

Commonwealth Secretariat



Consultation of Commonwealth National Women's Machineries

Millennium UN Plaza Hotel, One United Nations Plaza, 44th Street,
between 1st & 2nd Avenue, New York, NY 10017
Sunday 1 March 2009, 0900 - 1800

NOTE ON MID-TERM REVIEW FOR THE COMMONWEALTH PLAN OF ACTION FOR GENDER EQUALITY

Background

The Commonwealth Plan of Action for Gender Equality 2005-2015 (PoA) provides the framework within which the Commonwealth contributes to advancing gender equality. The PoA builds on past achievements, seeks to close persistent gaps, reflect the Commonwealth's response to global changes as they impact differently on women and men, and engages with new and emerging challenges. The PoA had formed part of the Commonwealth's contribution to the United Nations Beijing plus 10 Global Review in 2005.

The Mid Term Review as well as other methods of monitoring and evaluation are elaborated as part of the PoA mandate. Among various ways identified in the PoA are the Secretary General's biennial report on the implementation of the PoA to CHOGM and the periodic meetings of Ministers Responsible for Women's /Gender Affairs. Further "The Secretariat will integrate monitoring of the PoA into its 4-year strategic planning and 2-year operational planning cycles, and gender audits of the Secretariat's work will be undertaken to assess its impact in promoting equality between women and men in the Commonwealth.

The Mid Term Review of the PoA coincides with the Beijing plus 15 processes. Member countries have encouraged the Secretariat to harmonise the Mid Term Review of the PoA with processes in place at regional and international levels. The Secretariat has therefore taken steps to contact UNECA, UNECLAC and UNESCAP to facilitate information sharing of their processes at the 2009 Commonwealth consultation of national women's machineries in New York.

The year 2010 will see the completion of the Commonwealth PoA Mid Term Review and the Beijing plus 15 review; it will also be the year in which the Commonwealth Women's Affairs Ministers will hold their 9th Meeting in Barbados.

Mid Term Review

The Mid Term Review of the Commonwealth PoA offers a unique opportunity to refocus attention on interventions needed to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment. It will assess the extent to which the aspirations of the PoA have been achieved since its adoption in 2005. It will also generate authoritative evidence which will assist member countries as well as the Secretariat in making informed decisions to improve policy and practice.

The *Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for the Commonwealth Plan of Action* adopted at the Eighth Commonwealth Women's Affairs Ministers Meeting (8WAMM) in 2007 will be used as the main tool for undertaking the Mid Term Review. The Framework sets out indicators and data sources for each of the four critical areas of the PoA:

- Gender, democracy, peace and conflict
- Gender, human rights and law
- Gender, poverty eradication and economic empowerment
- Gender and HIV/AIDS

Regional workshops in the Caribbean and in Southern and Eastern Africa on the implementation of the M & E framework have been conducted throughout 2008 by the Commonwealth Secretariat. More are planned for 2009. The outcomes from these workshops and the substantive discussions at the Commonwealth meetings in New York will inform the Mid Term Review. The Mid Term Review process and outcomes therefore form a major part of the agenda for the meeting of the CGPMG (Commonwealth Gender Plan of Action Monitoring Group) and the annual consultation of Commonwealth NWMs (National Women's Machinery).

The final report of the MTR will be presented to the Ninth Women's Affairs Ministers Meeting (9WAMM) to be held in Barbados in 2010.