

Ninth Commonwealth Women's Affairs Ministers Meeting

*"Gender Issues in Economic Crisis, Recovery and Beyond: Women as
Agents of Transformation"*

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REPORT OF THE COMMONWEALTH SECRETARIAT'S WORK PROGRAMME IN SUPPORT OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COMMONWEALTH PLAN OF ACTION FOR GENDER EQUALITY 2005-2015

(Background paper prepared by the Commonwealth Secretariat)

Acronyms and Abbreviations

ACCORD	African Centre for Constructive Resolution of Disputes
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
AU	African Union
BPFA	Beijing Platform for Action
CARICOM	Caribbean Common Market
CAP	Commonwealth Association of Planners
CF	Commonwealth Foundation
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CGPMG	Commonwealth Gender Plan of Action Monitoring Group
CLA	Commonwealth Lawyers Association
CLGF	Commonwealth Local Government Forum
CMJA	Commonwealth Magistrates and Judges Association
CPA	Commonwealth Parliamentary Association
CSW	Commission on the Status of Women
DFID	Department for International Development, UK
DPKO	Department of Peacekeeping Operations, UN
EBR	Extra-budgetary resources
FMM	Finance Ministers Meeting
GENDERNET	Development Co-operation Directorate Network on Gender Equality
GIDD	Governance and Institutional Development Division
GRB	Gender-responsive budget
IANWGE	Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality, UN
IASG	Interagency Support Group
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IDRC	International Development Research Centre
ITC	International Trade Centre
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
OECD-DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development – Development Co-operation Directorate
PANCAP	Pan Caribbean Partnership Against HIV/AIDS
PoA	Commonwealth Plan of Action for Gender Equality 2005-2015
RSPN	Rural Support Programmes Network
SASD	Special Advisory Services Division
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
UNPFII	United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
WAMM	Women’s Affairs Ministers Meeting

1 Background

This report spans three years 2007-2010, since the 8WAMM. It covers the activities and results of projects carried out by the Gender Section of the Commonwealth Secretariat in its implementation of the objectives as defined in the Commonwealth Plan of Action for Gender Equality 2005-2015 (PoA). The report focuses on the strategic work programme of the Gender Section based on the four critical areas of the PoA. This report demonstrates the Commonwealth Secretariat's commitment to advancing gender equality, highlighting the comparative advantages of the Secretariat in delivering focused projects, including policy-level work. A commentary on the Section's strategic programming directions for the next three years is also highlighted. The strategies employed by the Secretariat in delivering its commitments are: undertaking high level advocacy, assisting in policy reform, researching and disseminating knowledge and information, offering technical assistance, capacity building, forging partnerships and networking.

2 Overview of Functioning

2.1 Meetings with National Women's Machineries

2.1.1 Since 8WAMM, the National Women's Machineries (NWMs) have met annually on the eve of the 52nd, 53rd and 54th Sessions of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in New York. The Consultation is usually preceded by a meeting of the Commonwealth Gender Plan of Action Monitoring Group (CGPMG). A Group mandated to oversee and track progress on gender equality in the Commonwealth through monitoring PoA implementation.

2.1.2 The 2008 consultation of the NWMs held, in February, reviewed the outcomes of the 8WAMM, considered the report of the 2008 CGPMG meeting, developed modalities for operationalising the implementation of the M & E (monitoring and evaluation) Framework, and proposal for a Commonwealth Working Group on Gender, Peace and Security. In the 2009 NWMs consultation, the issues discussed were the CGPMG report, updates from the Commonwealth Secretariat and the Commonwealth Foundation; revision of the M & E (Monitoring and Evaluation) Framework, development of the PoA indicator template and consideration of the Mid Term Review (MTR). Plans were also initiated for a theme and agenda for the 9WAMM. The 2010 NWMs Consultation held in February this year, deliberated on the 9WAMM agenda, preliminary findings of the MTR, priorities for the next five years of the PoA implementation in view of the MTR, the Beijing +15 review and global developments. The revised 2010 Terms of Reference (TOR) for the Commonwealth Working Group on Gender, Peace and Security were also considered and agreed.

2.2 Commonwealth Gender Plan of Action Monitoring Group (CGPMG)

2.2.1 The Commonwealth Gender Plan of Action Monitoring Group (CGPMG) set up in February 2005 by the Commonwealth Women's Affairs Ministers assists the Secretariat with monitoring, reviewing and evaluating the implementation of the Commonwealth Plan of Action for Gender Equality 2005-2015. To date, the CGPMG has met five times. In February 2008, the group met to review the findings of the Commonwealth Secretariat gender audit; update members on progress made in establishing the Commonwealth Group on Gender, Peace and Security, discuss the membership of the CGPMG and elect a new chair for the group. Key issues

under focus at the 4th meeting of the Group in 2009 were clarification of the roles and responsibilities of the Group and consideration of an update on the Working Group on Gender, Peace and Security. The Group also discussed the mandates, priorities and expected outcomes of the 2010 MTR of the Commonwealth PoA for Gender Equality 2005-2015 and developed a draft work plan for the Group. The 5th CGPMG meeting held in February 2010 was convened to consider the preliminary findings of the MTR and oversee the handover of the chairing of the group from Botswana to Bangladesh. Progress made between the 4th and 5th meeting of the CGPMG includes setting up an MTR sub group on indicators as requested in the 2009 meeting, finalising the indicator template and review of the MTR questionnaire and process.

2.3 Partners

2.3.1 To maximise impact and optimise the use of resources, the Gender Section has been working collaboratively with a wide range of strategic partners, including Commonwealth organisations, multilateral, regional and bilateral agencies, and civil society organisations. Among Commonwealth organisations the principal partners have been the Commonwealth Foundation (CF), Commonwealth of Learning (COL), Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGF), Commonwealth Magistrates and Judges Association (CMJA), Commonwealth Lawyers Association (CLA), and the Commonwealth Association of Planners (CAP). There have been major collaborative projects with UNIFEM, UN DPKO, UNECA, UNDP, ITC, DFID, CIDA, UNESCAP, UNCTAD, CBD, WEFF, CWWL, WTO, UNFPA, IDRC, the ASEAN Secretariat, CARICOM, SADC, CARE, women's regional law and development networks, Ministries of Gender and Law/Justice from West, Southern and East Africa, Asia, and the Pacific, several of which are on-going. The Gender Section also plays a strong advocacy role. It has representation on the Task Forces constituted by the UN Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality (IANWGE) on Indigenous Women and on Gender and Trade, and representation on the Interagency Support Group (IASG) of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII). It is also part of various networks, including the OECD-DAC GENDERNET.

2.4 Mid-Term Review of the implementation of the Commonwealth Plan of Action for Gender Equality 2005-2015 (MTR)¹

2.4.1 The Secretariat contracted a team of consultants, consisting of two global and several regional consultants to carry out the Mid Term Review (MTR) of the Commonwealth Plan of Action on Gender Equality 2005-2015 (PoA), due for consideration at 9WAMM. The major objectives of the review are to assess the extent to which Commonwealth countries have achieved the aspiration of the PoA since its inception in 2005, identify the persistent challenges to the PoA achievement, and the degree to which the Commonwealth Secretariat's programmes have contributed to promoting gender equality and women's empowerment. The MTR should enhance the visibility of the Secretariat and maintain its strategic leadership on gender in the global arena. 29 completed questionnaires were received by the Secretariat (Antigua & Barbuda, Bahamas, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belize, Botswana, Cameroon,

¹ The MTR questionnaire provides an opportunity for all member countries to provide information on challenges and progress. It draws on CEDAW, Beijing +15 and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). It is a comprehensive questionnaire consistent with the PoA. Annex 2 shows the statistics of countries implementation of the PoA in the four critical areas.

Canada, Cyprus, Canada, Dominica, Ghana, Jamaica, Kenya, Malaysia, Malta, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, New Zealand, Nigeria, Pakistan, Singapore, St Lucia, Tanzania, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, United Kingdom, and Samoa). Data from Samoa, South Africa, Kenya, Singapore and Tanzania received after the data deadline and is therefore not included in the draft final report presented to the Ninth Women’s Affairs Ministers Meeting. Data from these countries will be entered into the database post 9WAMM.

2.4.2 Organisational and Programmatic Assessment of the Commonwealth Secretariat. As part of the MTR, an internal assessment of the Commonwealth Secretariat was undertaken in 2009. The assessment built on the findings and recommendations of the 2007 *Performance Audit of the Commonwealth Secretariat Strategy for Gender Equality and Gender Mainstreaming* and reiterated that the effectiveness of the Commonwealth Secretariat in supporting member countries could be enhanced by strengthened internal structures and mechanisms for gender mainstreaming. Promoting gender equality has not been embedded in procedures and the formal and informal rules guiding operations and staff relations, and thus mainstreaming efforts are dislodged, particularly with the rotation of staff. Addressing gender issues and conducting gender analysis within the organisation is not routine, nor are gender issues mainstreamed across the Secretariats’ work programme. The conclusion of the assessment emphasised the need for the Secretariat to develop an active gender policy and institutional gender strategy with clear accountability mechanisms in order to move forward the gender mainstreaming agenda internally and by default with external partners.

2.5 *Budgetary Resources from 2007-2010*

2.5.1 The Budgetary resources allocated to the Gender Section for the following financial years are as follows:

2007/2008- £406,535

2008/2009 -£413,282

2009/10- £ -£413,282 (this excludes the WAMM budget)

This amounts to a total of £820,462 over three years.

External organisation	Funding	Commonwealth Secretariat activity	Year
DFID	£170,913	Gender and Trade activities	2007-2009

2.6 *Staffing Structure*

2.6.1 The Gender Section is undergoing structural change, the new structure comprising: the Head of the Section, three Advisers to cover the three strategic areas of work: political, social and economic development, one senior programme officer, one programme officer, two research assistants and one programme/administrative assistant.

3 Programme Activities

3.1 The Gender Section in response to the Secretariat's Strategic Plan priorities (2008–2012) and the PoA (2005–2015), focuses its activities on four critical areas:

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

4 Critical Area: Gender, Democracy, Peace and Conflict

4.1 Background

4.1.1 The current PoA reinforces the critical importance of balanced representation by urging governments, political parties and civil society to attain a minimum target of 30 per cent women's representation at all levels and in all sectors, and urging countries that have achieved the target of 30 per cent to strive for the higher aspiration of 50/50.

4.1.2 Some countries in the Commonwealth continue to experience conflicts with a breakdown of institutional structures and governance resulting in increased violence, despite the support and efforts made to strengthen democracy. It is accepted that conflicts are major barriers to development and democracy. Women tend to be disproportionately affected by conflict. The PoA stresses the critical importance of women being involved in all aspects of negotiation which affects their lives and those of their societies by participating in peace negotiations and post-conflict reconstruction processes.

4.2 Activities and results

4.2.1 Political participation and representation

In the area of increasing women's representation and achieving gender balance in government and decision-making, there have been specific activities to assist member countries. Overall, the strategy has been to share good practices and encourage South-South and North-South dialogue.

Activities	Results
Supported the launch of the regional workshop 'Women in leadership' organised in Belize for the Caribbean in 2008 and the formal launch of the Caribbean Institute for Women in Leadership (CIWiL) in Barbados (2009).	Institutional capacity to advance women's transformational leadership and increase the number of women in politics, leadership and decision-making at all levels in the Caribbean enhanced. Replicable training models developed.

<p>The Secretariat participated in the Bi-Annual Pan-Commonwealth Local Government Forum Conference, Barbados. (May 2009)</p> <p>Collaborated with UNDP, IDRC and other partners to support the international conference on 'Women, Decentralisation and Local Government' held in Mexico-2008.</p> <p>Town Hall meeting organised on 'Women and Young Persons Defining Politics and Peace in Sri Lanka April 2008 in the wings of the Commonwealth Youth Minister Meeting (CYMM).</p>	<p>Advocacy for increased representation of women in Local Government undertaken.</p> <p>Capacity of women in decision making positions to promote gender responsive budgets in local government strengthened. Through the launch of the Aberdeen agenda on local government, gender equality and equity in local government administration and local governance services in the Commonwealth enhanced.</p> <p>The NWM of the Bahamas has requested assistance in documenting lessons learned from 'Women in Politics and Leadership.</p> <p>Knowledge and capacity of women and young persons to engage in politics and peace process strengthened.</p>
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4.2.2 Democracy, Peace and conflict

Activities with specific results over the period include:

Activities	Results
<p>Processes for setting up the Working Group on Gender, Peace and Security (WGGPS) re-activated -2010</p> <p>Colloquium on Women's Empowerment, leadership Development, International Peace and Security held in Liberia in March 2009.</p>	<p>Letter requesting Commonwealth Ministries of Gender to constitute their Gender, Peace and Security Nucleus issued.</p> <p>Concept Paper and Guidelines for WGGPS developed.</p> <p>Process for increased mainstreaming of gender in peace processes across the CW commenced. 9WAMM CSO dialogue on WGGPS created awareness on gender, peace and security.</p> <p>Enabling framework within a Commonwealth country for integrating gender responsive perspectives and mechanisms into national peace and security modalities secured.</p> <p>Model to enhance the Secretariat's lobbying on development of gender and peace National Action Plan in Commonwealth Countries developed.</p> <p>Strategic partnerships with international, regional organisations and other civil society actors are strengthened to deliver more effective peace outcomes.</p>

Participated in consultations on the UN Secretary-General's Report on Post Conflict Peace-building and Early Recovery titled "Promoting Gender Equality in Recovery and Peace building: Planning, Financing, Monitoring & Accountability" in 2009.	Secretariat's work on peace, security, and gender mainstreaming profiled.
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5 Critical Area: Human Rights and the Law

5.1 Background

5.1.1 The PoA asserts the Commonwealth's commitment to promote a rights-based approach in all work areas and notes that national constitutions, international and regional instruments and monitoring bodies are crucial for the promotion and protection of women's human rights. By acknowledging the value of laws and legal mechanisms and recognizing the significance of customary laws and practices in the daily lives of women, men and their communities, the PoA points to the need for integration of a gender-responsive, rights-based agenda in policies and programmes.

5.1.2 In taking forward the recommendations of the PoA, the Gender Section's work in the area of human rights and the law has focussed on reconciling customs and practices with statutory laws and international human rights standards, raising awareness on the marginalisation of indigenous and tribal women, model laws, migrant women workers' rights and women's rights to land.

5.1.3 The work on gender, culture and the law is jointly delivered with the Justice Section of the Legal and Constitutional Affairs Division (LCAD). In addition to convening strategic meetings to advance women's rights through law and custom, the interventions also focus on specific areas such as access to land, violence against women, and building capacity among traditional authority at the national/local level in West and East Africa. A key partnership has been forged with UNFPA for regional level work in Southern and East Africa. In Asia, planned work on women's rights and culture will be in collaboration with strategic partners including the first UN Special Rapporteur on Cultural Rights.

5.2 Activities and results

Activities	Results
Regional Colloquia on Gender, Culture and the Law were organised, these events brought Ministries of Gender and Law/Justice, traditional and faith leaders, judiciary and women's law networks together to dialogue on reconciling women's rights through law and customs. These colloquia were convened in : Asia- Bangladesh, October 2007	Colloquia series helped in raising awareness and strengthening capacity of key stakeholders who can secure women's rights to resources and increase their access to justice. Mechanism for mapping gender-responsive and appropriate strategies for successful law reform was also developed.

<p>Southern and East Africa - Namibia May 2008.</p> <p>Pacific- Papua New Guinea, April 2010</p>	
<p>The review of CARICOM Model legislation on gender equality was presented and endorsed by Law Ministers in 2008</p>	<p>Model serves as advocacy and policy tool for CW countries and partners.</p>
<p>Paper on VAW and legislation for consideration by Parliamentarians prepared.</p> <p>Follow up to the technical assistance provided to government of Namibia on gender based violence through a needs-assessment exercise on capacity gaps of the prosecutorial system.</p> <p>Providing gender inputs to the Legal and Constitutional Affairs Division on trafficking in women and children</p>	<p>Technical capacities of Governments to address Violence Against Women (VAW) strengthened.</p> <p>Demand driven and needs responsive programming enhanced.</p> <p>Inter-divisional efforts to address trafficking in women strengthened.</p>
<p>In partnership with WiDO (Widows Development Organisation) in 2009 held a “Training for trainers’ workshop” for traditional and religious leaders by the judiciary focusing on will-writing and widow’s rights in the context of CEDAW.</p> <p>East and West Africa follow up activities include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Needs assessment mission in 2008 to explore strategies for addressing women’s access to justice in relation to land ownership, tenure, access and violence against women. 2. Partnership with the Kenya Women Judges Association (KWJA) for a key workshop for the Rift Valley jurisdiction 3. In Cameroon, ongoing work with the judiciary and a human rights group to 	<p>Awareness created on widows rights among key Inter-locutors.</p> <p>More gender-responsive and women-centred judicial processes necessary to guarantee women’s rights established.</p> <p>Dialogue across customary, religious and legal spheres and women’s rights networks has transformed and increased women’s ability to access justice and protect their rights.</p> <p>Capacities of key stakeholders including Kenya Women Judges Association on jurisprudence of equality programme strengthened.</p> <p>Capacities of the judiciary, local administration and traditional chiefs, on women’s rights, enhanced.</p>

<p>train traditional authority on human rights standards and jurisprudence of equality to promote women's rights to land.</p> <p>4. In collaboration with Umajo Uaso Women's Group in Kenya – the Secretariat supported training of Samburu women in legal literacy and facilitating registration of land titles in their names (2009-2010)</p> <p>5. Partnership forged with UNFPA to convene regional training of traditional chiefs and regional leaders on women's rights and culture with a view to build their capacity to be change agents; USD60000 raised to fund activity scheduled for August 2010</p>	<p>Capacity building of Mafors and Yaa (traditional authority), to facilitate women's access to land and delivering legal literacy to women, Cameroon</p>
<p>The Secretariat gained membership to the CEDAW @ 30 Interagency Group for global advocacy to commemorate 30 years of CEDAW ratification.</p> <p>New publication to showcase current thinking and good practices among member countries in domestication of CEDAW produced.</p> <p>Publication on CEDAW and women's rights titled "Without Prejudice" launched at 9WAMM</p>	<p>Increased awareness on CEDAW and women's rights in a cultural context.</p> <p>Summary of case law from across the Commonwealth available as reference material.</p>

6 Critical Area: Gender, Poverty Eradication and Economic Empowerment

6.1 Background

6.1.1 Gender, Poverty Eradication and Economic Empowerment is the third critical area of the 2005–2015 PoA. The PoA noted that gender inequality causes and exacerbates the impact of poverty on women, who globally account for about 70 per cent of those living in poverty. It also noted that new opportunities for economic growth from globalisation and trade liberalisation can also pose critical challenges related to loss of livelihoods and employment for both women and men. However, with many women shouldering the primary responsibility for household and community management through their paid and unpaid work, and with the existence of gender-based occupational segregation, women are often more affected.

6.1.2 In order to effectively address the feminisation of both labour and poverty, the PoA recognised the need for the Commonwealth to work not only towards influencing fiscal and

trade policies, but also to broaden its approach to gender and economic empowerment, to encompass the macro-, meso- and micro-levels. The Gender Section’s remit of activities has included work in the areas of gender and trade, gender-responsive budgets, market access and enterprise development, the informal economy and social protection.

6.2 *Activities and results*

6.2.1 *Gender and trade*

The Gender Section pioneered work on capacity building in the area of gender and trade by developing a training module and adopting a regional approach for its dissemination. In partnership with One World Action, the Commonwealth Secretariat undertook an additional activity within the overall project. This was supported by DFID with additional funds of £170,913 in October 2007. The total estimate for the completion of Phase 1 of the multi-faceted project ‘Capacity Building in Gender and Trade’ funded by DFID from 2006-2009 was £735,913. This project was completed in 2009.

Activities	Results
<p>In terms of mainstreaming gender in trade negotiations and policy formulation by the secretariat, India and Uganda were the initial recipient of a systematic gender training at the national level, for trade negotiators and policy makers, and for training trainers organised by the Secretariat-2008</p> <p>Two strategic workshops, “Training of Trainers” and “Training of Trade Negotiators” in the mainstreaming of gender in National Trade Policies were organised with the Governments of India and Uganda. A parallel pan-commonwealth meeting to strategise on “Mainstreaming Gender in Trade: The Way Forward” was held in India-2009</p> <p>Research was initiated on the gender impacts of EPAs in SADC and COMESA regions-2008. Findings were disseminated at Regional meetings in collaboration with International NGO, One World Action.</p> <p>The DFID funded project with the Secretariat</p>	<p>Based on studies in India and Uganda, two publications on the impact of Gender on Revenue Collection have been produced by the Secretariat. These documents outline policy, programme and advocacy frameworks for moving this arm of gender responsive budgeting work forward. The trainings provided insights into revisions needed for the module for future use and suggested new approaches to fully convey some of the key messages and linkages to trade negotiators and policy makers.</p> <p>Skills and capacities to mainstream gender effectively in trade negotiations increased. Member states capacity to negotiate on trade and to formulate, manage and implement gender sensitive trade policies improved. Meetings disseminated research findings, improved capacity to implement and negotiate gender sensitive trade policies and were instrumental in the development and piloting of the training module.</p> <p>The Secretariat published research on the gender impact of the EU-ACP Economic Partnership Agreements in SADC and CARIFORUM, helped to strengthen evidence and advocacy for mainstreaming gender in trade negotiations and policy formulation.</p> <p>This led to a request in the CARIFORUM region by Jamaica for gender sensitisation for their ongoing CARIFORUM-Canada free trade agreement -2008</p> <p>Partnership with international development agencies</p>

<p>has provided substantial advocacy at the international level, at the UNCTAD XII in 2008 and with the EU DG Trade and DG Development in 2009. Both meetings were well attended with representation and panel presentations at very high level including the UNCTAD Secretary General, various Ambassadors and Permanent Secretaries of Trade from Commonwealth countries in the South.</p>	<p>strengthened around gender and trade programming. Increased understanding and commitment to mainstreaming gender into trade policies and negotiation processes.</p>
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6.2.2 Gender-responsive budgets (GRBs)

Activities	Results
<p>Advocacy and Capacity Building workshop on Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) was held in The Gambia and Nigeria for the Cabinet and National Assembly by the Commonwealth Secretariat Gender Section as part of the Secretariats support towards promoting Gender and Economic Empowerment - May 2010</p> <p>The Secretariat in March 2010 in partnership with UNIFEM and UNECA organised an advocacy and capacity building Workshop on 'GRB for Women's Affairs Ministers of the African Region.' Expected output is that all partners and participants gained clearer understanding and strategic plans on what requirements to effectively support women ministers and machineries in advocating for women's policies and issues.</p> <p>The Secretariat promoted its work on GRB, engendering new aid modalities and national macro-economic planning processes at the Accra and Doha meetings on aid effectiveness and financing for development-</p>	<p>Skills and knowledge of policy makers enhanced on gender responsive budgeting and gender within the context of sustainable recovery from the triple crisis (economic, climate and food).</p> <p>Advocacy capabilities of African policy makers raised in gender equality, and equity, and women's empowerment issues.</p> <p>Secretariat inputs were reflected in the outcome documents of the meetings and have led to strengthened partnerships with the OECD Gender</p>

<p>2009</p> <p>Research was undertaken on the implementation of GRB in Commonwealth countries spanning a period of 2007-2009.</p>	<p>Network, UNIFEM and UNDP</p> <p>Research findings provide good practices and experiences which will facilitate the wider implementation of GRB. Recommendations from research will help sharpen Secretariat programming. CFM better acquainted with their role in deepening GRB practices and systems.</p>
<p>National capacity building initiatives working with the National Women's Machinery and Finance Ministry on Gender Responsive Budgets in Ghana and on mainstreaming gender in macro-economic planning budgeting in Uganda -2009.</p> <p>The Secretariat participated at the UN High Level Meeting on the Global Financial Crisis in New York -2009.</p>	<p>These workshops have resulted in the identification of gaps and strengthened the capacities of national and local government officials to understand the relevance and significance of gender in planning and budgeting for achieving enhanced gender equality outcomes in indentified sectors.</p> <p>This enabled advocacy for greater consideration of gendered implications of finance and economic policies on overall growth and national development.</p>

7 Critical Area: Gender and HIV/AIDS

7.1 Background

7.1.1 In acknowledging that poverty and gender inequalities are driving factors in the spread and impact of HIV/AIDS, the PoA emphasises the need for bringing together gender analysis, mainstreaming methods and a multi-sectoral approach in HIV/AIDS interventions. The Gender Section has engaged in technical assistance, institutional strengthening, policy reviews, partnerships and support for research.

7.2 Activities and results

Activities	Results
<p>The pan-Commonwealth research project on the 'Gender and Policy dimensions of unpaid work in HIV care in the household'.</p> <p>Evidence based advocacy workshop with Commonwealth Parliamentarians in the wings of 9WAMM.</p>	<p>Knowledge of members and partners enhanced through UN CSW Session 2009</p> <p>Parliamentarian's knowledge on unpaid HIV care enhanced through advocacy workshop held in Barbados.</p> <p>Research breaks new ground in its theoretical and empirical approach by placing dignity, human rights and economics at the centre of the enquiry</p>

<p>Institutional strengthening of CARICOM/PANCAP through:</p> <p>Placement of a gender expert to provide inputs to the Caribbean Regional Strategic Framework for HIV/AIDS and coordinate with national review teams.</p> <p>Institutional strengthening of National AIDS Commission, Barbados, through:</p> <p>Placement of gender and behaviour change expert.</p> <p>Grant provided to ICW (International Community of Women Living with HIV) to consolidate and strengthen research on policy advocacy. Regional focus: East and Southern Africa.</p> <p>Continued partnership and technical inputs to the UNIFEM-led multiagency initiative on gender mainstreaming of HIV interventions in the Caribbean.</p>	<p>Gender dimensions and analysis integrated in the regional framework.</p> <p>Strengthened coordination of national reviews and regional processes.</p> <p>Strengthened coordination of gender-sensitive national programme delivery.</p> <p>Research and publications on HIV/AIDS, has increased knowledge, awareness and enhanced policy dialogue.</p> <p>Strengthened capacities through availability of training manual and delivery of training at national, regional and sub-regional levels</p>
<p>Asia – policy reviews from a gender perspective commissioned in seven countries.</p>	<p>Dissemination of comprehensive reviews for dissemination, enhanced awareness and scope for collaboration.</p>
<p>South Asia Policy Dialogue convened in collaboration with the Centre for Policy Alternatives (August 2007); South Asia Policy Dialogue held in February 2007.</p> <p>The objective was to facilitate information sharing and learn from other stakeholders; forge and deepen partnership and coordinate Secretariat response to issues identified.</p>	<p>Commitments for integrating gender in HIV/AIDS policy and programmes strengthened.</p>

8 Public Sector and Governance

8.1 Background

8.1.1 The PoA states that ‘the Secretariat’s strategy is based on working closely with national women’s machineries (NWMs) and other relevant ministries and agencies in their efforts to promote gender equality’ (para. 1.9).

8.1.2 The NWMs take a leading role in ensuring that their governments recognise the importance of mainstreaming gender equality concerns into the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of government programmes and projects. The NWMs provide

policy advice and support for capacity building for mainstreaming gender in all government sectors. They also coordinate a network of structures, and mechanisms that mainstream gender equality concerns in their country.

8.2 *Activities and results*

Activities	Results
The Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration (GIMPA) in collaboration with the Secretariat organised a Gender Policy Review Workshop in May. Technical assistance from the Secretariat facilitated the development and review of a GIMPA gender policy -2009.	Consensus framework adopted to assist GIMPA, its clients and stakeholders to mainstream gender equality in a systematic and result oriented manner within the overall institutional policy, structure and systems.
In partnership with SADC- the Secretariat held a 3 day workshop in Malawi (October 2007) on “Women’s Role in Decision Making and Governance Process; Issues and Challenges for the SADC Region.” The rationale of the workshop was to provide a forum to review and discuss issues, challenges and strategies to address persistent obstacles to achieving equal and balanced representation and participation of women and men in democratic and governance process in the SADC region.	Partnership and consultation with regional institutions strengthened. Increased understanding of regional priorities and concerns around gender equality

9 **Challenges**

9.1 Staffing, Structure, Rotation Policy

Weak capacities for gender analysis across divisions and sector

Availability of funds for project continuation

Loss of focal points in projects

High level turnover in NWM and partner ministries

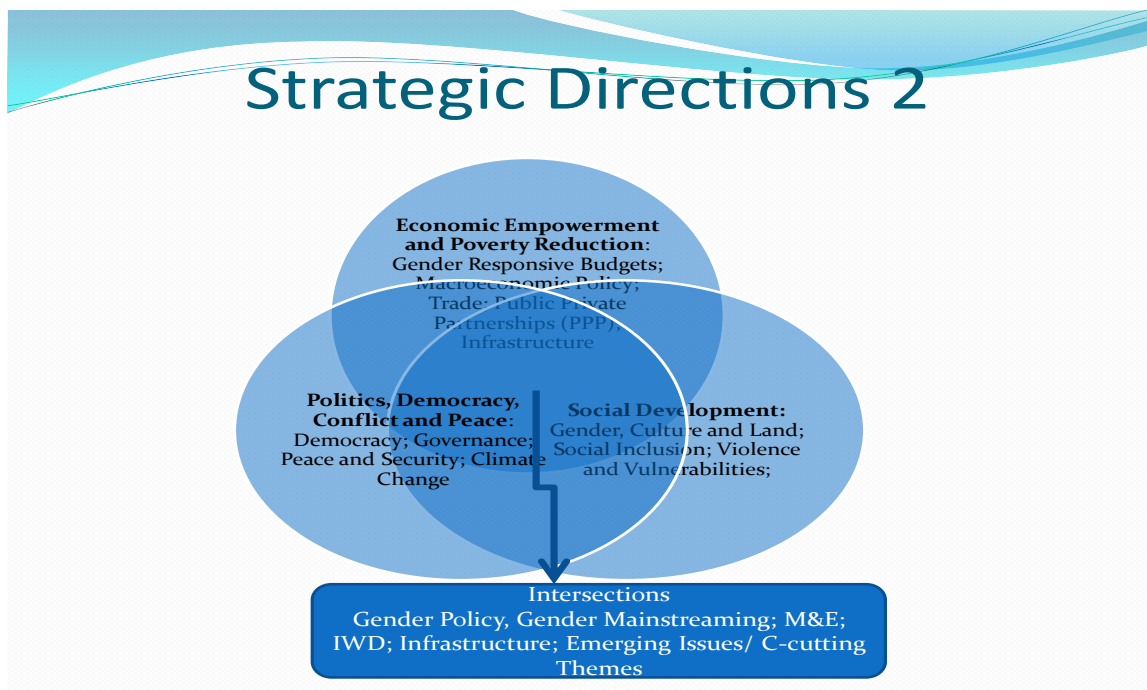
Weak communication with countries

10 **Forward-Looking Agenda**

In planning ahead, the Gender Section’s strategic plan is more closely aligned with key Commonwealth guiding principles and mandate. This is to provide more platforms for delivering on gender mainstreaming through its collaborative work with other ComSec divisions and units. Work is proposed in three strategic directions, political, social and

economic development. These are closely linked with the Secretariat strategic works programme areas viz:

Political Development linked with programme areas 1,3,4,5; Social Development linked with programmes 3 & 4; Economic Development linked with programme area 6.



3 Strategic Directions

The Gender Section's strategic directions aligned with key CW guiding principles and mandate:

- Economic Development: - Gender Responsive Budgets; Trade; Public Private Partnership (PPP), Climate Change;
- Political Development:- Democratic Governance, Decision Making, Conflict and Peace
- Social Development: Gender Culture and Land, Social Inclusion, Violence and Vulnerabilities.

Opportunities for furthering work on gender mainstreaming are provided by ongoing work in the following areas:

- CHOGM Mandate
- MTR of the PoA
- MDG review summit, B+15
- 9WAMM
- New Partnerships-UNCTAD; CWWL; Hubs and Spokes, ICTSD

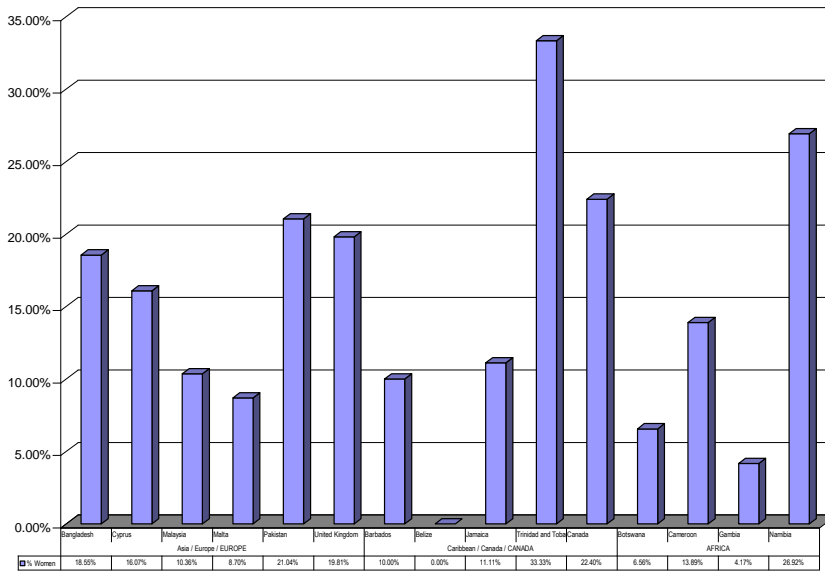
Programme relevance to country contexts is a constant concern. Design of projects and interventions will be greatly informed by findings of the MTR report of the PoA. Emerging issues, trends and patterns captured in Annex 1 will be utilised both as a baseline as well as monitoring tool to assess programme relevance and impact over time.

Research and knowledge enhancement will continue to be a strategic programme approach for the Secretariat's work on gender equality. Efforts will be geared at building on the stock of publications attached in Annex 2.

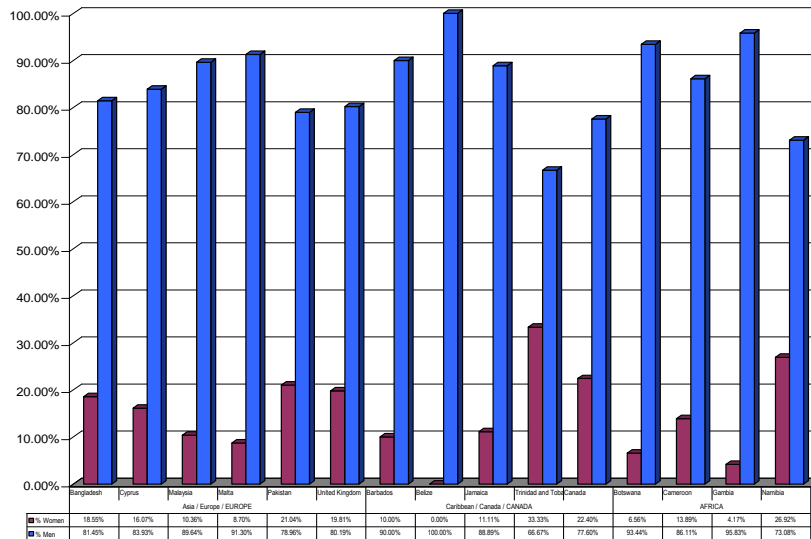
Annex 1

Governance Gender Peace and Security

Female Representation in Parliament as % of Total Number of Seats by Region

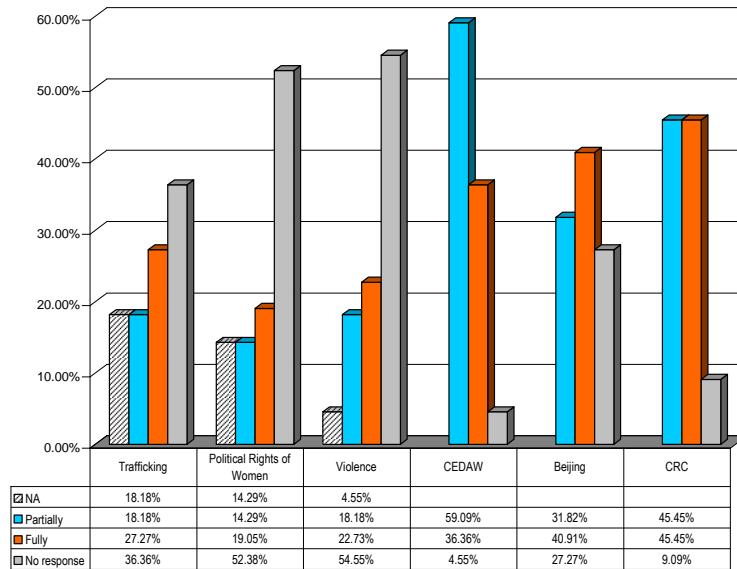


Women Representation in Parliamentary position

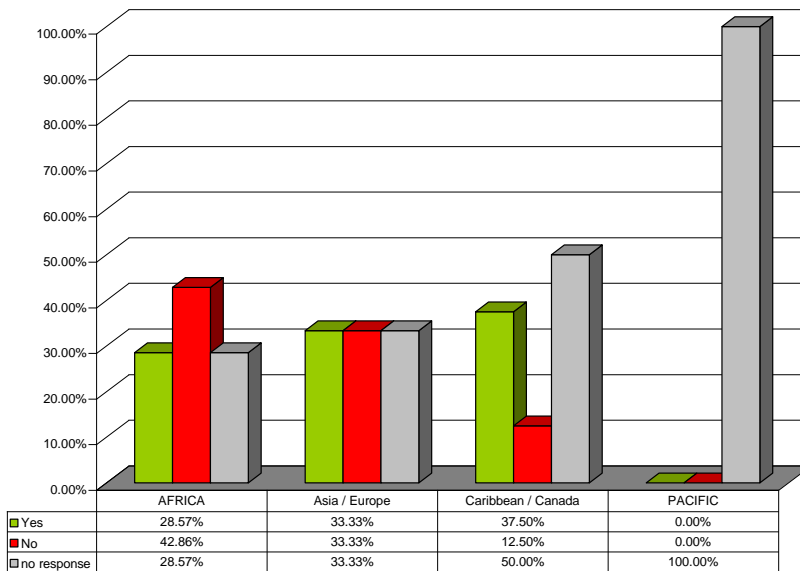


Human Rights and the Law

Global statistics on the degree of domestication of International Human Rights Instruments

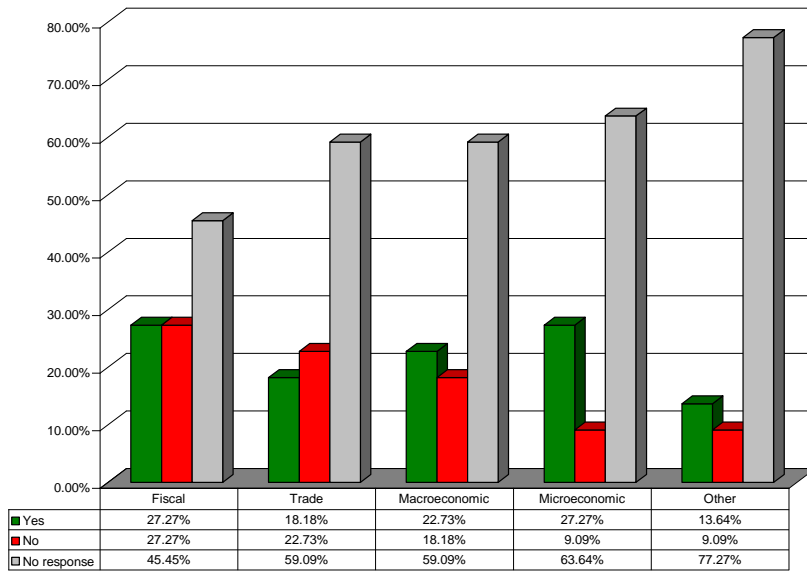


Review of Existing Laws to Codify Customary Laws by Region in %

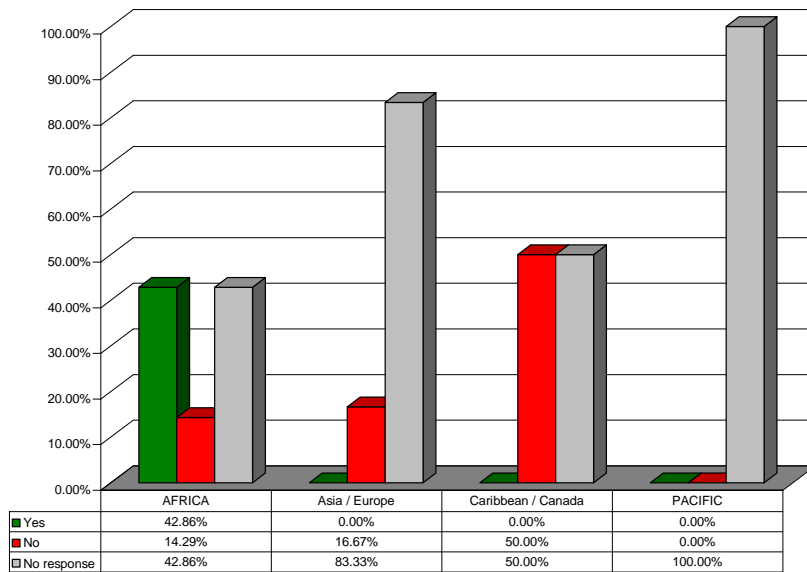


Gender, Poverty Eradication and Economics

Gender Sensitivity of Economic Policies, Global



Impact of Reduction in Tariffs and Elimination of Trade Barriers on Women by Region



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