

## **WORKSHOPS TO STRENGTHEN LEGISLATURES IN COMMONWEALTH WEST AFRICA**

**THE GAMBIA**  
**Corinthia Atlantic Hotel, Banjul**  
**5 – 8 OCTOBER 2004**

### **POINTS FOR ACTION**

#### **MEMBERS' CONSTITUENCY RESPONSIBILITIES**

- As elected representatives of the people, Members of the National Assembly have a duty and responsibility to be aware of and reflect the views and concerns of people in their constituency
- Debate in the National Assembly about the Executive's proposed legislation must be informed by constituents' concerns
- It is important for Members to hold regular surgeries with constituents in all areas of the constituency and budgetary, logistical and infrastructural provision should be made for this
- Members must follow-up and monitor development projects in their constituencies

#### **THE ROLE OF PARLIAMENTARIANS IN COMBATING CORRUPTION**

- Parliamentarians must take the lead in demonstrating the political will in the fight against corruption and must work together with the Executive, the Judiciary, political leaders, political parties, civil society, donors and the police
- Parliamentarians should consider demonstrating their commitment by joining the Global Organisation of Parliamentarians Against Corruption (GOPAC)
- There must be zero tolerance for corruption at every level
- An anti-corruption agency should be established in The Gambia
- Parliament should re-examine and, where necessary, amend the anti-corruption laws to reinforce the powers of anti-corruption agencies

## **ENGAGING NATIONAL ASSEMBLY MEMBERS IN FORMULATING THE POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY PLAN**

Members of the National Assembly will involve themselves in the PRSP development process through:

- Public outreach to get citizen input into policy formulation
- Integration of Members or Committees into Sector Working Groups
- Parliamentary Review of the SPA 2 document

Parliamentarians should be involved from the onset in the development of poverty reduction projects within their constituencies

## **THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AND THE BUDGET PROCESS**

- Members must take seriously their responsibility for oversight and authorisation of the Executive's Budget
- Members should receive briefings during the drafting process and there should be a formal consultation between the Executive and the National Assembly
- Members must ensure that the Budget is compliant with policy requirements and the needs of the people
- Parliamentarians should monitor execution of the Budget and should approve any additional appropriations
- The National Assembly should have budgetary research capacity
- All Select Committees should be involved in scrutinising the Estimates

## **PARLIAMENTARY OVERSIGHT MECHANISMS AND POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY PAPER (PRSP) MONITORING**

- The PAC must be proactive in ensuring that adequate resources are given to the Auditor-General so that the National Assembly is enabled to play its constitutional role
- The National Assembly must be financially autonomous in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution and any necessary legislation should be enacted
- Select Committees must monitor the budget allocations against SPA 2
- Parliamentarians must scrutinise legislation against SPA 2
- The National Assembly will insist on receiving and debating the Annual report on SPA 2 progress
- The National Assembly should forge linkages with key partners in poverty reduction within The Gambia