



**The Commonwealth Plan of Action
for Gender Equality 2005 – 2015**

Mid Term Review

**Survey Guidelines
& Acronym List**



MID TERM REVIEW (MTR) OF THE COMMONWEALTH PLAN OF ACTION FOR GENDER EQUALITY 2005-2015

MTR SURVEY GUIDELINES

I. Introduction and Purpose	2
II. Methodology	3
III. Survey Questionnaire Design.....	3
IV. Survey Questionnaire Distribution, Collection and Data Processing..	4
V. Filling in the Survey Questionnaire	6
VI. Submission of Survey Questionnaire.....	6
VII. Acronyms.....	7

I. Introduction and Purpose

In 2004, the Commonwealth Secretariat and Commonwealth Women's Affairs Ministers, in collaboration with the Commonwealth Foundation, Commonwealth Associations, CSO and other partners, developed the current Commonwealth Plan of Action for Gender Equality 2005-2015 (PoA) to guide its contributions towards gender equality and women's empowerment. This was negotiated and agreed at the 7th Women's Affairs Ministerial Meeting (7WAMM) held in Fiji Islands on 30 May – 2 June 2004.

The PoA reflects the Commonwealth's response to identified global changes which differentially impact on women and men. It sought to engage new and emerging challenges, build on past achievements to close persistent equality gaps, and formed part of the Commonwealth's contribution to the United Nations Beijing plus 10 Global Review in 2005.

This survey has been developed under the guidance of the Commonwealth Gender Plan of Action Monitoring Group (CGPMG) in collaboration with the Commonwealth's Gender Section, Social Transformation Programmes Division, as part of the agreed upon PoA mandate to conduct a mid-term review (MTR) of progress and commitments of Member States.

The main purpose of this MTR is to assess the extent to which Member States and the Commonwealth Secretariat's programmes, strategies and actions, as well as internal management practices achieve the PoA's overall goal to advance gender equality for the years under review which cover 2007-2009. (The 2007 reporting period start date coincides with the year the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Framework for the PoA was adopted).

The year 2010 will witness the completion of the Commonwealth's PoA MTR process which was planned to strategically coincide with the Beijing +15 review and it will also be the year of the 9th triennial meeting of the Commonwealth Women's Affairs Ministers (9WAMM) in Barbados. The MTR is therefore to not only track progress, but to also generate authoritative evidence to assist member countries and the Secretariat in making informed decisions in Barbados that will improve policy and practice for gender mainstreaming as a tool to advance women's rights and achieve gender equality. The final report of the MTR, for which this survey will provide a key source of information, will be presented to the 9WAMM. As requested by Member countries, the Secretariat has strived to harmonise the MTR of the PoA with processes in place at regional and international levels. Steps in this direction resulted in contacts with the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UNECLAC) and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) to facilitate information sharing of their processes at the 2009 Commonwealth consultation of National Women's Machineryes (NWM) held in New York.

II. Methodology

The methodology for the MTR and design of the survey questionnaire is informed by a rights and results based approach to gender equality and the need to identify structural challenges and procedural constraints to global efforts towards women's empowerment. Action oriented, participative and consensus building values are embraced as foundational principles for the MTR process.

Both qualitative and quantitative questions are included in the survey questionnaire and are accompanied by instructions for completion. Some questions go beyond the PoA in order to obtain extra data to put in place strong baselines for future monitoring of the Commonwealth's work on gender. Likert Scales and open-ended questions are used to allow for elaboration of ideas. Questions were designed to encourage participating countries to share information on gender equality initiatives related to the PoA, Beijing+15 review, CEDAW, MDGs, and other regional mechanisms. A desk and internet review was conducted on the Beijing +15 and other relevant gender equality instruments and monitoring tools, in addition to great reliance on the Commonwealth's PoA MTR indicator template, in order to conceptualize and frame questions, and facilitate data collection. Questions linked to the Beijing +15 questionnaire have been indicated at the beginning of each section. Furthermore, the majority of responses are via table format to facilitate the analysis of data using data management software.

As agreed upon by the CGPMG in their meetings in February and April 2009, additional guiding principles for the MTR include:

- The Commonwealth's consensus model for decision-making; thus member countries' views are provided for through the CGPMG and CGPMG Sub Group;
- The dual process perspective, with an internal Secretariat review and an external review of governments and NWMs, in collaboration with partners including CSOs;
- Commitment to monitoring and evaluation through the Secretary General's biennial report on the implementation of the PoA to the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meetings.

III. Survey Questionnaire Design

The survey questionnaire is organised into 5 parts for ease of simultaneous completion by a broad range of partners:

- Part I: Enabling environment and institutional development
- Part II: Progress in implementation of the critical areas of intervention of the PoA
- Part II: Commonwealth Secretariat's niche areas of comparative advantage & CSO engagement
- Part IV: Evaluation of Commonwealth direct interventions
- Part V: Looking forward

Part I is designed to capture developments and efforts to create an enabling environment and the institutional mechanisms to support gender equality, women's empowerment, and achievement of PoA targets.

Part II assesses PoA implementation and monitoring within the four critical areas of the PoA enshrined in the *Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for the Commonwealth Plan of Action* (M&E Framework – page 16 of the MTR Conceptual Framework) adopted at the Eighth

Commonwealth Women's Affairs Ministers Meeting (8WAMM) in 2007. These critical areas are:

1. Gender, democracy, peace and conflict;
2. Gender, human rights and law;
3. Gender, poverty eradication and economic empowerment
4. Gender and HIV/AIDS.

Part III asks for thoughts on the Commonwealth Secretariat's overall support for institutional development and capacity building with particular accent on the Commonwealth Secretariat niche areas of comparative advantage as well as civil society engagement. Questions here also seek clarity on the challenges and constraints faced in implementing tools and strategies developed by the Commonwealth Secretariat to eliminate gender disparities in niche areas. These queries are also mainstreamed throughout the survey questionnaire.

Part IV evaluates Commonwealth interventions, their relevancy, adaptability and ability to advance PoA target achievement.

Finally, Part V investigates ways to improve the Women's Affairs Ministerial Meetings and the annual consultations of National Women's Machineries, to best fulfill CGPMG mandates, and to enhance the future PoA progress review. It ends with questions to identify emerging issues not covered by the current PoA, all with the intent to make the 9WAMM and all other meetings and interventions more successful in the future.

IV. Survey Distribution, Collection, and Data Processing Procedures

The Role of National Women's Machineries

As agreed by the CGPMG and Women's Machineries (refer to pages 10 and 11 of the MTR Conceptual Framework), the role of the National Women's Machineries is to:

1. Distribute, promote and coordinate input to the MTR survey questionnaire in a timely manner;
2. Communicate the contact details of the designated MTR Survey Coordinator and the MTR Task Team membership to the Commonwealth Secretariat;
3. Submit completed survey questionnaire to the Commonwealth Secretariat by the agreed deadline.

How to proceed

(i) Set up a Commonwealth Country MTR Task Team

The CGPMG strongly encourages NWMs in each country to set up an 'MTR Task Team' to facilitate coordination, data collection and a whole of government/agency wide approach. The task team should include people with experience in reporting on Beijing+15 and CEDAW as well as representatives from key line ministries, department and agencies, civil society organisations, the private sector and where relevant international donor partners.

The role of the Country MTR Task Team will be:

- Data identification and sourcing;
- Completion and submission of survey questionnaire;
- Organising interviews and follow-up discussions as required to supplement available data
- Liaising with regional consultants in the production of country reports;

- Providing regular feed-back to the Minister in charge of women/gender affairs on progress in the report production;
- Generating country reports consistent with MTR guidelines and reporting templates.

(ii) Distribution of survey questionnaire

Distribute the relevant segments of the 5-part survey questionnaire to the relevant sector ministries, departments, agencies and partners to ensure a comprehensive and collaborative simultaneous completion.

(iii) Seek Commonwealth technical support

During the process, the following technical support will be available:

1. Contact your regional consultant: Regional consultants will be on hand to offer technical assistance as required to country MTR Task Teams in the preparation of country reports. They will also be responsible for generating a regional report on the PoA implementation based on your survey inputs (*contact details to be circulated shortly*).
2. MTR web pages: There is a special area on the website of the Commonwealth Secretariat where you can access the MTR Survey Kit and the latest information about the MTR process www.thecommonwealth.org/genderreview.
3. Virtual support: Please post all questions, comments and queries via the Feedback Form on the Commonwealth internet (www.thecommonwealth.org/genderreview) and you will receive a response as quickly as possible.
4. Liaise with your Ministry of Foreign Affairs: As requested by the CGPMG Sub Group, we will send the MTR Survey Kit to all Ministries of Foreign Affairs through the High Commissions in London. We hope the Ministry will be able to help raise the profile of the Commonwealth MTR in your country.

The Role of the Commonwealth Gender POA Monitoring Group (CGPMG):

The CGPMG, comprising representatives from the four Commonwealth regions (Africa/Europe, Asia, the Pacific and the Caribbean/Canada) and CSOs, has provided enormous ongoing assistance to the Commonwealth in designing the MTR process.

The role of the CGPMG is to:

1. Advise on and agree to the methodology for the MTR;
2. Review the MTR survey questionnaires of each country in the region;
3. Approve the final MTR report and submit to Ministers.

The Role of the Commonwealth Secretariat

The role of the Commonwealth Secretariat is to:

1. Coordinate and lead the global MTR process;
2. Ensure a substantive outcome is achieved within the agreed timelines;
3. Hold MTR briefings for London-based High Commissions, the Commonwealth Foundation and other relevant partners;
4. Set up and coordinate a Commonwealth Secretariat MTR Task team to undertake a review of the work of the Commonwealth Secretariat in implementing the Commonwealth PoA.

Role of the Commonwealth Foundation

The Commonwealth Foundation is the intergovernmental organisation of the Commonwealth with a mandate to work with civil society. Its MTR role is to:

1. Support the four regional civil society members who are members of the Commonwealth Gender Plan Monitoring Group;

2. Liaise with CSO on their parallel reporting processes to capture CSO perspectives and promote good practices for CSO engagement with governments and the Commonwealth Secretariat.
3. Support the efforts of civil society to participate in the MTR process through the Commonwealth Women's Network and other networks.

V. Filling in of Survey Questionnaire

- Each country has two months to fill in the survey questionnaire: September and October 2009. The deadline for receiving survey questionnaires is the 31st October 2009.
- Please fill in the survey questionnaire electronically to facilitate data analysis.
- Please use as much space as needed in replying to the questions or for adding additional relevant comments.

N.B. The questionnaire has been designed with all the Commonwealth countries in mind and therefore some questions may not be relevant for your country. In these cases, please state NA for 'non applicable'.

VI. Submission of Survey Questionnaire

Responses to the survey from reporting Member States should be sent in both hard copy and electronic format to the National Women's Machinery in each state. The National Women's Machinery is responsible for sending the survey (Parts I to V) and a short country report in both hard copy and electronic format by 31st October 2009 at the latest to:

Mrs Esther Eghobamien,

Head of Gender Section, Social Transformation Programmes Division
Commonwealth Secretariat

Marlborough House, Pall Mall, London SW1Y 5HX, United Kingdom

Tel: +44 (0)20 7747 6543 Fax +44 (0)20 7747 6287

Email: e.eghobamien@commonwealth.int

For further information on this process please consult: www.thecommonwealth.org/genderreview

VII. Acronyms

ART	Antiretroviral therapy
B+15	15th anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action
BPFA	Beijing Platform for Action
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women
CGPMG	Commonwealth Gender PoA Monitoring Group
CS	Commonwealth Secretariat
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DDRRR	Disarmament, Demobilization, Repatriation, Resettlement and Reintegration
EPA	Economic Partnership Agreement
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GMS	Gender Management System
GRB	Gender Responsive Budgets
GRBF	Generalised Radial Basis Function
HRBA	Human Rights Based Approach
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MTR	Mid Term Review
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
NWM	National Women's Machinery
OVC	Office Victims of Crime
PoA	Commonwealth Plan of Action on Gender Equality 2005 – 2015
PLHA	People Living with HIV/AIDS
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
SWAps	Sector Wide Approaches
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNECLAC	United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)
UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)
UNINSTRAW	United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women
UNSTATS	United Nations Statistics Division
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VAW	Violence Against Women
VCT	Voluntary Counseling and Testing
WAMM	Women's Affairs Ministerial Meeting
WB	World Bank
WHO	World Health Organisation
WIDE	Women In Development Europe network



Commonwealth Secretariat
Marlborough House
Pall Mall
London
SW1Y 5HX
United Kingdom

www.thecommonwealth.org



Commonwealth Secretariat