRM reports.

Therefore, It is necessary to profile all potential users of APRM data, those who are central in shaping the degree of use, the likely patterns, as well as mechanisms through which the different stakeholders influence policy changes to establish what works in the existing context. Focus should be on exploring changes in stakeholders' knowledge, policy relevant skills and attitude, improved shared understanding of the policy intervention, policy intervention leading to support and reinforcement, incentives motivating stakeholders' performance of their roles, and promotion of accountability to stakeholders. This will go a long way in identifying primary users and best mechanisms to focus on improving to ensure instrumental use based on their stakeholders' roles, participation, agency, interests, legitimacy and power in influencing policy outcomes. Therefore, they should maximise on the role of influential stakeholders like the President, since their interests are given priority in integration of action points into the NPoA (KII-S 2023:7).

7.4.5 Data collection

This is the evaluation execution phase when the data is collected and analysed for reporting and use. It is guided by the APRM principles of: national leadership and ownership, inclusive participation, technical competence, and freedom from political manipulation. Data is collected through a research methodology consisting of desk research, expert panels, household survey, FGDs, written submissions and public hearings among others (APRM 2017:13). Concerns were raised about the unclear sample selection of respondents in the research phase who were mobilised by Chief Administrative Officers (CAOs) in the local governments. Being supporters of the NRM regime, Tindifa and Luutu (2011:23) argue that these top civil servants considered mainly respondents who would give credit to the government in their responses, even when they had limited or no awareness about the APRM. Therefore, the study recommends that beyond simply considering representation, there is a need for stakeholders to agree on clear selection criteria for CSOs and participants in the consultations. It is also necessary to ensure balanced reporting of both the government and the opposition issues raised (KII FP 2023:21).

(a) Compilation of the CSAR

From the data collected, technical reports for the different thematic areas are discussed between the thematic consultants and the NGC. Upon the NGC's

approval, the draft thematic reports are compiled into a comprehensive CSAR highlighting the governance challenges identified in each thematic area and the best practices for learning and sharing experiences. The study recommends that, at this stage, measures must be taken to protect the independence and objectivity of both the TPI and the NGC to ensure that even dissenting views are accommodated and not edited out as alleged. After the report is presented by the NGC to the cabinet committee for the APRM for approval and response, their input should be incorporated to produce the final report.

(b) Country Review Visit by the CRM team

The second stage at the national level is the APRM country review visit to undertake validation of the CSAR and to generate a Country Review Report (CRR). It involves a mission by carefully balanced and professionally appointed country review experts deployed by the APR Continental Secretariat to the member state being reviewed. The activities include the Country Review Mission, compilation of the CRR, engagement with government, and its response to the CRR. Based on the information generated from the Self-Assessment Report, the Background Document and the Preliminary Programme of Action, an issue paper is developed by the APR Secretariat as the lead agency to guide the process of country review (NEPAD/HGSIC-3-2003/APRM/Guidelines/O&P 2003:12). The secretariat relying on the data available determines whether there could be any other issues that may necessitate more in-depth investigation before the Country Review visit commences. To assess the credibility of the team, the APRM Base Document (2003:18-19) identifies the membership to include APR panel members, Continental Secretariat officers, experts approved by the APR panel, observers from partner institutions and two other participating countries.

The NEPAD/APRM/Guidelines (2003:20) highlight the purpose of the APR country review visit to include: firstly, assessing the extent to which the participatory process is ensured in a way that meets stakeholder's expectations; and secondly, promoting interaction of the APR team with the major stakeholders for generating feedback. Thirdly, to provide an opportunity for verifying background information with the stakeholders as presented in the issue paper which is generated by the APR Secretariat. Fourthly, it enables discussion of the draft NPoA presented by the participating country to improve its governance. Fifthly, the review serves the

purpose of building consensus among key stakeholders on the best steps toward addressing the identified governance challenges.

7.4.6 Validation

There is a need to ensure inclusive decision-making by all stakeholders on priority actions for use and implementation instead of the cabinet alone. According to the APRM Research Protocol (2017:12), the data collection process is concluded with validation of the report to ensure that the different stakeholders agree on the content of the report as a reflection of the questions sought to answer, and whether the instructions were followed. This stage may involve an additional round of reviewing the CSAR through wide-ranging interactions and consultations with various stakeholders by the APRM country review mission traversing the country to brief them on the APRM process, leading to compilation of a CRR. According to Maloka (2019:4), participating stakeholders consulted by the APR team include: government officials, legislators, political parties, civil society organisations' representatives from academia, the media, business, professional bodies and trade unions, representatives of CBOs, as well as international organisations. However, after validation of the CSAR, a cabinet paper generated highlighting the major issues, the challenges faced and proposed solutions is used by cabinet to determine the priorities to finance (IDI-NGC 2023:20). This implies that such critical decisions on use are only taken by cabinet and not owned by all of the other stakeholders to promote ownership as opposed to executive control of the decisions regarding use of APRM data. The study emphasises multi-stakeholder inclusion through the review process to avoid bureaucratic capture and political manipulation that lead to symbolic use.

7.4.6.1 Selection of participants in the validation

The NEPAD/APRM/Guidelines (2003:20) indicate that a carefully balanced and professionally appointed country review team is required to evaluate the progress of the participating country's National Plan of Action (NPoA). However, limited attention is given to the details in the selection process of participants in the validation and how it affects use and influence. Findings show that participation, especially in local governments, is entirely dependent on the way in which the secretariat is run, without proper preparation, a clear schedule, adequate time and finances (IDI-NGC

2023:14). Firstly, participants argued that it is mainly technocrats in the public service, the private sector as well as the development partners who are invited for validation, leaving out the grass roots people, even when they were consulted in data collection.

Secondly, political bias is reported where the bureaucrats involved in validation and monitoring NPoA implementation at the NPA and the selection of participants in local governments such as Chief Administrative Officers (CAOs) could deliberately choose those loyal to the government. Thirdly, it was also observed that participants are not always the original persons who were consulted, which raises questions about its relevance in confirming the accuracy of the data. This approach is perceived to be against the recommended practice of validation, raising doubts about the purpose of the activity and the report content leading to non-use and conceptual use.

7.4.7 Reporting and evaluation output

The third stage of the proposed APRM framework involves preparation and compilation of the review mission team's report. The compilations are based on both the materials presented by the APRM national secretariat in the briefing and the in-country findings from the wide range of consultations, sources and interactions, summarising their implications on the country's governance. The major activity includes writing the country review draft report and editing by the review team, and panel validation through panel meetings (APRM Base Document 2003:19). Findings indicate that APRM information helps in strategising policies into action plans that inform government funding of its agencies. The MDAs are guided by the NPA framework as required to develop their own strategic plans, since funding is based on activities in the strategic plans which are aligned to the NDP. What then remains is to put in place strategies to monitor the implementation of the recommended actions. However, the NGC reporting is not intended to capture the negatives, but progress on the priority actions in the strategic plan as extracted from the NPoA (KII-NGC 2023:10).

The study recommends that failures, challenges and emerging issues affecting implementation of actions also be captured in the reports. The study recommends that at this stage, the quality of the report should also be assessed in terms of the attributes that support use and influence. The nature of the report presentation,

language use and analysis are considered key in influencing the use of APRM reports. Other attributes advanced in Mark and Henry's (2004) framework include responsiveness, credibility, communication, timeliness and sophistication. Therefore, to enhance use and influence of the APRM requires not only production of high-quality reports, but also ensuring that they are aligned to the national development priorities. For example, findings indicate that the insights from the APRM reports, backed by quality evidence convinced the President and he changed his long-time position that a big population as synonymous with a big market to focusing on the quality of the population with reasonable purchasing power. The APRM however is also called upon to engage in more activities throughout the year, as opposed to simply focusing on producing annual progress reports from monitoring the implementation of the actions recommended in the NPoA (KII-S 2023:5). This will go a long way towards ensuring continued awareness and participation among the population, while increasing opportunities for use of APRM data.

(a) Balanced reporting of progress on NPoA implementation with emerging issues

Findings revealed that in monitoring the NPoA implementation, the reporting system fails to strike a balance between new or emerging issues with tracking those previously reported in the CSAR and the CRR. Participants insisted that the NGC needs an analytical arm to analyse emerging issues and publish them in the form of emerging policy papers to form a basis for discussing what is working and what doesn't seem to work (KII-TRI 2023:18). Such policy papers and reports on emerging issues should also be included to constitute part of the agenda presented to the Focal Point Person and cabinet (KII-S 2023:17). This gives stakeholders and the wider public more confidence that the issues affecting them are captured and government is being more responsive. Furthermore, balanced reporting should involve focusing on all of the thematic areas equally, instead of emphasising some at the expense of others.

Findings indicate that some participants felt that APRM reporting puts too much emphasis on political governance, based on the assumption that it is the one which creates an enabling environment for socio-economic transformation (KII-TRI 2023:17). It is therefore recommended that priority should equally be given to service

delivery areas that directly affect the lives of the citizens on a daily basis. This is likely to motivate more stakeholders into sustainable participation as the APRM reports will be perceived to be responsive to their immediate needs. There is also a need to establish a mechanism where NGC representatives and other participating stakeholders can mobilise their constituents, regularly interact and report back on government's position in response to the issues raised (IDI-NGC 2023:20). Without such a strategy for stakeholder engagement in the APRM system, stakeholder motivation to participate keeps declining, leaving the review process in the control of government and its MDAs.

(b) Government engagement with the entire body politic in the APRM system

Government should ensure a conducive policy environment for continuous engagement with the entire body politic in the country's governance, such as the parliament, the executive, political parties and CSOs among other actors. The legislation governing NGOs in the country should be relaxed from the restricted civil space where non-state actors involved in advocacy work are perceived to be in opposition to government. The current NGO Administration Act establishes harsh requirements for their operations, making it hard for independent NGOs to effectively mobilise themselves and the citizens, but also to engage government. Findings show that in the early stages of APRM operations, government used to be very committed to responding to governance concerns raised by the NGC and the CSOs.

However, over time, upon realising that the mechanism was such a powerful tool for political accountability, and raising politically sensitive questions on issues like restoring presidential term limits, and calling for transitional government, among others, this constructive engagement was scaled down. It is argued that this may explain why government did not make much effort to establish a legal framework through parliament to empower the APRM structures (KII-TRI 2023:18). In addition, the NGC lacks a framework for mobilising and giving feedback to their constituencies. This was also worsened by introducing more restrictive legislation on the operations of CSOs that further weakened the government-CSO engagements where APRM reports would be used for improving governance and public policy.

Related to the above, there is a need to harmonise the reporting methodology with the government first, to avoid direct rejections leading to non-use of APRM data. Maloka (2019:4) indicates that this stage is concluded with the CRR and the NPoA presented to the Heads of State and Governments for consideration and adoption by the APR Forum. To further enhance use and influence of APRM reports, the preparation of government response should be presented to the President's Office to avoid the President questioning its methodology and content at the APR Forum. For example, during the second peer review, when the President was not happy with the report content given to him, he instead questioned the methodology used to generate it (IDI-NGC 20223:20). Despite the involvement of the cabinet sub-committee, the President had not been involved in any prior consultations, which could translate into non-use. There is a need for balancing between objective reporting and diplomacy as a way of motivating the government to keep improving. Failure to harmonise and capture the President's sentiments may negatively affect use resulting in non-use or symbolic use to justify pre-determined political decisions.

(c) Report submission

The fourth stage starts with the submission of the Country Review Report, its recommendations to the APR Forum, and the preliminary NPoA to the APRM Continental Secretariat. The documents are then peer reviewed by the APRM Panel of Eminent Persons. At that point, the APRM Base Document (2003:18) provides that the Continental Secretariat compiles all the necessary information on the country's governance situation in the form of a background document, for the purposes of comparative analysis awaiting review by the APR Forum.

However, some participants explained non-use of APRM recommendations arguing that some issues may be captured in the report, but are not implementable in a practical sense. This is sometimes attributed to prejudice of the review team or inadequate consultations of relevant stakeholders. In addition, the report sometimes does not indicate practical proposals on how to go about the implementation (IDI-NGC 2023:20). An example was the proposal to reduce the size of parliament without indicating more viable ways of doing it, which leaves the issues persisting without any action that would be used as a basis for demanding government response (KII-TRI 2023:18). It is this lack of an action point which creates a sense of discontent among the stakeholders and is an indicator of non-use.

7.4.8 Publication of the costed NPoA with CRR recommendations

The fifth stage involves the publication/dissemination of the final country review report together with a detailed NPoA. The final report, which contains all of the necessary elements, the CRR and the proceedings from the APRM Forum's peer review discussions is formally tabled and made public (APRM Base Document 2003:18-25). At this stage, post evaluation should begin with the NGC ensuring that the findings are well disseminated, especially to all potential primary users in the country as well.

(a) Effective dissemination for enhanced stakeholder awareness and use

There is a need to ensure effective dissemination of the reports beyond the NPA website, and external sub-regional and regional structures, but also to prioritise non-state actors within the country as potential users. According to Maloka (2019:4), this publication is shared widely with the major regional structures which may include: the summit of the African Union, the Pan-African Parliament, the African Commission on Human and People's rights, the Social and Economic Council (ECOSOC), as well as the Peace and Security Council of the African Union. The same report is also shared with the Regional Economic Community to which the reviewed country belongs as a member (APRM Base Document 2003:18-25). Therefore, it is recommended that disseminating to CSOs is also emphasised, since they can promote use when they pick up APRM recommendations, question government and hold it accountable on behalf of the ordinary citizens (KII-S 2023:4). The CSO advocacy work contributes to formulation and assessment of the performance of national policies. This helps to reinforce implementation of the NDP, where similar content is reported (KII-S 2023:9).

7.4.9 Incorporation of the final NPoA into the NDP

Finally, the reviewed country is expected to modify its NPoA and annually report its progress registered towards implementation of the NPoA in preparation for the subsequent reviews. There is the integration of CRM recommendations, costing and publication of the final NPoA, and finally incorporation of the final NPoA into the NDP and National Budget. The country progress reporting reflects the new policies designed and reforms conducted in the reviewed member state.

(a) Reliable funding and coordination among government structures

Adequate financial and technical resources must be mobilised to cover all of the years of the NPoA implementation. While the NGC with support from the NPA must follow up to ensure that the final report is effectively disseminated to all potential users, MDA improvement plans are developed, reporting by departments on implementation progress and its enforcement, through a well institutionalised accountability mechanism. The political will from government must be demonstrated by releasing the projected allocations to the NPA, but also the MDAs to implement their work plans in which APRM recommendations have been integrated.

(b) Institutionalisation of monitoring and accountability mechanisms for MDAs

As part of institutionalisation, since funding of MDAs from the government is received through the budgets, there is a need for clear guidelines on integration of APRM recommendations into the planning framework. For example, the Budget Call Circular (BCS) with detailed guidelines and instructions requests MDAs to submit their revenue and expenditure for the following financial year consistent with priorities set out in the APRM reports (IDI-NGC 2023:11). Such institutionalisation must not be limited to the central government, but also extended to the local government. The purpose is to ensure the use of APRM recommendations by aligning them to government priorities in the National Development Plan.

7.5 AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This study is significant in contributing towards improved and sustained performance of the APRM in undertaking its assessment mandate towards the realisation of the AU Agenda 2063. It also observes that, while a number of researchable issues regarding the use and influence of the APRM system were addressed in this thesis, certain areas could not be researched comprehensively and are recommended for future investigation as discussed below.

In assessing the influence of APRM evaluation on a country's public policies, the principles of the mechanism as a Made in Africa Evaluation (MAE) approach were

highlighted, without exploring the details. This study recommends a detailed investigation to establish the extent to which African perspectives and practices are reflected in the APRM implementation with this proposed framework. Furthermore, this investigation did not go into the details of examining the politics of evaluation that arise in the APRM implementation as a result of multiple stakeholders' interests. It would be very useful to analyse how politics is manifested in the commissioning of the peer review, the implementation, the reporting and its implications on the use and influence of APRM data.

Finally, in analysis of the data, this study adopted a thematic analysis technique in which the themes were deductively identified from the already existing literature of evaluation influence. It started by investigating the APRM's influence on public policy in general and then narrowed down to the refugee policy framework. This thesis suggests that further research could take a different approach by focusing on specific policy or sector cases from the beginning to generate more in-depth understanding. A comparative analysis of cases within or across country contexts may also be considered. In doing so, an inductive approach will go a long way towards identifying emerging themes from the empirical data to identify specific factors influencing use in the cases under investigation.

7.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter focused on responding to the central question that this study sought to answer: How can the APRM's evaluation system be improved to positively influence public policy among AU member states? Informed by the empirical findings, the study adopted a mechanism-based approach, to present possible solutions in the form of an adapted framework and recommendations to address the shortcomings within the APRM system. The chapter was made up of three major sections. The first section analysed the strategies for enhancing the APRM evaluation influence as informed by the empirical data. The main recommendations were presented as: (a) enforcing guidelines for ensuring an inclusive peer review throughout the process, (b) aligning evaluation activities with government systems in MDAs, and (c) effective dissemination of APRM reports to clearly identified primary users in their order of strategic importance.

Furthermore, the section presented the detailed explanations for enabling factors in each of the elements identified in the APRM evaluation system covering the inputs, activities, outputs and the mechanisms through which the different types of use occur. The chapter also discussed a proposed framework by combining insights from three theoretical frameworks explained in Chapter Three. These included Mark and Henrys' (2004) schematic framework of evaluation influence, Freeman's (1984) stakeholder theory and Easton's (1952) political systems' theory. The chapter also presented a workable framework towards improving the use and influence of the APRM, highlighting the key stages recommended to enhance the mechanisms' use and influence. It concluded by indicating that while evaluation use is predominantly symbolic, integration of the identified strategies can result in progressive changes from non-use, to conceptual use, to symbolic use and finally to the desired instrumental use.

In conclusion, the findings also revealed the reforms in the case of the refugee policy framework as a best practice, can to a lesser extent be attributed solely to the APRM evaluation system. The study observes that while the policy issue of managing refugees has a role to play, the APRM evaluation system has demonstrated potential to cause policy changes in perfect combination with other factors and actors as reflected in the proposed framework. As a Pan-African initiative, the APRM largely provides a suitable platform for countries to show case their best practices as a means of motivating learning from member states faced with similar challenges like the refugee crisis. Besides, in the absence of a mechanism for sanctioning non-compliant member states, the proposed framework provides inbuilt safeguards if adopted will go along way in promoting the accountability function of evaluation, which has largely been relegated to the periphery.

In the general context of Uganda's first-and second-generation review, the evidence indicates well as the APRM first National Plan of Action (NPoA) was among the 23 core studies that directly informed the formulation of Uganda's initial National Development Plan (NDP I), its influence is declining to show casing best practices, with increasing, symbolic use but also mis-use of APRM recommendations. This is attributed to inadequate financial and technical capacity inputs, lack of a well-

domesticated legal framework supporting APRM structures and activities, stakeholders without a well-established culture of evaluations and a political context that allows selective use of evaluations in national policies. In the proposed framework, the study recommends inclusive participation in evaluation input, activities aligned with government plans; institutionalising government wide reporting on NPoA implementation and establish a well-domesticated legal framework. Therefore, in response to the call for empirical case studies of evaluation influence, this study intended to contribute to the decolonising agenda in policy evaluation research. It aimed at promoting home-grown indigenous knowledge system, by focusing on developing a framework for enhancing the APRM as a catalyst towards the realisation of Africa's master plan, the AU Agenda 2063.

7.7 LIST OF REFERENCES

- African Union and NEPAD. 2003. *Guidelines for Countries to Prepare for and to Participate in the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM)*. Available at: <https://www.aprm-au.org/home> (Accessed on 23 June 2020).
- African Union Commission. 2015. *Agenda 2063: The Africa we want*. Available at: <https://www.un.org/home> (Accessed on 12 May 2020).
- African Union. 2000. *The Constitutive Act of the African Union*. Available online <https://au.int/en/constitutive>- Act. (Accessed on 4th March 2021).
- African Union (AU). 2007. *African Charter on Democracy, Elections, and Good Governance*. Accessible online: African Union Common Repository [http://archives.au.intAfricanUnionCommission-](http://archives.au.intAfricanUnionCommission-Agreements/Charters/Manifestos/Protocols and Treaties) Agreements/Charters/Manifestos/Protocols and Treaties.
- Ahimbisibwe, F. 2020. The 2006 Refugees Act in Uganda: Between Law and Practice. *Institute of Development Policy Working paper*. Available at <https://medialibrary.uantwerpen.be/oldcontent/container2673/files/Publications/WP/2020/wp-202002.pdf>. (Accessed on 12 February 2023).
- Anney, B. 2014. Ensuring the Quality of the Findings of Qualitative Research: Looking at the Trustworthiness Criteria. *Journal of Emerging Trends in Educational Research and the Policy Studies (JETERAPS)*, (5): 272-281.
- Alkin, M. and Taut, S. 2003. Unbundling Evaluation Use. *Studies in Educational Evaluation*, 29(1):1-12.
- Alkin, M.C. 2012. *Evaluation roots: A wider perspective of theorists' views and influences*. Sage Publications.
- Alkin, M.C. and King, J.A. 2016. The historical development of evaluation use. *American Journal of Evaluation*, 37(4):568-579.
- Alkin, M.C. and King, J.A. 2017. Definitions of evaluation use and misuse, evaluation influence, and factors affecting use. *American Journal of Evaluation*, 38(3):434-450.
- Anderson James, E. 1984. *Public Policy Making: An Introduction*. Boston.
- Appleton-Dyer, S., Clinton, J., Carswell, P. and McNeill, R. 2012. Understanding evaluation influence within public sector partnerships: a conceptual model. *American Journal of Evaluation*, 33(4):532-546.
- APRM. 2003. *Memorandum of Understanding on the African Peer Review Mechanism, 6th Summit of the NEPAD Heads of State and Government*

- Implementation Committee*. Abuja, Nigeria. Available at: Available at: <https://www.aprm-au.org/wp-content>. (Accessed on 20 July 2020).
- APRM. 2003. *Base Document*. Available at: Available at: <https://www.aprm-au.org/wpcontent>. (Accessed on 18 May 2020).
- APRM. 2016. *Statute of the African Peer Review Mechanism*. Available at: Available at: <https://www.aprm-au.org/wp-content>. (Accessed on 13 June 2020).
- APRM Secretariat. 2016. *Strategic Plan 2016-2020*. Available online at: <https://www.aprm-au.org/publications>. (Accessed on 13 April 2021).
- APRM Secretariat. 2012. *Revised Self-Assessment Questionnaire for the African Peer Review Mechanism*. Available at: Available at: <https://www.aprm-au.org/wp-content>. (Accessed on 13 April 2021).
- PRM. 2017. *Uganda Country Self-Assessment Report 2017*. Available at: <https://wwwAPRM2018> Second Country Review Report-Uganda. (Accessed on 10 April 2020).
- APRM. 2019. *Africa Governance Report 2019*. Available at: <https://www.aprm-au.org/wp-content> (Accessed on 22September2020).
- APRM. 2017. *Guidelines for National - level Monitoring and Reporting on the implementation of the APRM National Programmes of Action*. Available at: <https://www.aprm-au.org/wp-content> (Accessed on 2 June 2020).
- APRM. 2018. *Workshop for the Consultative Committee of National Governing Councils/National Governing Commissions (NGCs)*. Available at: <https://www.aprm-au.org/wp-content>. (Accessed on 27 May 2020).
- Ashatu, H. 2009. The use of triangulation in social science research: can qualitative and quantitative research combine. *Journal of comparative social work*, 4(17): 1-12.
- Astbury, B. and Leeuw, F.L. 2010. Unpacking black boxes: mechanisms and theory building in evaluation. *American journal of evaluation*, 31(3):363-381.
- Babbie, E. & Mouton, J. 2011. *The practice of social research*. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.
- Basheka, B.C. and Byamugisha, A.K. 2015. The state of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) as a discipline in Africa: From infancy to adulthood? *African Journal of Public Affairs*, 1:45-61.
- Bellagio Report. 2013. *African thought leader's forum on evaluation and development: Expanding leadership in Africa*. The Bellagio Report.

- Bernard, H.R. (2013). *Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches* (2nd ed). Los Angeles, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Benington, J. and Moore, M.H. 2010. *Public value: Theory and practice*. Macmillan International Higher Education.
- Betts, A., Bloom, L., Kaplan, J. and Omata, N. 2014. *Refugee economies: rethinking popular assumptions*. Humanitarian Innovation Project, University of Oxford. Oxford. Saatavilla: <http://www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/refugeeeconomies>. Luettu, 25, p.2015.
- Betts, A., Bloom, L., Kaplan, J.D. and Omata, N. 2017. *Refugee economies: Forced displacement and development*. Oxford University Press.
- Betts, A. 2021. Refugees and Patronage: A Political History of Uganda's 'Progressive' Refugee Policies. *African Affairs*, 243–276.
- Birkland, T.A. 2019. *An introduction to the policy process: Theories, concepts, and models of public policy making*. Routledge.
- Bryman, A. 2016. *Social research methods*. Oxford university press.
- Brynard, D.J., Dassah, M.O., Thornhill, C., Van Dijk, G. and Ile, I. 2015. *Public Administration and Management in South Africa: A Developmental Perspective*. Cape Town: Oxford University Press Southern Africa (Pty) Ltd.
- Bryson, J., Sancino, A., Benington, J. and Sørensen, E. 2017. Towards a multi-actor theory of public value co-creation. *Public Management Review*, 19:640-654.
- Bryson, J.M. 2004. What to do when stakeholders matter: stakeholder identification and analysis techniques. *Public management Review*, (6):21-53.
- Bryson, J.M. and Patton, M.Q. 2010. *Analyzing and engaging stakeholders*. *Handbook of practical program evaluation*. (3):30-54.
- Bovaird, T. and Löffler, E. eds. 2015. *Public management and governance*. Routledge.
- Bourgeois, I. and Cousins, J.B. 2013. Understanding dimensions of organizational evaluation capacity. *American Journal of Evaluation*, 34(3):299-319.
- Cairney, P. 2016. *The politics of evidence-based policy making*. [SI]: Springer.
- Caplan, N. 1979. The two-communities theory and knowledge utilization. *American behavioural scientist*, 22(3):459-470.
- Chen, H.T. and Chen, H.T. 2005. *Practical program evaluation: Assessing and improving planning, implementation, and effectiveness*. London: Sage.
- Chilisa, B. 2012. *Postcolonial indigenous research paradigms. Indigenous research methodologies*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

- Chilisa, B. 2015. *A Synthesis Paper on the Made in Africa Evaluation Concept Commissioned*. African Evaluation Association (AfrEA).
- Chilisa, B., Major, T.E., Gaotlhobogwe, M. and Mokgolodi, H. 2015. Decolonizing and indigenizing evaluation practice in Africa: toward African relational evaluation approaches. *Canadian Journal of Program Evaluation*, 30(3).
- Chikwanha, A.B. 2007. The APRM: A case study in democratic institution building? *Institute for Security Studies Papers*, 2007(151):1.
- Cresswell, J.W. 2002. *Research design: qualitative and mixed-method approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Traditions.
- Creswell, J.W. 2013. *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Approaches: Choosing among Five*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Traditions.
- Creswell, J.W. and Creswell, J.D. 2017. *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. London: Sage Publications.
- Critensen, B.L., Johnson, R.B. and Turner, L.A. 2015. *Research methods, design and analysis* (12th Edt.). Harlow: Pearson Education Limited.
- Christie, C.A. 2007. Reported influence of evaluation data on decision makers'actions: An empirical examination. *American Journal of Evaluation*, 28(1):8-25
- Flick, U. 2018. *Designing qualitative research*. Sage. 28(1):8-25.
- Christie, C.A. and Alkin, M.C. 2013. *An evaluation theory tree. Evaluation roots: A wider perspective of theorists'views and influences*, pp.11-57.
- Cloete, F., Rabie, B. and De Coning, C. eds. 2014. *Evaluation Management in South Africa and Africa*. African Sun Media.
- Cloete, F. 2016. *Developing an Africa-rooted programme evaluation approach*.
- Cousins, J.B. and Leithwood, K.A., 1986. Current empirical research on evaluation utilization. *Review of educational research*, 56(3):331-364.
- Cousins, J.B. 2004. Commentary: Minimizing evaluation misuse as principled practice. *American Journal of Evaluation*, 25(3):391-397.
- Cousins, J.B. and Leithwood, K.A. 1986. Current empirical research on evaluation utilization. *Review of educational research*, 56(3):331-364.
- Dahler-Larsen, P. 2011. *The evaluation society*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Denzin, N.K. and Lincoln, Y.S. eds. 2011. *The Sage handbook of qualitative research*. London: Sage.

- Dryden-Peterson, S. and Hovil, L. 2004. A remaining hope for durable solutions: Local integration of refugees and their hosts in the case of Uganda. *Refuge: Canada's Journal on Refugees*:26-38.
- Dye, T.R. 2013. *Understanding public policy: Pearson new international edition*. Pearson Higher Ed.
- Easton, D. 1965. *A Framework for Political Analysis*. Englewood Cliffs, HJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Economic Commission for Africa. 2011. *Progress Report on the implementation of the African Peer Review Mechanism*. Addis Ababa Available on <https://repository.uneca.org/handle/10855/25997>. (Accessed on 2 March 2021).
- Edmondson, A.C. and Mcmanus, S.E. 2007. Methodological fit in management field research. *Academy of management review*, 32:1246-1264.
- Enserink, B., Koppenjan, J.F. and Mayer, I.S. 2013. A policy sciences view on policy analysis. In *Public policy analysis*:11-40. Springer, Boston, MA.
- Fischer, F. 2003. *Reframing Public Policy: Discursive Politics and Deliberative Practices*. OUP Oxford.
- Flak, L.S. and Rose, J. 2005. *Stakeholder governance: Adapting stakeholder theory to e-government*. *Communications of the Association for Information Systems*, 16, 31.
- Flick, U. 2018. *Designing qualitative research*. [SI]: Sage.
- Flick, U. 2014. *An Introduction to Qualitative Research*. 5th Edition, London: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Frank, A. 2018. *The 2006 Refugees Act at 15 in Uganda: An Appraisal*. -19 ISIL YB Int'l Human. & Refugee L., 18:220.
- Freeman, R.E. 1984. *Strategic management: A stakeholder approach*. Pitman, Boston.
- Freeman, R.E. 2010. *Strategic management: A stakeholder approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Friedman, A.L. and Miles, S. 2002. Developing stakeholder theory. *Journal of management studies*, 39:1-21.
- Friese, S. 2019. *Qualitative data analysis with ATLAS.ti*. SAGE Publications Limited.
- Gaotlhobogwe, M., Major, T.E., Koloi-Keaikitse, S. & Chilisa, B. 2018. *Conceptualizing evaluation in African contexts*. *New Directions for Evaluation*, pp 47-62.

- Gaille, B. 2018. *Case Study Method Advantages and Disadvantages*. Retrieved November 25, 2021, from <https://brandongaille.com/12-case-study-method-advantages-and-disadvantages/>
- Gerring, J. 2016. *Selecting Cases for Intensive Analysis: A diversity of goals and methods*. SAGE, 45(3). doi: 10.1177/0049124116631692.
- Gerring, J. 2008. The mechanistic worldview: Thinking inside the box. *British journal of political science*:161-179.
- Geva-May, I. and Pal, L.A. 1999. *Good fences make good neighbors: policy evaluation and policy analysis—exploring the differences*. *Evaluation*, 5(3): 259-277.
- Goffin, K., Åhlström, P., Bianchi, M. and Richtner, A. 2019. Perspective: State-of-the-art: The quality of case study research in innovation management. *Journal of Product Innovation Management*, 36:586-615.
- Gough, H. 2020. *Qualitative vs Quantitative Research: What is it and when should you use it?* Retrieved November 3, 2021, from <https://www.qualtrics.com/blog/qualitative-research/>
- Government of Uganda, United Nations & UNHCR. 2017. *Uganda Solidarity Summit on Refugees: Translating New York Declaration Commitments into Action*, June 22-23.
- Greene, J.C. 2005. *Stakeholders*. *Encyclopedia of evaluation*, :397-398.
- Grimm, S., Nawrath, K., Roth, R., Triebel, S. and Utz, B. 2009. *The African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) as a tool to improve governance? Experience in Ghana*.
- Gris Legorreta, P.C. 2015. *The Hidden Politics of Evaluation: Towards a Smarter State?* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Sheffield).
- Grix, J. 2018. *The foundations of research*. Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Groeneveld, S., Tummers, L., Bronkhorst, B., Ashikali, T. and van Thiel, S. 2015. Quantitative methods in public administration: Their use and development through time. *International Public Management Journal*, 18:61-86.
- Gruzd, S. 2009. *The African Peer Review Mechanism: assessing origins, institutional relations and achievements*. SAAIA Occasional Paper No. 29, April 2009. South Africa: SAAIA.
- Hansen, R. 2018. The comprehensive refugee response framework: A commentary. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 31(2):131-151.
- Head, B.W. 2008. Three lenses of evidence-based policy. *Australian Journal of Public Administration*, 67(1):1-11.

- Hennink, M. 2022. *Sample sizes for saturation in qualitative research: A systematic review of empirical tests*. Elsevier, 292. Retrieved June 13, 2022, from <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0277953621008558>
- Herbert, R. and Gruzdz, S. 2008. *African Peer Review Mechanism: Lessons from the Pioneers*. South Africa, SAIIA.
- Herbert, J.L. 2014. Researching evaluation influence: A review of the literature. *Evaluation Review*, 38:388-419.
- Højlund, S. 2014. *Evaluation use in evaluation systems—the case of the European Commission*. *Evaluation*, 20:428-446.
- Holvoet, N., Gildemyn, M. & Inberg, L. 2012. Taking stock of monitoring and evaluation arrangements in the context of poverty reduction strategy papers: evidence from 20 aid-dependent countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. *Development Policy Review*, 30:749-772.
- Hoppe, R. and Colebatch, H. 2016. The role of theories in policy studies and policy work: selective affinities between representation and performance? *European policy analysis*, 2:121-149.
- Hovil, L. 2007. Self-settled refugees in Uganda: An alternative approach to displacement? *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 20(4):599-620.
- Hovil, L. 2018. Uganda's refugee policies: The history, the politics, the way forward. *International Refugee Rights Initiative*.
- Hutahaeen, M. 2016. The Importance of Stakeholders Approach in Public Policy Making. *International Conference on Ethics in Governance Atlantis Press*. (ICONEG 2016) :462-466.
- Jacobsen, K. 2006. Refugees and asylum seekers in urban areas: a livelihoods perspective. *Journal of refugee studies*, 19(3): 273-286.
- Johnson, K., Greenesid, L.O., Toal, S.A., King, J.A., Lawrenz, F. and Volkov, B. 2009. Research on evaluation use: A review of the empirical literature from 1986 to 2005. *American Journal of Evaluation*, 30:377-410.
- Kagame, P. 2017. *Decision on the Institutional Reform of the African Union Assembly*. (606 :XXVII).
- Kaiser, T. 2005. *Participating in Development? Refugee protection, politics and developmental approaches to refugee management in Uganda*. *Third World Quarterly*, 26(2):351-367.

- Kekeya, J. 2016. *Analysing qualitative data using an iterative process*. Contemporary PNG Studies, 24:86-94.
- Kigali. 2006. *Implementing the African Peer Review Mechanism: Challenges and Opportunities*. Report of the Sixth Africa Governance Forum (AGF-VI), Kigali, 9-1.
- Kirkhart, K.E., 2000. *Reconceptualizing evaluation use: An integrated theory of influence*. New directions for evaluation, 2000(88):5-23.
- Khupe, C. 2014. *Indigenous knowledge and school science: Possibilities for integration*. University of the Witwatersrand, Faculty of Science, School of Science Education.
- Kura, S.Y.B. 2012. *Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches to the Study of Poverty: Taming the Tensions and Appreciating the Complementarities*. Qualitative Report, 17:34.
- Kuye, J.O. and Tshiyoyo, M.M. 2015. *The journey toward forgiveness: a case of reconciliation and strategic governance in Burundi and the Great Lakes Region of Africa: Recent leadership developments and policy decision-making*.
- Kumar, R. 2011. *Research Methodology: A Step-by-Step Guide for Beginners*. 3rd Edition. New Delhi: Sage.
- Lasswell, H.D. 1951. The immediate future of research policy and method in political science. *The American Political Science Review*, 45(1):133-142.
- Leavy, P. 2022. *Research design: Quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods, arts-based, and community-based participatory research approaches*. Guilford Publications.
- Leedy, P.D. and Ormrod, J.E. 2014. *Practical Research: Planning and Design (10th ed.)*. Edinburgh Gate: Pearson Education.
- Leeuw, F.L. and Furubo, J.E. 2008. Evaluation systems: What are they and why study them? *Evaluation*, 14:157-169.
- Lemire, S., Peck, L.R. and Porowski, A. 2020. The Growth of the Evaluation Tree in the Policy Analysis Forest: Recent Developments in Evaluation. *Policy Studies Journal*, 48:S47S70.
- Lemire, S., Kwako, A., Nielsen, S.B., Christie, C.A., Donaldson, S.I. and Leeuw, F.L. 2020. What is this thing called a mechanism? Findings from a review of realist evaluations. *New Directions for Evaluation*, 2020(167):73-86.
- Levers, M.J.D. 2013. *Philosophical paradigms, grounded theory, and perspectives on emergence*. Sage Open, 3(4), p.2158244013517243.

- Leviton, L.C. and Hughes, E.F. 1981. Research on the utilization of evaluations: A review and synthesis. *Evaluation review*, 5(4):525-548.
- Lincoln Y.S and Guba, E.G. 1985. *Naturalistic inquiry*. London: Sage.
- Mack, L. 2010. *The philosophical underpinnings of educational research*.
- Mangu, A.M. 2014. The African Union and the promotion of democracy and good political governance under the African Peer-Review Mechanism: 10 years on. *Africa Review*, 6:59-72.
- Mark, M.M. 2011. Toward better research on—and thinking about—evaluation influence, especially in multisite evaluations. *New Directions for Evaluation*, (129):107-119.
- Mark, M.M. and Henry, G.T. 2004. The mechanisms and outcomes of evaluation influence. *Evaluation*, 10(1):35-57.
- Martinaitis, Ž., Christenko, A. and Kraučiušienė, L. 2019. Evaluation systems: How do they frame, generate and use evidence?. *Evaluation*, 25(1):46-61.
- Matlosa, K. 2008. *The Feasibility of a Union Government and a United States of Africa: Dilemmas of Political Integration and Democratisation*. *African Politics: Beyond the Third Wave of Democratisation*:9-32.
- Maxwell, J.A. 2012. *Qualitative research design: An interactive approach* (Vol. 41). London: Sage Publications.
- McLeod, S. 2019. *Case Study Method*. Retrieved July 10, 2022, from <https://www.simplypsychology.org/case-study.html>.
- Meyer, S. 2006. *The refugee aid and development approach in Uganda: empowerment and self-reliance of refugees in practice*. Research paper No. 31, University of Oxford available at <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/242187022> (accessed 16 February 2023)
- Milner, J. 2009. *Refugees, the state and the politics of asylum in Africa*. London: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Mofolo, M., Mkuyane, L. and Skade, T. 2014. Actions and behaviours essential for monitoring & evaluation to succeed in South African public service. *Africa's Public Service Delivery & Performance Review*, 2(3):5-24.
- Moloi, K.C. 2016. *An African narrative: The journey of an indigenous social researcher in South Africa*. *Indigenous pathways into social research: Voices of a new generation*, 101-122.

- Mugenda, O. & Mugenda, A. 2003. *Research methods: Quantitative and Qualitative methods*. Nairobi, Kenya.
- Mulyaningrum, M., Kartodihardjo, H., Jaya, I.N.S. and Nugroho, B. 2013. Stakeholders Analysis of Policy-Making Process: The Case of Timber Legality Policy on Private Forest. *Jurnal Manajemen Hutan Tropika*, 19(2):156-162.
- Muwanga-Zake, J.W. 2009. Building bridges across knowledge systems: Ubuntu and participative research paradigms in Bantu communities. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, 30:413-426.
- New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). 2003. *Memorandum of Understanding on the African Peer Review Mechanism, 6th Summit of the NEPAD Heads of State and Government implementation Committee*, Abuja, Nigeria. <https://www.aprm-au.org> (Accessed on 23 June 2020).
- New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). 2003. *Declaration on Democracy, Political, Economic and Corporate Governance, 6th Summit of the NEPAD. Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee*. Abuja, Nigeria. <https://www.aprm-au.org> (Accessed on 17 August 2020).
- Nutley, S. 2003. Bridging the policy-research divide: reflections and lessons from the United Kingdom. *Canberra Bulletin of Public Administration*, (108):19-28.
- Nutley, S.M., Nutley, S., Walter, I. and Davies, H.T. 2007. *Using evidence: How research can inform public services*. Policy press.
- OHCHR. 2016. *The New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants*. Retrieved September 9, 2022, from <https://www.ohchr.org/en/migration/new-york-declaration-refugees-and-migrants>
- Oliver, M. and Connoy, L. 2017. *Humanitarian assistance, refugee management, and self-reliance schemes: Nakivale refugee settlement 1*. Transnational Social Policy: Routledge: 152-77.
- Oliver, M. and Ilcan, S. 2018. The politics of protection: the right to food in protracted refugee situations. *Refugee Survey Quarterly*, 37(4):440-457.
- Onwuegbuzie, A.J. and Leech, N.L. 2007. Sampling designs in qualitative research: Making the sampling process more public. *Qualitative Report*, 12(2):238-254.
- Oso, W.Y. and Onen, D. 2008. *A General Guide Line to Writing Research Proposal and Report. A Handbook for the Beginning Researchers*. Makerere University, Kampala.

- Owen, G.T. 2014. Qualitative methods in higher education policy analysis: Using interviews and document analysis. *The qualitative report*, 19(26):1-19.
- Patton, M.Q. 2008. *Utilization-focused evaluation*. London: Sage Publications.
- Patton, M.Q. 2015. A transcultural global systems perspective: In search of blue marble evaluators. *Canadian Journal of Program Evaluation*, 30.
- Pawson, R. 2006. *Evidence-based policy: a realist perspective*. London: Sage.
- Pawson, R. 2013. *The science of evaluation: a realist manifesto*. London: Sage.
- Peck, L.R. and Gorzalski, L.M. 2009. An evaluation use framework and empirical assessment. *Journal of MultiDisciplinary Evaluation*, 6(12):139-156.
- Petlane, T. and Gruzd, S. eds. 2011. *African solutions: best practices from the African Peer Review Mechanism*. Jacana Media.
- Pienaar, J. 2010. Ethics in economic and management sciences: A researcher's resource. *South African Journal of Economic and Management Sciences*, 13:177-189.
- Porter, S. and Goldman, I. 2013. A growing demand for monitoring and evaluation in Africa. *African Evaluation Journal*, (1):9.
- Purshottama, S., Reddy, P.S. and Govender, J. 2014. In Thornhill, C., Ile, I. and Van Dijk, G. eds., 2014. *Public Administration & Management in South Africa: An Introduction*. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.
- RLP. 2006. Critique of the Refugee Act. Available at https://www.refugeelawproject.org/files/legal_resources/RefugeesActRLPCritique.pdf
- Rebuild. 2022. *Analysis and Evaluation of Refugee-Related Policies and Legislation: Uganda/Kenya*.
- Rogers, P.J. and Weiss, C.H. 2007. Theory-based evaluation: Reflections ten years on. *New directions for evaluation*, 114(2):63-67.
- Rutgers, M. 2010. Theory and scope of public administration: An introduction to the study's epistemology. *Public Administration Review*, 1-45.
- Sabatier, P.A. 2007. *Fostering the development of policy theory. Theories of the policy process*, 2:321-336.
- SAGE. 2020. *Key Informant Interviews*. Retrieved July 15, 2022, from <https://methods.sagepub.com/methods-map/key-informant-interviews>
- Saldaña, J. 2021. *The coding manual for qualitative researchers. The coding manual for qualitative researchers*:1-440.

- Sebba, R.K. and Zanker, F. 2022. *Political Stakes of Refugee Protection in Uganda*. Available at https://www.arnoldbergstraesser.de/sites/default/files/political_stakes_of_refugee_protection_in_uganda_sebba_zanker.pdf
- Bunawaree, S. 2007. *The African Peer Review Mechanism in Mauritius: Lessons for Phase 1 Africa Governance Monitoring and Advocacy Project (AfriMAP)*.
- Scriven, M. 2019. The checklist imperative. *New Directions for Evaluation*, 2019(163):49-60.
- Sharpe, M. and Namusobya, S. 2012. Refugee Status Determination and the Rights of Recognized Refugees under Uganda's Refugees Act 2006. *International Journal of Refugee law*, 24(3):561-578.
- Schiltz, J. and Titeca, K. 2017. *Is Uganda really a 'refugee paradise'?* Aljazeera, Available at: <https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2017/07/uganda-refugee-paradise-170726133024156>. (Accessed on 22 March 2021).
- Shulha, L.M. and Cousins, J.B. 1997. Evaluation use: Theory, research, and practice since 1986. *Evaluation practice*, 18(3):195-208.
- Sileyew, K. 2019. *Research Design and Methodology*. <https://www.intechopen.com/online-research-design-and-methodology> (Accessed on 15 January 2022).
- Stacey, A. and Stacey, J. 2012. *Research ethics for sustainable development*.
- Streicher, J. 2017. Evaluations, Actors and Institutions. The Case of Research, Technology and Innovation Policy in Austria. *Unpublished Doctoral dissertation*, Vienna: WU Vienna University of Economics and Business.
- Strojny, J. and Jedrusik, A. 2018. *Stakeholder analysis during a reorganization project in local government institutions—key methodological aspects*. 372-381.
- Stone, D. 2002. *Policy paradox: The art of political decision making*. New York: W.
- Tekin, A.K. and Kotaman, H. 2013. The epistemological perspectives on action research. *Journal of Educational and Social Research*, 3(1):81-81.
- Thomas, D.R. 2006. A general inductive approach for analyzing qualitative evaluation data. *American journal of evaluation*, 27(2), .237-246.
- Republic of Uganda. 1995. *The Constitution of the Republic of Uganda*. Kampala.
- The Refugees Act. 2006. *The Government of Uganda*. Available at: <https://www.refworld.org/pdfid/4b7baba52.pdf>. (Accessed on 23 April 2022).

- The Refugee Regulations. 2010. *The Government of Uganda*. Available at: <https://www.refworld.org/docid/544e4f154.html>. (Accessed on 28 April 2021).
- GoU. 2015. *The Second National Development Plan (NDP II) 2015/16 – 2019/20*
- Thornhill, C. and Van Dijk, G. 2010. Public Administration theory: Justification for conceptualisation. *Journal of Public Administration*, 45(1):95-110.
- Thornhill, C., Ile, I. and Van Dijk, G. eds. 2014. *Public Administration & Management in South Africa: An Introduction*. Oxford University Press.
- Tracy, S.J. 2010. Qualitative quality: *Eight “big-tent” criteria for excellent qualitative research*. *Qualitative inquiry*. 16:837-851.
- Tracy, S.J. 2013. *Interview practice: embodied, mediated focus-group approaches*. *Qualitative Research Methods: Collecting Evidence, Crafting Analysis, Communicating Impact*. West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell, 157.
- Tshiyoyo, M.M. 2013. *Leadership and governance imperatives for development in the Democratic Republic of the Congo*. Unpublished Doctoral dissertation. Pretoria: University of Pretoria.
- Tshiyoyo, M. 2017. Assessing the Catalytic Role of the African Charter and the African Peer Review Mechanism in the Realisation of the Objectives set out in Africa Agenda 2063 and the SDGs. *African Journal of Public Affairs*, 9:172-185.
- Tsiyoyo, M. 2018. The relevance of Public Administration in the Governance era. In de Vries, M.S., Dijk, G.V. and Chitiga-Mabugu, M. 2018. *Public Administration: Reflection, Relevance and Readiness*. NISPAcee Press, Pretoria (South Africa).
- Tungwarara, O. 2010. *The African Peer Review Mechanism: A compilation of studies of the process in nine African countries*. Johannesburg: Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa.
- Turianskyi, Y. 2009. *Common African political governance issues: Lessons from six early APRM Reports*.
- Turnbull, N. 2018. *Policy design: Its enduring appeal in a complex world and how to think it differently*. *Public Policy and Administration*, 33:357-364.
- UN. 1967. *Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees*.
- UN. 1951. *Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees*.
- UNDP. 2017. *Uganda's contribution to refugee protection and management*. Kampala.
- UNHCR. 2011. *Submission by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees for the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. Compilation Report-*

- Universal Periodic Review: Uganda*. Available at: <http://www.refworld.org/pdfid/4d806bc112f.pdf>. (Accessed on 23 February 2021).
- Vedung, E. 1997. *Public Policy and Program Evaluation*.
- Vedung, E. 2010. Four waves of evaluation diffusion. *Evaluation*, 16(3), pp.263-277. the SDGs. *African Journal of Public Affairs*, 9:172-185.
- Vedung, E. 2017. *Public policy and program evaluation*. Routledge.
- Vries, M.S.D., Dijk, G.V., Chitiga-Mabugu, M.C. and Eastern, E. 2018. *Public administration: reflection, relevance and readiness*. Bratislava: NISPACEE Press.
- Weimer, D.L. and Vining, A.R. 2017. *Policy Analysis: Concepts and Practice*. Routledge.
- Weiss, C.H. 1999. *The interface between evaluation and public policy*. *Evaluation*, 5(4), pp.468-486.
- Weiss, C.H. 2004. *Rooting for evaluation: A cliff notes version of my work*. *Evaluation roots: Tracing theorists' views and influences*, pp.153-168.
- Weiss, C.H., Murphy-Graham, E. and Birkeland, S. 2005. An alternate route to policy influence: How evaluations affect DARE. *American journal of evaluation*, 26(1):12-30.
- World Bank. 2002. *Bank and IMF support additional debt relief for Uganda amounting to \$1.3 billion*. Available at: <http://www.worldbank.org/hipc/country-cases/uganda/uganda.html>, (Accessed on 2 April 2022).
- World Bank. 2019. *Informing the Refugee Policy Response in Uganda Results from the Uganda Refugee and Host Communities 2018 Household Survey*. Available at <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/32511> (Accessed on 17 February 2023).
- Yanow, D. 2017. *Qualitative-interpretive methods in policy research*. In *Handbook of public policy analysis*. Routledge: (431-442).
- Yin, R. 2014. *Case Study Research: Design and Methods (5th ed.)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Yin, R.K. 2017. *Case study research and applications: Design and methods*. Sage publications.
- YU, C.-H., Chen, C.-K., Tasi, S.-H. and Chang, H.-C. 2011. Developing a public policy analytical operational model based on stakeholder identification and salience typology. *African Journal of Business Management*, 5:8715-8727.

Zalmanovitch, Y. 2014. Don't reinvent the wheel: the search for an identity for public administration. *International Review of Administrative Sciences*, 80(4):808-826.

Zittoun, P. 2014. *The political process of policymaking: A pragmatic approach to public policy*. Springer.

LIST OF ANNEXURES

Annexure 1:	EMS Ethical Committee approval - Phase One
Annexure 2:	EMS Ethical Committee Certificate - Final Approval
Annexure 3:	Research Ethics Committee - Approval letter in Uganda
Annexure 4:	Agency data collection authorisation letter
Annexure 5:	Final research approval by the Uganda National Council for Science and Technology (UNCST)
Annexure 6:	Data collection tools

ANNEXURE 1: EMS ETHICAL COMMITTEE APPROVAL PHASE ONE



Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences

RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

Approval Certificate

20 July 2021

Mr M Kizito
Department: School of Public Man + Admin

Dear Mr M Kizito

The application for ethical clearance for the research project described below served before this committee on:

Protocol No:	EMS108/21
Principal researcher:	Mr M Kizito
Research title:	A framework for enhancing the influence of evaluation in the implementation of the African Peer Review Mechanism
Student/Staff No:	20713178
Degree:	Doctoral
Supervisor/Promoter:	Prof MM Tshiyoyo
Department:	School of Public Man + Admin

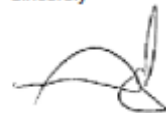
The decision by the committee is reflected below:

Decision:	Approved
Conditions (if applicable):	Approval of Phase 1
Period of approval:	2021-07-24 - 2022-07-24

The approval is subject to the researcher abiding by the principles and parameters set out in the application and research proposal in the actual execution of the research. The approval does not imply that the researcher is relieved of any accountability in terms of the Codes of Research Ethics of the University of Pretoria if action is taken beyond the approved proposal. If during the course of the research it becomes apparent that the nature and/or extent of the research deviates significantly from the original proposal, a new application for ethics clearance must be submitted for review.

We wish you success with the project.

Sincerely



pp PROF JA NEL
CHAIR: COMMITTEE FOR RESEARCH ETHICS

ANNEXURE 2: EMS ETHICAL COMMITTEE CERTIFICATE FINAL APPROVAL



Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences

RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

Amendment Approval Certificate

20 May 2022

Mr M Kizito
Department: School of Public Management and Administration

Dear Mr M Kizito,

The amendments to the research project described below served before this committee on:
2022-05-13

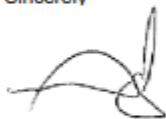
Protocol No:	EMS108/21 Line 1
Principal researcher:	Mr M Kizito
Research title:	A framework for enhancing the influence of evaluation in the implementation of the African Peer Review Mechanism
Student/Staff No:	20713178
Degree:	Doctoral
Supervisor/Promoter:	Prof MM Tshiyoyo
Department:	School of Public Management and Administration

The decision by the committee is reflected below:

Decision:	Approved
Conditions (if applicable):	
Period of approval:	2021-07-24 - 2022-07-24

We wish you success with the project.

Sincerely



pp PROF JA NEL
CHAIR: COMMITTEE FOR RESEARCH ETHICS

ANNEXURE 3: RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE - APPROVAL LETTER IN UGANDA

UG-REC-026 Approval Version 4.0

17th November, 2021



**UGANDA CHRISTIAN
UNIVERSITY**
A Centre of Excellence in the Heart of Africa

17th November, 2021

Kizito Martin
PhD Public Policy Candidate
School of Public Management and Administration
University of Pretoria, South Africa
Tel. +256 70 454 6819
mkizito@ucu.ac.ug

UG-REC-026 APPROVAL NOTICE

To: Mr. Kizito Martin, Principal Investigator
Re: UCUREC Application titled; *A framework for enhancing the influence of evaluation in the implementation of the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM)*
Application Number: UCUREC-2021-218

Version: 4.0

Type: ☐ Initial Review
☐ Protocol Amendment
☐ Letter of Amendment (LOA)
☐ Continuing Review
☐ Material Transfer Agreement
☐ Other, Specify: _____



I am pleased to inform you that the UG-REC-026; UCUREC approved the above referenced application.

Approval of the research is for the period from 17th November, 2021, to 17th November, 2022.

This research is considered minimal risk category.
As Principal Investigator of the research, you are responsible for fulfilling the following requirements of approval:

1. All co-investigators must be kept informed of the status of the research.
2. Changes, amendments, and additions to the protocol or the consent form must be submitted to the REC for re-review and approval prior to the activation of the changes. The REC application number assigned to the research should be cited in any correspondence.

1 of 2

A Complete Education for A Complete Person

P.O. Box 4, Mukono, Uganda (East Africa), Plot 67-173, Bishop Tucker Road, Mukono Hill,
Tel: +256 (0) 31 235 0800, Web: www.ucu.ac.ug  UgandaChristianUniversity  @UCUniversity
Founded by the Province of the Church of Uganda. Chartered by the Government of Uganda



UG-REC-026 Approval Version 4.0

17th November, 2021



**UGANDA CHRISTIAN
UNIVERSITY**

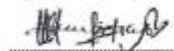
A Centre of Excellence in the Heart of Africa

3. Reports of unanticipated problems involving risks to participants or other must be submitted to the REC. New information that becomes available which could change the risk: benefit ratio must be submitted promptly for REC review.
4. Only approved consent forms are to be used in the enrollment of participants. All consent forms signed by subjects and/or witnesses should be retained on file. The REC may conduct audits of all study records, and consent documentation may be part of such audits.
5. Regulations require review of an approved study not less than once per 12-month period. Therefore, a continuing review application must be submitted to the REC eight weeks prior to the above expiration date of 17th November, 2022 in order to continue the study beyond the approved period. Failure to submit a continuing review application in a timely fashion may result in suspension or termination of the study, at which point new participants may not be enrolled and currently enrolled participants must be taken off the study.

The following is the list of all documents approved in this application by UG-REC_026:

Document Title	Language	Version	Version Date
1. Research Proposal	English	1.0	31 st October, 2021
2. Informed Consent Form	English	1.0	31 st October, 2021
3. Data Collection Tools	English	1.0	31 st October, 2021
4. Prior REC Approval	English	1.0	27 th August, 2021
4. UCUREC Approval Letter	English	4.0	17 th November, 2021

Signed and Stamped



Prof. Peter Waiswa
UCUREC Chairperson,
pwaiswa@musph.ac.ug



2 of 2

A Complete Education for A Complete Person

P.O. Box 4, Mukono, Uganda (East Africa), Plot 67-173, Bishop Tucker Road, Mukono Hill,
Tel: +256 (0) 31 235 0800, Web: www.ucc.ac.ug  [UgandaChristianUniversity](https://www.facebook.com/UgandaChristianUniversity)  @UCUniversity
Founded by the Province of the Church of Uganda. Chartered by the Government of Uganda

ANNEXURE 4: AGENCY DATA COLLECTION AUTHORIZATION LETTER



REF: EXD.504.7

17th December, 2021

Martin Kizito
PhD. Public Policy Researcher
School of Public Management and Administration (SPMA)
University of Pretoria, Private Bag X20
Hatfield 0028, South Africa.

Dear Martin,

RE AUTHORISATION TO COLLECT DATA ABOUT THE APRM NATIONAL SECRETARIAT.

Reference is made to your letter dated the 20th of November 2021. The National Planning Authority (NPA) appreciates your interest to conduct a study in one of its units as part of your PhD study on the topic **"A framework for enhancing the influence of evaluation in the implementation of the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM)"**.

You specifically requested the following:

- To collect primary data, mainly through interviewing key informants and conducting Focus Group Discussions (FGDs).
- To interview targeted participants including staff of the National APRM Secretariat, the Focal Person, the National Governing Council (NGC), the Technical Research Institute (TRI) and the Focal Points in MDAs, involved in decision making and implementation of the National Plan of Action (NPoA) between the first country review in 2008 and the second in 2017.
- Access to secondary data as the Country Self-Assessment Reports, Country Review Reports and National Plan of Actions (NPoAs) among others for validation of the primary data.

NPA considers your study to be of national importance in enabling the country share best practices and successes registered in implementing the continental APRM evaluation system with other African member states and the research community. Considering that your study has already obtained ethical clearance both at the University of Pretoria and in Uganda through the UCU-REC, I hereby grant you authorisation. This is on condition that you will observe the National regulations governing access to and use of public information as well as the research ethical principles. In addition, you will need to furnish my office with a plan on how you intend to observe Covid-19 SoPs during your study.

Please don't hesitate to contact my office in case of need for further assistance. Wishing you the best in the process of data collection and successful completion of your studies.

Sincerely,

Charles Oleny Ojok
FOR: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Cc. Chairperson, National Planning Authority

17A Clement Hill Road
P.O. Box 21434
Kampala Uganda
Tel. +256-414-250229
+256-312310730
Fax. +256-414-250213
E-mail: npa@npa.go.ug
Website: www.npa.go.ug

Planning for Development



ANNEXURE 5: FINAL RESEARCH APPROVAL BY THE UGANDA NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (NCST)



Uganda National Council for Science and Technology
(Established by Act of Parliament of the Republic of Uganda)

Our Ref: SS1568ES

18 January 2023

Martin Kizito
Uganda Christian University
Mukono

Re: Research Approval: **A framework for enhancing the influence of evaluation in the implementation of the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM).**

I am pleased to inform you that on **18/01/2023**, the Uganda National Council for Science and Technology (UNCST) approved the above referenced research project. The Approval of the research project is for the period of **18/01/2023** to **18/01/2024**.

Your research registration number with the UNCST is **SS1568ES**. Please, cite this number in all your future correspondences with UNCST in respect of the above research project. As the Principal Investigator of the research project, you are responsible for fulfilling the following requirements of approval:

1. Keeping all co-investigators informed of the status of the research.
2. Submitting all changes, amendments, and addenda to the research protocol or the consent form (where applicable) to the designated Research Ethics Committee (REC) or Lead Agency for re-review and approval **prior** to the activation of the changes. UNCST must be notified of the approved changes within five working days.
3. For clinical trials, all serious adverse events must be reported promptly to the designated local REC for review with copies to the National Drug Authority and a notification to the UNCST.
4. Unanticipated problems involving risks to research participants or other must be reported promptly to the UNCST. New information that becomes available which could change the risk/benefit ratio must be submitted promptly for UNCST notification after review by the REC.
5. Only approved study procedures are to be implemented. The UNCST may conduct impromptu audits of all study records.
6. An annual progress report and approval letter of continuation from the REC must be submitted electronically to UNCST. Failure to do so may result in termination of the research project.

Please note that this approval includes all study related tools submitted as part of the application as shown below:

No.	Document Title	Language	Version Number	Version Date
1	Informed consent	English	VERSION 2	06 September 2022
2	Data collection tools	English	VERSION 2	06 September 2022
3	Risk Management Plan	English	VERSION 2	06 September 2022
4	Project Proposal	English	APPROVED PDF VERSION	
5	Approval Letter	English		
6	Administrative Clearance	English		
6	Amended informed consent form for participants	English	Version 2	28 December 2022
7	FGD Participants list	English	Version 1	28 December 2022
8	Separate informed consent for IDI- National Governing Council Members	English	Version 3	06 January 2023
9	Approved Covid-19 mitigation plan	English	Version 2	06 January 2023
10	Revised amended informed consent for KII-MDA Focal Point Persons	English	version 4	12 January 2023
11	Revised amended informed consent for KII-TRI members	English	version 4	12 January 2023
12	Revised amended informed consent for KII- Secretariat Staff for APRM	English	version 4	12 January 2023
13	Revised amended informed consent for IDI-NGC members	English	version 4	12 January 2023

Yours sincerely,



Hellen Opolot

For: Executive Secretary

UGANDA NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

ANNEXURE 6: DATA COLLECTION TOOLS

A. Informed Consent Form for Key Informant Interviews

 UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Faculty of Economics and
Management Sciences
School of Public Management
and Administration

Title of the Study
(A framework for enhancing the influence of evaluation in the implementation
of the African Peer Review Mechanism)

Research conducted by:
Mr.M.Kizito
Student number:
20713178

Informed Consent for the Key informant interviews

Dear APRM National Governing Council (NGC) member,

You are invited to voluntarily participate as an In Depth Interviewee (IDI) in an academic study conducted by Martin Kizito, a Doctoral student of Public Policy from the School of Public Management and Administration (SPMA) at the University of Pretoria. It is funded by the Partnership for African Social and Governance Research (PASGR) and is intended to generate a framework that could assist to enhance the APRM evaluation system in positively influencing policy design among the African Union (AU) member states. It takes a case of the refugee policy framework in Uganda and you have been purposively identified basing on your position and experience in the APRM process. To this end, it has already been approved by an accredited Uganda Christian University Research Ethics Committee (REC) to run for 12 months of data collection.

1

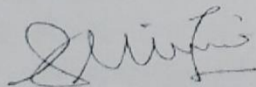
 UGANDA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY
APPROVED
(UNTIL)
06 JAN 2024
RESEARCH ETHICS
COMMITTEE

least a mail address and or telephone contact being mainly officials from government MDAs, local governments and CSOs.

During the fieldwork regular use of the temperature gun and symptoms checks at the beginning of each field day to rule out any symptoms and isolate or quarantined for 14 days where they are detected. Ensuring that the written consent document presented to the respondents for signing indicates the potential risk of participants catching COVID-19, mitigating measures taken, as well as the options of not participating or withdrawing when the conversation is still doing on.

This will be followed by ensuring compliance to restrictions and regular reminders between the researcher, assistant, and participants to observe the national COVID-19 regulations. Among others, ensure the minimum of two meters of social distancing requirements with the study participants and where possible consider well-ventilated facilities or outdoor spaces, especially for the planned FGD. Also, the researcher ensuring washing hands regularly washing of hands with hand sanitisers or water with soap at the beginning or intervals of interviews. In addition, use of anti-bacterial wipes for regular cleaning of data collection devices like the recorder. Besides encouraging participants to wear masks always during interviews, ensuring that it covers the mouth and the nose. Finally, the researcher at the end of each interview, intends to appreciate the participants by giving them masks instead of money.

Please if you have any questions or comments regarding the study, feel free to contact my academic promoter, (Prof. Michel Tshiyoyo at: +27(0) 760278213/michel.tshiyoyo@up.ac.za (Email).



26/10/2021

0777784227

Researcher's signature

Date

Contact



B. Individual Interview Schedule For Members of The National Governing Council (NGC)

Study title: A framework for enhancing the influence of evaluation in the implementation of the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM)

Individual interview schedule for members of the National Governing Council (NGC)

Objective One: The effect of the APRM process in influencing the type of use or non-use of data in Uganda' public policy process.

1. How do you describe the use of APRM in public policy processes in Uganda?
2. How does the nature of the APRM's evaluation inputs affect public policy in Uganda?
3. What are the effects of APRM evaluation activities on public policy in Uganda?
4. How do APRM outputs affect public policy in the context of Uganda?

Objective Two: The role of the APRM stakeholders in influencing the type of use or non-use of APRM data in Uganda's policy process.

5. As an NGC, briefly describe the degree of participation of different stakeholders in influencing the utilisation of APRM data in Uganda's public policies?
6. Do APRM findings normally confirm your expectations and how?
7. How do you rate the level of stakeholders' influence on the use of public policy in Uganda?

Objective Three: The extent to which the context of the APRM system influences the type of use or non-use in Uganda's refugee policy.

8. How do you assess the institutional capacity of the APRM in ensuring that data is used to inform public policy?
9. What policy framework informs the use of APRM evaluation findings in Uganda's policy process?
10. Considering the refugee policy framework as the country's best practice, how have APRM's recommendations contributed to its reforms in Uganda?
11. If so, what other contextual factors influence the use of APRM data in the implementation of the refugee policy framework in Uganda?

Objective Four: To generate a framework that can positively enhance APRM's evaluation influence on public policy of AU member states?

12. What do you consider to be the major challenges to the APRM system in influencing the use of data in public policies of AU member states?
13. What strategies would you propose could be adopted by APRM to ensure more effective utilisation of the findings in public policy?



C. Individual Interview Schedule for the Focal Point Minister

Study title: A framework for enhancing the influence of evaluation in the implementation of the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM)

Individual interview schedule for the Focal Point Minister.

Objective One: The effect of the APRM process (inputs, activities, and outputs) in influencing the type of use or non-use in Uganda's policy process.

1. How do you describe the use of APRM data in the context of public policy processes in Uganda?
2. How does the nature of the APRM's evaluation inputs affects public policy in Uganda?
3. What are the effects of APRM evaluation activities and methods on public policy in Uganda?
4. How do APRM outputs affect public policy in the context of Uganda?

Objective Two: The role of the APRM stakeholders in influencing the type of use or non-use of APRM data in Uganda's policy process.

5. As the Focal Point Minister, briefly describe how your participation contributes to the utilisation of APRM data in Uganda's public policies?
6. From your experience, do the APRM findings normally confirm your expectations and how?
7. How do you rate the level of stakeholders' influence on the use of APRM data in Uganda's public policy?

Objective Three: The extent to which the political context of the APRM system influences the type of use or non-use in Uganda's refugee policy.

8. How do you assess the institutional capacity of the APRM in ensuring that data is used to inform public policy?
9. What policy framework informs the use of APRM evaluation findings in Uganda's policy process?
10. Considering the refugee policy framework as the country's best practice, how have APRM's recommendations contributed to its reforms in Uganda?
11. If so, what contextual factors influence the use of APRM data in the implementation of the refugee policy framework in Uganda?

Objective Four: To generate a framework that can positively enhance APRM's evaluation influence on public policy of AU member states.

12. What do you consider to be the major challenges to the APRM system in influencing the use of data in public policies of AU member states?
13. What strategies would you propose that can be adopted by APRM to ensure more effective utilisation of the findings in public policy?



D. Individual Interview Schedule for Staff Members of the National APRM Secretariat

Study title: A framework for enhancing the influence of evaluation in the implementation of the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM)

Individual interview schedule for staff members of the National APRM Secretariat.

Objective One: The effect of the APRM process in influencing the type of use or non-use of data in Uganda's policy process.

1. How do you describe the use of APRM data in the context of public policy processes in Uganda?
2. How does the nature of the APRM's evaluation inputs affects public policy in Uganda?
3. What are the effects of APRM evaluation activities and methods on public policy in Uganda?
4. How do APRM outputs affect public policy in the context of Uganda?

Objective Two: The role of the APRM stakeholders in influencing the type of use or non-use of APRM data in Uganda's policy process.

5. As a staff at APRM Secretariat, briefly describe the degree of different stakeholders' participation in influencing the utilisation of APRM data in Uganda's public policies?
6. From your experience, do APRM findings normally confirm your expectations and how?
7. How do you rate the level of stakeholders' influence on the use of APRM data in Uganda's public policy?

Objective Three: The extent to which the context of the APRM system influences the type of use or non-use in Uganda's refugee policy.

8. How do you assess the institutional capacity of the APRM in ensuring that data is used to inform public policy?
9. What policy framework informs the use of APRM evaluation findings in Uganda's policy process?
10. Considering the refugee policy framework as the country's best practice, how have APRM's recommendations contributed to its reforms in Uganda?
11. If so, what contextual factors influence the use of APRM data in the implementation of the refugee policy framework in Uganda?

Objective four: To generate a framework that can positively enhance APRM's evaluation influence on public policy of AU member states.

12. What do you consider to be the major challenges to the APRM system in influencing the use of data in public policies of AU member states?
13. What strategies would you propose that can be adopted by APRM to ensure more effective utilisation of the findings in public policy?



E. FGD Guide for MDA Focal Point Persons

Study title: A framework for enhancing the influence of evaluation in the implementation of the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM)

FGD guide for focal point persons (MDAs)

Objective One: The effect of the APRM process (inputs, activities, and outputs) in influencing the type of use or non-use in Uganda's policy process.

1. How do you describe the use of APRM data in the context of public policy processes in Uganda?
2. How does the nature of the APRM's evaluation inputs affects public policy in Uganda?
3. What are the effects of APRM evaluation activities and methods on public policy in Uganda?
4. How do APRM outputs affect public policy in the context of Uganda?

Objective Two: The role of the APRM stakeholders in influencing the type of use or non-use of APRM data in Uganda's policy process.

5. As MDA focal persons, briefly describe the degree of participation of different stakeholders in influencing the utilisation of APRM data in Uganda's public policies?
6. From your experience as a Focal person in an MDAs do evaluation results normally confirm your expectations and how?
7. How do you rate the level of stakeholders' influence in terms of the three attributes of stakeholder: power, legitimacy, and agency with regards to your mandate as NGC?

Objective Three: The extent to which the political context of the APRM system influences the type of use or non-use in Uganda's refugee policy.

8. How do you assess the institutional capacity of the APRM in ensuring that data is used to inform public policy?
9. What policy framework informs the use of APRM evaluation findings in Uganda's policy process?
10. Considering the refugee policy framework as the country's best practice, how have APRM's recommendations contributed to its development and reforms in Uganda?
11. If so, what contextual factors influence the use of APRM data in the implementation of the refugee policy framework in Uganda?

Objective Four: To generate a framework that can positively enhance APRM's evaluation influence on public policy of AU member states.

12. What do you consider to be the major challenges to the APRM system in influencing the use of data in public policies of AU member states?
13. What strategies would you propose that can be adopted by APRM to ensure more effective utilisation of the findings in public policy?

1



F. Data Collection Strategy for Managing COVID-19 Spread in the Field

 UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Faculty of Economics and
Management Sciences
School of Public Management
and Administration

Title of the Study

(A framework for enhancing the influence of evaluation in the implementation
of the African Peer Review Mechanism)

Research conducted by:

Mr. M. Kizito

Student number:

20713178

Data collection strategy for managing COVID-19 spread in the field.

This strategy which will be presented in securing clearance for data collection and access to the participants covers two major areas namely, before and during the field work to minimise the possible risks. Prior to the field data collection, the researcher intends to generate a COVID-19 management plan and include it in the fieldwork budget, to cover items like hand sanitisers, anti-bacterial wipes, masks among others. In addition, five planned tests will be undertaken by both the researcher and the research assistant before embarking on the major field work visits in each of the five regions in the country where the study sites were identified.

In the strategy, the researcher will ensure that Computer Assisted Telephone Interviews (CATI) will be conducted in those areas considered to be high-risk locations and vulnerable populations like pregnant women and elderly participants above 60 years. This will be possible especially since almost all participating stakeholders in APRM process are elites and expected to have at

 UGANDA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY
APPROVED
UNTIL
06 JAN 2024
RESEARCH ETHICS
COMMITTEE

Please note that in line with the National Guidelines for research involving humans as participants in the research (UNCST, 2014:16), the following ethical principles for securing documented informed consent shall be observed. You are requested to read them and if agree, please put your sign, thumbprint or mark.

- This is an anonymous interview as your name and contacts will not appear on the questionnaire. To ensure your privacy, the answers you give will be treated as strictly confidential as you cannot be identified in person based on the answer you give but instead, audio recordings and transcripts will be identified with codes.
- Your voluntary participation in the study is very important to us, so feel free to discontinue your participation and it will not lead to any penalty or loss of entitled benefits in appreciation of your time. Considering the prevailing pandemics, there may be a potential risk of participants catching COVID-19 or Ebola but mitigating measures will be taken to avoid the same by observing all the SOPs, national general regulations, and social distancing requirements.
- You are kindly requested to answer questions in the attached interview schedule as completely and honestly as possible in your most convenient language.
- Your participation may take about 45-60 minutes' time, responding to interview questions by sharing your experience and opinions. The results of the study will be used and published for academic purpose only. We will provide you with feedback on progress and a summary of our findings on request.
- In case of any question regarding the study, please contact my academic promoter, (Prof. Michel Tshiyoyo at: +27(0) 760278213/michel.tshiyoyo@up.ac.za (Email).

Please sign the form to indicate that:

- You have read and understood the information provided in the form above
- All your questions have been answered by the researcher
- You give your consent to participate in the study on a voluntary basis

Participant's Signature _____

Date _____

Researcher's Signature: _____

Date _____

