



Commonwealth
Foundation

Strategic Plan
2012–16

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Acronyms

CA	Commonwealth Association
CD	Capacity Development
CHOGM	Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting
CPF	Commonwealth People's Forum
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
EPG	Eminent Persons Group
IGO	Intergovernmental Organisation
KM	Knowledge Management
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
RBM	Results-Based Management

1. Introduction

Background

The Foundation was established as a charity under English law in 1965. At the outset, Commonwealth leaders recognised the value that the efforts and endeavours of people acting outside the realm of government bring to the Commonwealth, primarily through associations of professionals.

Throughout the 1970s the concept of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) developed and Commonwealth leaders responded by expanding the mandate of the Foundation. It was reconstituted as an intergovernmental organisation (IGO) in 1982, with a remit to work with a wider range of civic organisations on specific issues including gender equality and culture.

From 1982 the Foundation started to establish an international network of development orientated NGOs, beyond the professional associations. These NGOs were largely national in their focus and distinct from the relatively well-resourced international NGOs. The Foundation worked with these partners to advance a development agenda that was broadly consistent with Commonwealth priorities.

The 1980s also saw the Foundation support several professional development centres or hubs across the Commonwealth and many of these still function effectively today. In the 1990s the Foundation used its grant making to address an emerging global

development agenda, for example by supporting the participation of NGOs in major international development processes. In 1999 the Foundation presented a major piece of research on the relationship between participatory governance and good development outcomes to the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Durban. This heralded a new era of facilitating dialogue between Civil Society and governments through Commonwealth processes.

At the CHOGM in Port of Spain in 2009, Heads of Government committed to the reform of Commonwealth institutions. They established the Eminent Persons Group (EPG), which highlighted the importance of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) to the future of the Commonwealth.

In their final report they made several recommendations on ways in which the Foundation could support this constituency. When the report was received in Perth in 2011, Commonwealth Heads of Government committed:

To promote the future of the Commonwealth through the strong and important voice of its people by ... re-launching the Commonwealth Foundation in 2012, while retaining its fundamental intergovernmental nature and maintaining its accountability to member states, with a revised mandate and Memorandum of Understanding so that it can more effectively deliver the objectives of strengthening and mobilising Civil Society in support of Commonwealth principles and priorities.

This Strategic Plan marks the beginning of a third phase in the evolution of the Foundation. It breaks new ground for the organisation, signaling a determination to apply more focus, rigour and an outcomes orientation to its work.

The Plan responds to the CHOGM mandate and has been developed collectively by the Foundation's staff with inputs from stakeholders, including member states, CSOs and the Commonwealth Secretariat. Participatory governance and Civil Society are the central concepts in the strategic priorities for 2012-16 and inform the new Vision and Mission.

The Foundation is well placed to respond to new demands and areas of need as requested by its Civil Society stakeholders and has long advocated for and supported the inclusion of citizens' voices in decision-making processes.

The Plan focuses the Foundation's activities on strategic participatory governance outcomes: to develop the capacity of Civil Society to participate; and to strengthen collaboration and learning between CSOs and institutions in governance. This speaks to the Foundation's unique proposition as an IGO able to work directly with its member state institutions, while encouraging and enabling Civil Society.

The Plan coincides with the introduction of Results-Based Management (RBM) at the Foundation. RBM will enable the Foundation to demonstrate to its stakeholders that it is making a difference in pursuit of Commonwealth principles and priorities by placing an emphasis on clearly defined and evaluable results.

This approach brings a number of benefits for the organisation. It provides for the organisation to ensure that all of its resources are coherently mobilised and that every staff member is able to locate their work in the achievement of commonly held objectives. RBM as a process positions the Foundation strongly as a learning organisation that promotes performance and contributes meaningfully to building a culture of knowledge sharing in participatory governance.

It differs in format to previous plans. It enables the Foundation to design multi-year initiatives for the first time and has provided the impetus for the organisation to construct project teams across departments. It is also envisaged that the Plan will improve the way that the Foundation communicates its work.

The Plan is divided into six sections. Section 1 is an overview of the document and provides the background and the programming considerations. Section 2 articulates the Foundation's strategic framework. Section 3 discusses RBM as an integral strategy both in the process of developing the Strategic Plan and in the ongoing work of the Foundation. It presents the Foundation's Outcome Performance Framework. Section 4 describes the programming strategy, and the redesigned Grants Programme and how this aligns with the strategic priorities and target outcomes of the Foundation. Section 5 discusses programme management and support, and how it has also been aligned with the RBM process. Section 6 describes the Foundation's budget approach. Section 7 features the project profiles for the multi-year strategic and the continuing projects.

Participatory Governance: Context and Programming Considerations

Governance encompasses the rules, institutions and processes, through which people, organisations and governments work toward common objectives, make decisions, generate legitimate authority and power, and promote and protect human rights¹. Participatory governance is about how the state, the market and Civil Society interact to effect change. These interactions involve the inclusion of Civil Society in decision-making processes, enabling citizens to exercise voice and vote and engaging in policy formation among others. "Citizens are engaged in public venues at a variety of times... thus allowing them to be involved in policy formation, selection and oversight"².

One of the cornerstones of participatory governance is dialogue. Dialogue requires facilitation so that people listen, learn and discuss to foster an environment of active, inclusive participation. It enables community members to constructively address issues that affect them in their daily lives. At the same time, public dialogue offers an effective means for

¹ Governance Toolkit, Canadian International Development Agency, December 2010

² <http://www.comminit.com/democracy-governance/content/does-participatory-governance-matter-exploring-nature-and-impact-participatory-reforms>

policy makers to be informed about community concerns, needs and priorities. It also serves to find ways in which community demands can be addressed meaningfully. When facilitated effectively, public dialogue has a strong potential to foster a wide variety of societal processes such as but not limited to democratisation, peace-building and reconciliation, leading to social and political transformation³. Subsumed in participatory governance is participatory communication which promotes a bottom up approach and includes communication for social change and development strategies. It gives importance to “resurrecting” voices, particularly of those who are marginalised, and facilitates processes that are inclusive, build consensus and promote social cohesion.

Strengthening and mobilising Civil Society is at the heart of the Foundation’s mandate. By having a stronger voice and clearer messages, Civil Society will be able to participate more effectively in governance processes as well as address the challenges faced in their operating environment. The Foundation defines Civil Society as the arena, outside of the family, the state and the market, which is created by individual and collective actions, organisations and institutions to advance shared interests. Civil Society therefore encompasses Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and the

actions of less formalised groups and individuals. CSOs are independent, non-state and non-private sector associations and organisations that have some form of structure and formal rules of operating, together with the networks, infrastructure and resources they utilise⁴.

The growth of Civil Society has been one of the most significant trends in international development with a dramatic expansion in its size, scope, and capacity around the globe over the past three decades, aided by the process of globalisation and the expansion of democratic governance, economic integration, and information and communication technology (ICT). The participation of CSOs in government development projects and programmes can enhance their operational performance by promoting relevance to needs, contributing local knowledge, providing technical expertise, and leveraging social capital. Further, CSOs can bring innovative ideas and solutions, as well as participatory approaches, to solving local problems⁵.

CSO influence in shaping global public policy has also emerged over the past two decades. This dynamism is exemplified by successful advocacy campaigns around issues such as banning of land mines, debt cancellation, and environmental protection which have mobilised

3 http://pgexchange.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&id=56&Itemid=127

4 State of Civil Society, CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation, April 2012

5 <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/CSO/0,,contentMDK:20092185-menuPK:220422-pagePK:220503-sitePK:220476-theSitePK:228717,00.html>

millions of supporters around the globe. A recent manifestation of the vibrancy of global Civil Society has been the World Social Forum which has been held annually since 2001 on different continents, and which has brought together tens of thousands of Civil Society activists to discuss global development issues. Another example of the impact of Civil Society is the Global Call to Action Against Poverty (GCAP), an international Civil Society campaign advocating debt relief and increased aid commitments. In 2008, GCAP is estimated to have mobilised more than 116 million citizens to participate in the Stand Up Against Poverty events held in cities throughout the world⁶.

In keeping with its mandate and optimising its convening advantage, the Foundation is responding to these shifts by adjusting its work to enable CSOs to contribute meaningfully to participatory governance and in doing so, contribute to improving development outcomes. Although the Foundation's thrust is on the demand side (CSOs and citizens) of governance, its strategic priorities also address the supply side (state institutions and structures) and the interaction between the two. This speaks to the unique position of the Foundation as an intergovernmental agency with a mandate to strengthen and mobilise Civil Society in support

of Commonwealth principles and priorities. The inclusion of citizens in state-sanctioned forums means that they are now in regular contact with government officials. These spaces generate new forms of interaction among citizens as well as between citizens and government officials⁷.

Through its strategic planning for the period 2012-16, the Foundation has identified short-term outcomes – and related approaches – in support of the ultimate outcome of a more effective, responsive and accountable governance with Civil Society participation. The Strategic Plan presents a range of initiatives in support of the priority needs of Civil Society across the Commonwealth. Through a process of consultation and consensus building, these initiatives have been designed as multi-year projects with specific planned activities for the fiscal year 2012-13. It is recognised that it is imperative that the projects will entail a follow-through assessment and validation of the range of issues targeted. This will enable the fine-tuning of project design in a way that is needs based, demand driven, locally owned and focused on developing sustainable local capacities. This will be a regular aspect of the Foundation's learning and planning cycle.

⁶ Ibid

⁷ Governance Toolkit, Canadian International Development Agency, December 2010

2. Strategic Framework

The Foundation has articulated a new Vision, Mission and Core Values. Through a participatory process, the Foundation also developed its Logic Model which includes the target outcomes at the ultimate, intermediate and short term levels for the strategic period 2012-16.

Vision

A world where every person is able to fully participate in and contribute to the sustainable development of a peaceful and equitable society.

Mission

To develop the capacity of Civil Society to act together and learn from each other to engage with the institutions that shape people's lives.

Core Values

— Diversity

Recognising that the plurality of the Commonwealth lies at the heart of its strength, the Commonwealth Foundation will respect the diversity of the people of the Commonwealth in fulfilling its mission. It is committed to the equality of opportunity for all and to respect for difference.

— Collaboration

Recognising that effective, responsive and accountable governance requires the inputs of all stakeholders, the Commonwealth Foundation will share the learning generated by the participation of Civil Society. It is committed to inspiring dialogue from the bottom up, promoting consultations, building consensus, facilitating convergence, forging partnerships and engaging diverse stakeholders in participatory governance.

— Integrity

Recognising that IGOs are publicly funded and answerable to their member states, the Commonwealth Foundation will act in a thoroughly transparent manner in all its undertakings. It is committed to demonstrating accountability to both governments and Civil Society. It pursues its mission with commitment, discipline and rigour.

— Ingenuity

Recognising the scale and scope of the challenges facing Commonwealth people and their organisations, the Commonwealth Foundation acknowledges the requirement to be innovative in its responses. It is committed to acting as a catalyst that brings stakeholders together to generate creative and innovative solutions and promote thoughtful analysis and learning.

Commonwealth Foundation Logic Model

Ultimate outcome	More effective, responsive and accountable governance with Civil Society participation			
Intermediate outcomes	1.0 Enhanced capacity of CSOs to collaborate with each other and engage in participatory governance		2.0 Increased collaboration and learning between CSOs and institutions in governance	
	Dialogue	Replication	Collaboration	Learning
Short-term outcomes	1.1 Strengthened ability of Civil Society networks/alliances to engage in dialogue on participatory governance	1.2 Enhanced ability of Civil Society networks/alliances to identify and replicate good practices on participatory governance	2.1 Increased interaction between Civil Society networks/alliances and institutions in governance	2.2 Greater understanding of and competence in participatory governance among Civil Society and other stakeholders including the wider public

3. Results-Based Management

The 2012-16 Strategic Plan coincides with the full adoption of Results-Based Management (RBM) by the Foundation. RBM is a strategy for sustainable effectiveness with a strong focus on outcomes, aligning the whole organisation in their pursuit.

Among other things it requires:

- Clarity about, and budgeting for, expected results
- Systematic monitoring of results
- Processes for evaluating results data, learning from them, and applying the learning in operational and strategic decisions
- Meaningful reporting to external stakeholders
- Attention to risk

The Foundation is engaging with RBM in a number of ways:

- It has identified expected outcomes at three levels, Short-Term (0-4 years), Intermediate (3 years onwards) and Ultimate, and clarified their inter-relationships as illustrated in the Logic Model .
- Each Short-Term Outcome is addressed by a Strategic Project supported by activity-based budgeting.
- The Foundation's grant making will be clearly aligned with the Intermediate Outcomes.
- Cross-cutting outcomes have also been identified.

- A more detailed discussion on how these cross-cutting outcomes will be mainstreamed in projects is included in the following section on Programming Strategy.
- Evidence of these outcomes will be monitored through the surveys of stakeholders and fully assessed in the Strategic Plan summative evaluation.
- Assumptions behind the expected outcomes have been identified and risk strategies are being reviewed regularly.
- Foundation staff will monitor the outputs of their projects – both their reach and quality – and of grant making through customised approaches.
- Indicators for the Logic Model and cross-cutting outcomes have been developed and will be monitored, mainly through surveys of stakeholders.
- The Foundation will create spaces and processes for staff and stakeholders to interpret the results data, learn from them, share the knowledge and apply it.
- Annual reporting in particular will focus on outcomes.
- There will be an evaluation of the Strategic Plan towards the end of year three to feed into the planning process for 2016-20.

RBM involves a gradual change in organisational culture. All staff will receive training in RBM and support in applying results-based approaches in planning multi-year projects for 2012-16, including an activity-based budgeting process. The Foundation will regularly take stock of its progress in building the evaluative culture that RBM needs and supports.

Outcome Performance Framework

The Outcome Performance Framework stems from the Logic Model, taking each outcome and identifying assumptions behind, and performance indicators for, their achievement. It also proposes means of verification of the indicators. It is similar to a project logical framework, but it is pitched at a strategic level, and does not extend to outputs and activities. These are included in the project implementation plans and are implicit in the Grants Programme.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Outcome Performance Framework contains the details of the monitoring strategy for outcomes. Most outcomes will be traced through periodic surveys of CSOs and institutions in governance that the Foundation has engaged with. These surveys will be conducted by a variety of low-cost means including online methodologies, and face-to-face when expedient, such as during participatory forums and follow-through activities related to project implementation.

Project outcome monitoring surveys will be complemented by:

- Proportionate reporting requirements for grantees
- Quantitative and qualitative monitoring of outputs by staff and project partners
- Summative evaluation of the Strategic Plan towards the end of year three

Outcome Performance Framework

Mission				
To develop the capacity of Civil Society to act together and learn from each other to engage with the institutions that shape people's lives				
	Results	Indicators	Means of Verification	Assumptions behind the conversion of an outcome to the next level
Ultimate outcome	More effective, responsive and accountable governance with Civil Society participation	# and % of CSOs reporting improvements in governance as a result of their participation	Periodic – mainly qualitative – follow-up surveys of CSOs that have partnered with / benefited from Foundation interventions	
		# and % of institutions in governance reporting the take-up of CSO contributions in their policy-making and institutional development	Periodic – mainly qualitative – surveys of governance institutions that have partnered with / benefited from Foundation interventions or independently engaged with CSOs who have	
Intermediate Outcome 1	Enhanced capacity of CSOs to collaborate with each other and engage in participatory governance	# and % of CSOs reporting significant increase in benefits from collaboration with peers	Periodic – mainly qualitative – follow-up surveys of CSOs that have partnered with / benefited from Foundation interventions	Collaboration leads to take-up of CSO contributions by institutions in governance
		# and % of CSOs reporting significant improvements in their effectiveness in engagement with institutions in governance	Periodic – mainly qualitative – follow-up surveys of CSOs that have partnered with / benefited from Foundation interventions	

	Results	Indicators	Means of Verification	Assumptions behind the conversion of an outcome to the next level
Short-Term Outcome 1.1	Strengthened ability of Civil Society networks/alliances to engage in dialogue on participatory governance	# and % of CSOs reporting their readiness to engage with confidence in dialogue on participatory governance # and % of CSOs reporting improved skills in using specific tools in dialogue	Periodic – mainly qualitative – follow-up surveys of CSOs that have partnered with / benefited from Foundation interventions	There are sufficient opportunities for CSOs to apply their new abilities CSO partners take ownership of the processes set in motion by the projects, underpinning their sustainability
Short-Term Outcome 1.2	Enhanced ability of Civil Society networks/alliances to identify and replicate good practices on participatory governance	# and % of CSOs reporting significant increase in their knowledge of good practices on participatory governance # and % of CSOs reporting significant increase in actual replication of good practices on participatory governance	Periodic – mainly qualitative – follow-up surveys of CSOs that have partnered with / benefited from Foundation interventions	CSOs willing to share their experience with, and support, other CSOs
Intermediate Outcome 2	Increased collaboration and learning between CSOs and institutions in governance	# and % of CSOs reporting significant increases in constructive collaboration with institutions in governance	Periodic – mainly qualitative – follow-up surveys of CSOs that have partnered with / benefited from Foundation interventions	Collaboration leads to take-up of CSO contributions by institutions in governance
		# and % of institutions in governance reporting significant increases in constructive collaboration with CSOs	Periodic – mainly qualitative – surveys of institutions that have partnered with / benefited from Foundation interventions or independently engaged with CSOs who have	

	Results	Indicators	Means of Verification	Assumptions behind the conversion of an outcome to the next level
Short-Term Outcome 2.1	Increased interaction between Civil Society networks/alliances and institutions in governance	<p># of participatory forums in governance processes</p> <p># of CSOs participating in ministerial meetings in Commonwealth and non-Commonwealth processes</p>	Foundation monitoring of forums	The experience of interaction is positive enough on both sides to convince them to engage substantively in participatory governance
Short-Term Outcome 2.2	Greater understanding of and competence in participatory governance among Civil Society and other stakeholders including the wider public	# and % of CSOs reporting greater understanding of and competence in participatory governance resulting from dialogue with institutions in governance	Periodic – mainly qualitative – follow-up surveys of CSOs that have partnered with / benefited from Foundation interventions	<p>The environment for substantive engagement in participatory governance is sufficiently enabling</p> <p>CSOs willing to share their experience with, and support, other CSOs</p>
		# and % of institutions in governance reporting greater understanding of and competence in participatory governance resulting from dialogue with Civil Society networks/alliances	Periodic – mainly qualitative – surveys of institutions that have partnered with / benefited from Foundation interventions or independently engaged with CSOs who have	
		# and % of new Civil Society networks/alliances engaging in constructive dialogue about participation with institutions in governance	Foundation monitoring of forums	

The Management of Risk in the Pursuit of Outcomes

Outcomes are beyond the control of organisations in development. They are subject to external factors which increase in number and complexity in the progression from Short-Term to Intermediate and finally to the Ultimate Outcome.

It is possible however to identify some of the risks that may inhibit the expected emergence of outcomes, to take advance action to mitigate them, to monitor them, and to take contingency action if they arise.

The principal risks in the Outcome Performance Framework are the reverse of the assumptions. Risk management strategies for the outcomes are summarised on the following page.

Risks apply at the level of the activities and outputs. Each project has its own risk management strategy.

Risks also apply to the Foundation's enabling environment eg. funding, partnerships, and reputation. An extended risk strategy will be developed in the first year of the Strategic Plan to encompass organisational risk.

Risk Management Strategies

Risks	Outcomes at Risk	Risk Management Strategies
Collaboration does not lead to take-up of CSO contributions by institutions in governance	More effective, responsive and accountable governance through Civil Society participation	Further engagement with both parties to identify reasons for lack of take-up. Identify necessary support mechanisms
There are insufficient opportunities for CSOs to apply their new abilities	Enhanced capacity of CSOs to collaborate with each other and engage in participatory governance	Engagement with institutions in governance to identify opportunities for interaction
CSO partners do not take ownership of the processes set in motion by the projects, undermining their sustainability	Enhanced capacity of CSOs to collaborate with each other and engage in participatory governance	Emphasis on consensus building, sustainability and ownership built in to the projects Continuing contact with CSO leadership to identify any necessary further support
CSOs are unwilling to share their experience with, and support, other CSOs	Enhanced capacity of CSOs to collaborate with each other and engage in participatory governance Greater understanding of and competence in participatory governance among Civil Society and other stakeholders including the wider public	Build consensus and expectations around the concept of sharing and mutual support
Engagement experience is not positive enough on one side or the other to convince the party to engage substantively in participatory governance	Increased collaboration and learning between CSOs and institutions in governance	Feedback mechanisms from interactions to identify these weaknesses. Follow-up with the parties to identify possible remedial interventions
The environment for substantive engagement in participatory governance is not sufficiently enabling	Increased collaboration and learning between CSOs and institutions in governance	Collaboration with Commonwealth Secretariat and other inter-governmental stakeholders to improve the enabling environment

4. Programmes

This section discusses in detail the programming strategies which include a capacity development (CD) model, and approaches to managing knowledge, mainstreaming cross-cutting outcomes and promoting synergy and coordination with key stakeholders. It also describes the direction the Grants Programme will take to strengthen and mobilise CSOs to engage in participatory governance.

Section 7 presents the project profiles for 2012-16.

Programming Strategy

Capacity Development

Capacity Development (CD) can be seen as “a locally driven process of learning by leaders, coalitions and other agents of change that brings about changes in socio-political, policy-related, and organisational factors to enhance local ownership for and the effectiveness and efficiency of efforts to achieve a development goal⁸.” Increasing the capacity for development is “by extension, a process of socio-political, policy-related, and organisational change... and driven primarily by changes in how knowledge and information are applied at various levels of society – that is, by learning⁹.”

The Foundation will facilitate and support this change process in pursuit of its mission and mandate to support Civil Society in the Commonwealth. The Foundation adheres to the principle that the individual, organisations and institutions involved should own and manage their own CD and use methodologies that contribute to sustainability.

The Foundation will facilitate this process by:

- providing support at various levels of the participatory governance system
- following a systematic process of CD that leads to sustainability
- utilising effective CD delivery methodologies
- promoting knowledge sharing and learning as an important aspect of social transformation in bringing about locally-owned changes to advance a particular development goal

The Foundation’s CD Model

In the past, reference to capacity has often emphasised individual capacity to the exclusion of organisational and institutional capacity. There is now a growing awareness that human resource development alone is not the answer to capacity constraints in most institutions. Effective CD focuses on

⁸ Otoo, Samuel et al. *The Capacity Development Results Framework: A Strategic and results-oriented approach to learning for capacity development*, World Bank Institute, June 2009, p3.

⁹ Ibid

the organisation, and the individuals, within a system. The Foundation's CD model describes an open system that defines the stakeholder terrain at the individual, organisational and institutional levels. It identifies stakeholders such as CSOs that should be involved in the CD process and the capacities that are needed. These stakeholders perform a range of functions that include developing and advocating for policy and plans, mobilising resources, performing administrative functions, delivering basic services, providing oversight, managing financial systems and implementing programmes.

In addition it considers the policy, funding and supporting environment in which the individuals and organisations operate. This 'enabling environment' may also need enhancement if the process and the results of CD are to be sustained. The Foundation's CD model offers a view of capacity as a complex, holistic process that takes place at different levels of the system in a web of interconnectedness.

Staged Process of Capacity Development

The process of change and development in the Foundation's CD model includes four general stages. CD is viewed broadly as a developmental process that takes place over time, each step or stage building on the one before or at times overlapping and the steps repeating themselves in a cyclical, upwardly spiraling manner in a response to internal and external influences.

- **Stage 1: Consensus**
Increased and facilitated agreement about the need to enhance capacity in order to achieve a development goal; and about what capacities and whose capacities to develop.
- **Stage 2: Strengthening Capacity**
Strengthened individual competencies and organisational processes, structures and systems.
- **Stage 3: Application**
Improved application of capacities; improved implementation of processes, structures, and systems to enhance performance.
- **Stage 4: Institutionalisation**
Enhanced regulatory support for new systems; culture of continuous improvement internalised; increased ability of the enabling environment to support and sustain development.

Participatory Capacity Development Methodologies

CD in the Foundation is viewed as a comprehensive approach involving necessary and strategic stakeholders in a change process aimed at the improved performance of a Civil Society network/alliance within a system or a sector. CD in the Foundation is characterised as holistic, participatory, priorities based, culturally situated, results based, collaborative, analytical, practical and iterative.

The Foundation will use participatory methodologies in the design, development, implementation and evaluation of its CD activities. Exemplary practices and lessons in CD have shown that delivery methodologies for CD activities are most effective when there is an emphasis on learning-by-doing, on-site mentoring, locally based hands-on training approaches, broad participation of stakeholders, and direct application of new skills to the local situation. There are also examples of successful CD that utilise public communication strategies and demonstration projects for concrete and on-site applications of skills and technology.

Participatory CD methodologies are not only effective in helping Civil Society partners strengthen their skills and abilities, but they also model participatory approaches that these partners can utilise when planning their own activities beyond the technical assistance. The participation of Civil Society partners in the planning of the CD activities, and the integration of a communication strategy, underscores the importance of consultation and communication with partners during the planning and implementation of projects.

The Foundation recognises the critical role of on-site coaching in ensuring and increasing the effectiveness of the CD projects. This strategy moves beyond the delivery of discrete interventions towards ongoing support to partners in identifying their issues, developing solution-seeking approaches to solve their problems, identifying new methods of approaching dialogue and interaction with government, and providing support to broadening the CD initiatives. The Foundation will use this strategy to ensure that partners receive comprehensive and cohesive coaching for ongoing CD rather than a series of disjointed 'training' interventions and capacity replacement approaches.

Knowledge Management: Building a Culture of Learning and Performance

Knowledge Management (KM) serves as an overarching approach in the development and the implementation of the Foundation's Strategic Plan for 2012-16. KM offers the Foundation a discipline for managing information and knowledge that it knows it already has; identifying information and knowledge it may not know that it has; creating new knowledge and helping it to innovate. A learning-centred definition of KM is the acquisition, storage, retrieval, creation, sharing, use, application and review of an organisation's explicit and tacit knowledge in a systematic manner to achieve organisational goals. KM will be a central strategy in strengthening the Foundation as a knowledge-focused and outcome-based organisation.

KM will be applied in both the internal and external processes of the Foundation and will guide the design, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and reporting of projects. It will enable the Foundation to get the right knowledge to the right people at the right time. As a key strategy, KM will ensure sustainability by:

- promoting knowledge sharing and learning
- systematically supporting replication of good and fit practices

- documenting and disseminating knowledge tools, lessons learned and success stories
- developing a communications strategy to increase awareness and understanding of the benefits of participatory governance
- maximising technology to enable meaningful learning and performance

For information to truly be considered as knowledge, it needs to be applied for effective action. Replication of models and good practices to improve Civil Society engagement in participatory governance is a knowledge process exemplifying the application of knowledge. Effective RBM that is integrated in the Foundation's programming, is inseparable from KM.

Communications is key to the programming and management of the Foundation and needs to be anchored in promoting a culture of learning and performance. The Foundation will develop comprehensive KM, Stakeholder Relations and Communications strategies to promote the importance of creating synergy in programming and promoting innovative and results-oriented performance. It will provide a comprehensive guide for staff and technical advisors in designing and planning activities, and will emphasise the importance of both internal and external communications, taking into consideration the Foundation's various partners and stakeholders.

These strategies will also employ a target audience-centred approach. It is important to ask the questions: Who are we talking to? What do we want to say? How do we want to say it? The Foundation has various target audiences based on its results-based programming that need to be uniquely addressed for effective outcomes. Thus, target audiences are not seen as passive receivers of messages but as active participants of a specific process or initiative.

The Foundation will use a wide range of approaches and tools, such as knowledge sharing, the development of knowledge tools, social marketing and advocacy, mainstream media, social media, online communications, communications for development, networking activities, building linkages and CD strategies such as peer-to-peer learning, learning by doing and the use of champions, among others. The focus is not only on traditional means and tools of communication but aims as well at promoting dialogue, building consensus and creating true ownership of communication objectives, processes and outcomes.

Mainstreaming Cross-Cutting Outcome Areas

This Strategic Plan highlights three cross-cutting outcome areas, which will be mainstreamed in the design and implementation of the Foundation's programming. Mainstreaming is a strategy to ensure that the concerns related to these cross-cutting areas feature in decision-making. It will ensure that they are integral parts of the Foundation's planning, budgeting, programming, monitoring, evaluation and reporting. The themes have been identified using the following criteria:

- Relevance to the Commonwealth as indicated by priorities endorsed by Heads of Government. The Foundation recognises that it can help animate these Commonwealth mandates by mobilising CSOs.
- Relevance to the Mission endorsed by the Foundation's Board of Governors, which has universal relevance for Civil Society across the Commonwealth. The Mission highlights the development of the capacity of Civil Society, the generation of knowledge and the sharing of learning about Civil Society participation, and the receptivity of institutions to Civil Society.
- Relevance to previous work undertaken by the Foundation. The organisation recognises the need to build on areas of expertise and competence that it has established.

These criteria have been applied to the following three outcome areas:

— **Gender Equality**

The Commonwealth Plan of Action for Gender Equality was developed with Civil Society input and sets targets for the Commonwealth to be met by 2015. The Foundation has supported Civil Society input to the group that monitors progress being made. Commonwealth Women's Affairs Ministers will meet in Bangladesh during the course of the Strategic Plan 2012-16.

— **Environmental Sustainability**

Commonwealth Heads of Government committed to the Langkawi Declaration on the Environment in 1989 and the Lake Victoria Plan of Action on Climate Change in 2007. Both of these called on the international community to support the Commonwealth's shared view on these agendas. The concerns of small states in particular were highlighted again at the Rio+20 summit. The Foundation has supported organisations working to raise awareness of climate change and has also produced materials on the green economy.

— **Cultural Respect and Understanding**

In 2005, Heads of Government called for a Commission on Respect and Understanding, which reported in 2007. When they endorsed the report on building tolerance and understanding of diversity amongst and within distinct societies, cultures and communities, they called for the engagement of Civil Society. The Foundation is the Commonwealth agency with a mandate to work on culture and recent projects have sought to encourage dialogue on difference and the application of cultural interventions in post-conflict situations.

These three areas will remain in focus throughout project implementation, with indicators that will demonstrate the extent to which progress is being made. Evidence of these outcomes will be monitored through the surveys of stakeholders and fully assessed in the Strategic Plan summative evaluation.

The three cross-cutting outcome areas will feature in discussions with partner organisations, including the Commonwealth Secretariat, about joint programming. A strategy and toolkit for cross-cutting outcome areas will be developed by the Foundation to guide its staff and partners in ensuring that they are mainstreamed, monitored, analysed and reported.

Promoting Synergy and Coordination

The Foundation, as an outcome-based learning organisation, can only make progress in fulfilling its Mission and achieve the stated outcomes included in this Plan, by working in partnership with other organisations. These have been identified via a stakeholder analysis, which was conducted during the development of the Strategic Plan. These partners will come from the following sectors:

— The Commonwealth Family

The EPG on the reform of the Commonwealth called for closer collaboration between the Commonwealth Secretariat and the Foundation in particular on a programmatic and operational level. The Secretariat is acknowledged as the custodian of the Commonwealth's ministerial and political processes. It is also the agency with responsibility for the accreditation of Commonwealth organisations. A number of mechanisms have been put in place to ensure synergy and coordination which include: regular dialogue between the Director of the Foundation and the Commonwealth Secretary-General; regular exchange between Foundation staff and counterparts in the Secretariat on project specific initiatives (e.g. on enabling Civil

Society input to Commonwealth ministerial meetings); and sharing information on operational issues such as the development of internal policies and procedures. The Foundation will also maintain contact with colleagues in the Secretariat's Strategic Planning and Evaluation Division.

The EPG also called on the Foundation to help build the capacity of Commonwealth Associations (CAs). In the past this has been interpreted as an obligation to provide grant funding to this sector. This Strategic Plan provides an opportunity for this relationship to evolve and invites these organisations to locate themselves in the achievement of the Foundation's strategic outcomes. The Foundation sees CAs as an important part of Civil Society in the Commonwealth and will engage in dialogue on the ways in which their capacity can be developed in the context of implementing this Plan.

— **Multilateral Organisations and International Development Agencies**

Heads of Government reconstituted the Commonwealth Foundation in 1982 as an IGO. The Foundation has yet to realise the potential afforded by this status, but aims to do so as it delivers this Strategic Plan. The Plan envisages dialogue between the Foundation and institutions with an interest in improving their interface with Civil Society, whether these are national, regional or international agencies. This dialogue may result in partnerships or other joint initiatives with institutions that encourage civic participation. As an organisation committed to development effectiveness, it is imperative for the Foundation to coordinate and synergise its work with multilateral agencies, such as the United Nations and international development agencies, to be able to build on current successes, pursue strategic partnerships and collaboration, and ensure that duplication of work does not take place.

— **Private Sector**

This Strategic Plan acknowledges the role that a range of institutions play in shaping the lives of Commonwealth people. It recognises that these are not exclusively public institutions and that Civil Society is increasingly calling for dialogue with the private sector. The Foundation can use its intergovernmental status to broker these discussions. There is also an awareness of the continuing significance of intra-Commonwealth economic activity, but relatively little discussion on how Corporate Social Responsibility can be effectively mobilised in support of Commonwealth principles and priorities.

Grants Programme

Purpose of the Foundation's Grants Programme

The new Grants Programme will contribute to sustainable development in the context of effective, responsive and accountable governance, and will be delivered under the two Intermediate Outcomes of the Foundation's Logic Model. The Programme will broker knowledge and ideas. It will support innovation, share replicable and sustainable models, and promote good practices across the participatory governance sector.

Objectives of the Foundation's Grants Programme

- i. To deliver an efficient and effective programme which is responsive to the development needs of CSOs across the Commonwealth.
- ii. To complement the effectiveness of the Foundation's projects by providing grants to CSOs beyond those supported through the projects.
- iii. To generate knowledge and understanding of participatory governance and its benefits in promoting effective, responsive and accountable governance within the Commonwealth by supporting models of good practice. This will be promoted through systematic monitoring and evaluation.

Grants Programme Governance

The Board of Governors provides oversight to the Foundation's grant making through the Grants Committee, which comprises representatives of member states and reports to the Executive Committee. In addition to receiving reports on grants made by the Foundation, the Committee is called upon to make decisions on larger awards. It also provides input to the development of the grant-making strategy and regularly reviews policy.

Grant Model

The Foundation will give grants to fund activities or projects of registered CSOs. Up to 10% of the total grant award will fund a monitoring, evaluation and learning element to support KM for both the grant applicant and the Foundation. Grants will also include funding to support indirect and overhead costs. To promote sustainability, grant applicants will be encouraged to seek co-funding and provide a counterpart in the form of in-kind or financial resources to support the funding request to the Foundation.

Grant Streams

The Grants Programme has two main grant streams, which align with and support the Foundation's two Intermediate Outcomes:

- i. Enhanced capacity of CSOs to collaborate with each other and engage in participatory governance
- ii. Increased collaboration and learning between CSOs and institutions in governance

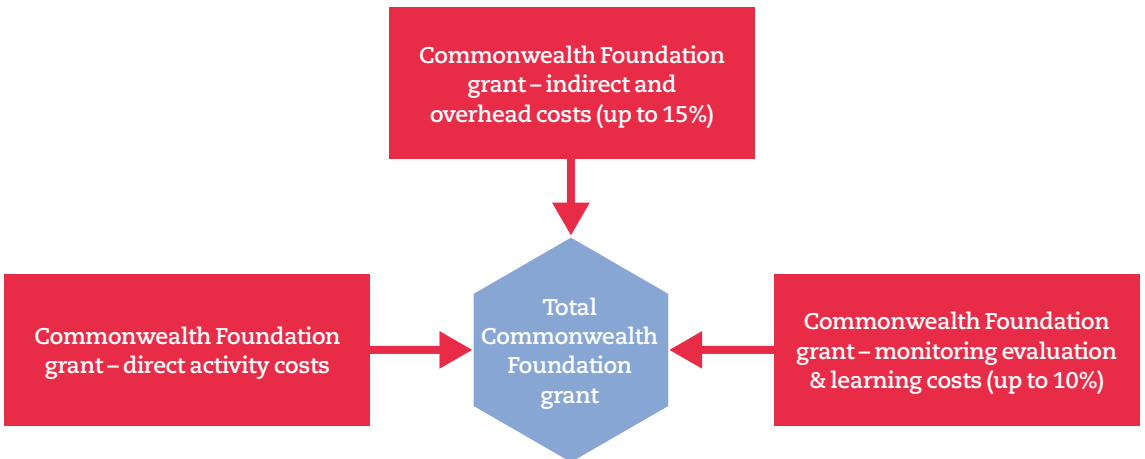
The Grants Programme will be particularly supportive of proposals that mainstream the cross-cutting outcome areas in their project design. Funding will respond to applications received in response to calls for applications announced via the Foundation's website and supporting channels.

CAs will no longer be funded under a separate grant stream; instead support to CAs will be merged with support to all CSOs, and delivered through the two new grant streams. A transitional programme will be developed and implemented in 2012-13 to ensure that the CAs are supported through this phase.

Grants Programme Annual Review

The Grants Programme will be reviewed on a yearly basis during the Foundation's annual planning cycle to ensure that it remains responsive to the needs of Civil Society and remains aligned with the Foundation's outcome areas.

Grant Model



Project Implementation Plans: Overview

The development of project implementation plans was an integral part of the strategic planning process. Results of various consultations provided inputs to the designing of the projects. The strategic planning process also included a stakeholder analysis and an environmental scan which were validated by the full implementation team. A highly inclusive approach to planning was taken with the Foundation staff, alongside the adoption of RBM as a key management strategy with its strong focus on outcomes.

Section 7 presents the profiles of the four Strategic Projects for the period 2012-16. There are two Strategic Projects per Intermediate Outcome. Each contributes to the achievement of one or more of the Short-Term Outcomes.

In addition to the four Strategic Projects, there are projects that have been implemented in fiscal year 2011-12 which are being carried forward to fiscal year 2012-13, with the intention of assessing whether they should be integrated in one or more of the Strategic Projects from 2013-14 onwards, phased out, or continue to be implemented as stand-alone projects. The latter would include individual events and initiatives that provide enabling and complementary support to the Strategic Projects.

Towards the end of each fiscal year, the Foundation will review the implementation of its projects and determine whether changes and adjustments should be made to their design. This will be a regular aspect of the Foundation's learning and planning cycle.

5. Management and Support

Governance

The Commonwealth Foundation is one of the Commonwealth's three intergovernmental agencies alongside the Commonwealth Secretariat and the Commonwealth of Learning. This status is conferred by Commonwealth Heads of Government and requires the highest standards of accountability. The Foundation will meet these standards through the effective and efficient servicing of its Board and the committees that it has established. The Foundation's principal article is its Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Guidelines will be produced, which codify existing practice related to the conduct of the Foundation's governance.

Finance and Operations

In order for the Foundation to achieve its desired outcomes, and to demonstrate the linkage between resources and results, it is essential that it has the appropriate systems in place to capture this information. A new accounting system that will align resources with the outcomes will be in place to cover the strategic period. The new system will provide three tiers of information:

- i. Financial overview, mainly for external parties or high level internal reporting
- ii. Costs per outcome area
- iii. Detailed costing on activities per outcome area

The organisation's financial and operating manual will be updated to support the effective monitoring of costs and provide clear guidance on what is required by staff responsible for the allocation of resources to activities in support of the Short-Term Outcomes. A concise service-level template will be developed as part of the review to ensure that there is a standard way of allocating input resources, particularly where it relates to support staff and operating infrastructure.

Human Resources

The Foundation intends to promote learning within the organisation. The introduction of RBM will enable the organisation to ensure that its principal input resource - its employees - are fully supported in an environment that promotes results through performance and knowledge sharing, both internally and externally.

The present review of the Human Resource policies will undergo full consultation with the Board of Governors and staff and will be aligned to this new way of working. It will ensure that the Foundation's appraisal system, reward and benefit packages, training and development are in-keeping with performance criteria based on achievable results. Staff roles will also reflect this new cross functional way of working.

It will also involve reviewing the way we engage with external human resources. There will be a comprehensive review of contracts and a more robust selection process to ensure that an individual or organisation has the right competencies and are fully accountable for outputs in line with our Intermediate Outcomes and the associated Short-Term Outcomes.

During the 2012-13 fiscal year there will be significant investment in ensuring that the right HR platforms are in place so that staff are fully supported and there are appropriate HR guidelines and procedures in place so that results are easily captured and demonstrated at the individual, project and organisational level.

Knowledge Management, Stakeholder Relations and Communications

KM, Stakeholder Relations and Communications are key strategies in the programming and management of the Foundation. These strategies will promote the organisational objectives of the Strategic Plan, including providing targeted support for projects.

As such, the KM, Stakeholder Relations and Communications support will include the following:

- Managing stakeholder relations
- Creation and management of the Foundation's new brand
- Production of publications including annual reports and other generic materials, tailored promotional materials, e-newsletters, project-specific reports and toolkits
- Event management
- Online communications including the management and maintenance of the Foundation website
- Associated social media initiatives
- Communications for development initiatives tailored to support project outputs and activities

The Stakeholder Relations and Communications Team will explore the range of media at both organisational and project level, utilising a combination of print, broadcast and online media as appropriate for the target audience and specific message.

6. Budget

The Foundation is principally funded by assessed contributions made by its 46 member governments. The assessed contributions, along with other income such as project specific income received as grants to the Foundation, provide the resources for the annual budget which is approved by the Executive Committee and endorsed by the Board of Governors.

The introduction of performance-based budgeting has resulted in a more integrated approach to allocating resources across the organisation, with activity-based budgeting undertaken by management and staff as part of its annual planning and budgeting cycle.

The Foundation's fiscal year runs from 1 July to 30 June. The Foundation's resources are allocated to project activities, the grants programme, and to management and support costs. The allocation of resources is based on expected outcomes and outputs and

the financial, human and materials commitments required to achieve these outputs. The Foundation is committed to allocating £1 million annually to the grants programme, which is awarded in line with the revised grants guidelines in support of the Foundation's outcome areas.

The resources expended during the year are audited annually by a chartered accounting firm appointed by the Audit Committee, a sub-committee of the Board. The audited financial statements are prepared in accordance with the International Financial Reporting Standards issued by the International Accounting Standard Board. The accounts are approved and signed by the Director of the Foundation on behalf of the Board of Governors.





7. Project Profiles

Strategic Projects 2012-16

Dialogue: Developing Dialogue for Engagement in Participatory Governance

Replication: Developing Capacities to Replicate Good Practice on Participatory Governance

Collaboration: Facilitating Collaboration in Participatory Governance

Learning: Building a Culture of Learning in Participatory Governance

Continuing Projects 2012-13

Caribbean Literature Action Group (CALAG)

Commonwealth Writers

Commonwealth Book Prize and Commonwealth Short Story Prize

Commonwealth Lecture

Breaking Point: The Post-2015 MDG Agenda

Special Events/Programmes

Strategic Project

Dialogue: Developing Dialogue for Engagement in Participatory Governance

Summary

This project focuses on strengthening the knowledge, skills and ability of Civil Society networks/alliances to engage in dialogue with governance institutions and other key stakeholders. To achieve this, the project will assess the current capacity of Civil Society networks/alliances for dialogue, identify a credible Civil Society network/alliance, and implement a CD plan. This CD plan may include training, mentoring and coaching on dialogue, communications for development and leadership development, to enhance the capacity of Civil Society to participate in promoting effective, responsive and accountable governance.

Principal Intermediate Outcome

Enhanced capacity of CSOs to collaborate with each other and engage in participatory governance

Principal Short-Term Outcome

Strengthened ability of Civil Society networks/alliances to engage in dialogue on participatory governance

Rationale

Public dialogue is at the heart of participatory governance. On one hand, it helps facilitate active and inclusive participation, offering citizens a means by which they can constructively identify, articulate and address the issues that affect their lives. While on the other, public dialogue offers an effective means for decision and policy makers

in governance to learn about the concerns, needs and priorities of their constituents, and helps them find ways to address these demands. Dialogue is a way of communicating that promotes genuine interaction and includes multi-stakeholder consultations and public hearings, consensus building, facilitation, mediation, policy and issue-based advocacy among others. The capacity of CSOs to constructively engage in and demand for effective, responsive and accountable governance through dialogue with institutions in governance and the private sector is a critical element of participatory governance.

A CSO's ability to engage in dialogue can be hindered by a number of things including: (i) a lack of awareness of the issues being debated by governance institutions; (ii) a lack of understanding of institutional processes and structures; (iii) a lack of communications skills to interact with governance institutions; and (iv) a lack of knowledge of effective strategies for dialogue. Addressing the capacity needs of CSOs to engage in dialogue will help promote opportunities for governance institutions to recognise and foster positive, credible and sustained means of collaboration with CSOs. Supporting CSOs to understand and articulate their issues, find solutions to address them, and provide spaces to interact and share these solutions with governance institutions, is imperative in promoting effective, responsive and accountable governance.

This project is designed to address the gaps in knowledge, skills and abilities of Civil Society networks/alliances to successfully engage in dialogue with governance institutions and other key stakeholders. The project will focus on strengthening Civil Society networks/alliances in undertaking consultations, building consensus, and facilitating and engaging in constructive dialogue with institutions in governance for development.

Strategy

CD is most successful when using comprehensive, strategic and coordinated approaches that are based on sound analysis at the system, organisational and individual level. Therefore, at the onset it is crucial to assess where CSOs in the Commonwealth are, generally and regionally, in terms of engaging in dialogue on participatory governance, and identify what the needs, gaps, issues, constraints and enabling factors are. This analysis will result in the development of an engagement strategy for participatory governance, anchored in the geographical and thematic needs of the Commonwealth. It is thus crucial at the start of the project, to identify established good practices, models, and the range of effective dialogue strategies currently undertaken across the Commonwealth. Through this approach, there is an opportunity to maximise the Foundation's extensive experience in working with Civil Society networks/alliances to

identify and target ways in which they can improve their competencies in dialogue, as part of a customised needs-based, demand-driven support strategy. It is important that the project facilitates a process whereby the participating Civil Society networks/alliances arrive at a consensus in identifying issues and needs, and articulate the solutions to address them.

Given the results of the assessment, the project will undertake CD initiatives to strengthen the knowledge and skills of Civil Society networks/alliances, allowing them to better engage in dialogue with government and other key stakeholders in governance. Effective communications for social change strategies, skills, tools and approaches will be enhanced, along with strategies for confidence building, communications, consensus building, consultations, facilitation, mediation, social marketing and policy advocacy, to strengthen their knowledge and skills in dialogue. Adult learning strategies will also be used as part of the CD strategy for this project. The project will build a pool of mentors and coaches from the Civil Society networks/alliances, whose ability to dialogue have been strengthened, to expand learning and dissemination in the sector.

Strategic Project

Replication: Developing Capacities to Replicate Good Practices on Participatory Governance

Summary

This project focuses on building the capacity of Civil Society networks/alliances to identify and replicate good and fit practice, enabling the development of proven and effective solutions to common and similar challenges. In doing so it will strengthen the ability of Civil Society to effectively contribute to participatory governance processes. Civil Society networks/alliances will be supported to develop their own criteria for identifying, documenting and replicating good and fit practice. The strategies for achieving this employ the development of: (i) an assessment framework to guide the replication of good practice; (ii) a core pool of mentors from participating Civil Society networks/alliances to promote replication; (iii) the spaces in which to share good practice; and (iv) incentives to promote participation for more effective, responsive and accountable governance.

Principal Intermediate Outcome

Enhanced capacity of CSOs to collaborate with each other and engage in participatory governance

Principal Short-Term Outcome

Enhanced ability of Civil Society networks/alliances to identify and replicate good practices on participatory governance

Rationale

Inclusive governance has long been recognised as an essential ingredient in poverty reduction and sustainable development. The institutions and processes that shape the lives of citizens increasingly operate regionally or internationally but Civil Society is all too often under-represented at these levels. There is a growing appreciation of the nexus between governance and sustainable development. In turn this has heightened Civil Society interest in participatory governance. However, Civil Society networks/alliances face challenges in identifying and replicating good practice in participatory governance processes and require support in this area.

CSOs have been proven to make a difference in engaging governments in pursuit of effective, responsive and accountable governance in various countries. There are good practices in participatory governance that provide common solutions to similar problems globally, however there is a need to have a more systematic process among CSOs to identify and replicate these good practices. There is also a need to strengthen the knowledge and skills of CSOs to identify good and fit practices that can offer solutions to their problems in their own context. As a consequence there is a need to improve access to information about good practices and to address the lack of opportunities to support learning in the sector.

The Foundation is well placed to respond to new demands and areas of need as requested by its Civil Society stakeholders. Over the years this has seen the Foundation deliver projects and train Civil Society and citizens across the Commonwealth on empowerment, transparency, accountability, and governance of CSOs which have resulted in models and good practices in these areas. This project will enable Civil Society networks/alliances and coalitions to identify, develop and replicate good practice, enabling them to clearly articulate and conceptualise their issues, as well as develop solutions to the challenges they face.

Strategy

This project will develop a generic replication framework, and support CSOs to adapt it for use in their own context. It will build capacity to replicate good practice and encourage the creation of space to share good practice. Mentors will be identified to guide CSOs as they use the framework, recognising the value of peer-to-peer learning. In the first year, this project will assess the gaps, issues and opportunities in participatory governance across the Commonwealth, including the

range of good practices, and identify credible Civil Society networks/alliances to participate in the project. This process will include assessing Civil Society networks/alliances that the Foundation has worked with already and assess their interest and readiness to participate in the project. For example, there could be potential to further strengthen networks that were part of the Foundation's Leadership Exchange Programme (2011-12). This analysis will result in the development of an engagement strategy for participatory governance particularly in terms of the geographical and thematic focus of the project.

Strategic Project

Collaboration: Facilitating Collaboration in Participatory Governance

Summary

This project focuses on the opportunities for engagement between CSOs and institutions in governance; putting Civil Society-government interaction into practice. The strategies for achieving this will employ a mapping of the current Civil Society engagement environment, exploration of the platforms that offer the most effective opportunities for Civil Society engagement, targeted support to improve the ways in which CSOs are able to participate in governance, and strengthening strategic coordination with Commonwealth IGOs.

Principal Intermediate Outcome

Increased collaboration and learning between CSOs and institutions in governance

Principal Short-Term Outcome

Increased interaction between Civil Society networks/alliances and institutions in governance

Rationale

Civil Society engagement with institutions in governance through constructive dialogue is a critical element of participatory governance. This project addresses the lack of Civil Society engagement with key stakeholders which in turn hinders three key elements of participatory governance: (i) consultation, (ii)

constructive dialogue and (iii) consensus building. The lack of engagement stems in part from: (i) CSO lack of ability to engage and (ii) the lack of understanding and recognition within institutions in governance about the role and benefits of Civil Society engagement. This results in a lack of political will on the part of institutions in governance and a lack of trust between key policymakers and Civil Society.

As a result, Civil Society space at meetings and processes (both regional and global) is not being used effectively. Within the Commonwealth the quality, consistency and transparency of engagement needs to be addressed. The terms of engagement at ministerial meetings vary widely and are often not institutionalised, resulting in Civil Society participation not being strategically integrated into ministerial meetings.

This project aims to facilitate Civil Society networks/alliances in gaining experience in constructive engagement with governance institutions. Recognising the interdependence between governments, the private sector and Civil Society, support will be targeted at increasing and improving the opportunities for engagement which will ultimately enhance the effectiveness, responsiveness and accountability of governance institutions.

Strategy

Achieving a sustainable level of engagement is reliant on having effective methods for key stakeholders to consult one another, build consensus and effect meaningful change. It is therefore important to undertake a comprehensive assessment that will provide a map of the current Civil Society engagement environment. Specifically, the project will seek to undertake a stakeholder and needs analysis to:

- i. Identify which institutions and stakeholders are involved in the processes of engagement
- ii. Identify and describe the current practice with respect to consultation, engagement and consensus-building mechanisms and the constraints, gaps and opportunities for Civil Society engagement
- iii. Provide clear evidence of which platforms offer the greatest opportunity for Civil Society engagement

The stakeholder analysis captured in (i) will be used as a basis for selecting initial stakeholders (regional Civil Society networks/alliances, private sector and government institutions) to participate in the project. This geographic and thematic analysis will feed into the participatory governance engagement strategy.

Moreover, this project will build on the results of the Foundation's projects which have developed the abilities of Civil Society networks/alliances to identify and replicate good practice and engage in dialogue on participatory governance. In addition, the project will build on the current activities of the Foundation, specifically: (i) regional consultations in the lead up to the Commonwealth People's Forum (CPF) and CHOGM; (ii) Commonwealth Women's Affairs Ministers Meeting (10WAMM) and meetings of the Commonwealth Gender Plan of Action Monitoring Group (CGPMG) and the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW); and (iii) post-MDG agenda processes. These initiatives will provide opportunities for skilled Civil Society representatives to work with targeted decision-makers leading up to and following regional and international forums.

Good practices will be captured and developed into models for ongoing Civil Society-stakeholder engagement which will illustrate that key stakeholders can benefit from Civil Society participation and that Civil Society can effectively contribute towards a more effective, responsive and accountable governance. These good practices may be considered for inclusion in the Foundation's project on the replication of good practice.

Strategic Project

Learning: Building a Culture of Learning in Participatory Governance

From the findings of the analysis, the Foundation will draw on its intergovernmental status, its mandate to support Civil Society and its knowledge of where good practice exists to target support to increase and improve the space for Civil Society engagement, and help address the limitations of the rules of engagement, particularly, but not limited to, Commonwealth processes. It is anticipated by the end of year 1 that the project will have mapped out the current Civil Society engagement environment and provided clear evidence of which platforms offer the greatest opportunity. In addition, relationships with key 'champions' receptive to Civil Society engagement will be built within governance institutions. One important aspect of the project is the development of a strategic coordination framework between the Foundation and Commonwealth IGOs.

Summary

This project focuses on building a culture of learning in participatory governance. The key strategy is to contribute to sustainability by: (i) promoting knowledge sharing and learning; (ii) documenting and disseminating knowledge resources, lessons learned and success stories and (iii) maximising communications and technology to enable meaningful learning and performance. This project will engage with media for development as partners in advocating for good governance. Stakeholders will also be engaged with on governance issues where there is minimal knowledge and contribute to increasing awareness and understanding of, and demand for, efficient, responsive and accountable governance.

Principal Intermediate Outcome

Increased collaboration and learning between CSOs and institutions in governance

Principal Short-Term Outcome

Greater understanding of and competence in participatory governance among Civil Society and other stakeholders including the wider public

Rationale

To achieve successful participatory governance it is vital that Civil Society has an awareness of the principles and examples of effective engagement with governance institutions, and an understanding of why such engagement and the demand for more effective, responsive and accountable governance is important to society. Moreover, it is essential for the wider public to have an increased awareness of participation in governance and its benefits to them as citizens. Barriers to realising this include: (i) lack of a knowledge-sharing culture; (ii) limited funding; (iii) inability to use or access technology; (iv) cultural differences; (v) conflict and disabling political cultures and environments, and (vi) the media's lack of coverage of good stories on participation in governance. A consequence of this lack of awareness of Civil Society participation in governance within the wider public is low demand or expectation for such engagement, and limited interest in and spaces for participating in a wider dialogue within society.

This project aims to increase understanding and competence in participatory governance by facilitating access to good practices, promoting success stories and knowledge resources on participatory governance to Civil Society, government, the market, intergovernmental organisations and other stakeholders in governance across the Commonwealth and beyond, including the wider public.

Strategy

Increasing understanding of and competence in participatory governance among Civil Society and other stakeholders, including the wider public, is dependent on developing a systematic mechanism for acquiring, sharing and utilising information. This project will provide the basis for a series of consultations, forums, conferences and learning sessions to share successful participatory governance models and good and fit practices. The project will be guided by the principle of getting the right information to the right people at the right time.

Through facilitating spaces for knowledge sharing and learning to a wider audience via conferences and forums, such as but not limited to the CPF in 2013, awareness of successful models and examples of participatory governance will rise, and Civil Society will develop skills to effectively disseminate relevant information on mechanisms to engage with institutions in governance. In tandem, a communication strategy to increase awareness and understanding of the benefit of participatory governance will be developed, including how mainstream, social and online media, and communication for development can be used to achieve strategic aims. A dissemination plan for the knowledge resources will be formulated as part of the project.

Continuing Project Caribbean Literature Action Group (CALAG)

Summary

The Foundation, British Council, and NGC Bocas Lit Fest are working in partnership to enhance the Caribbean literary scene and help kick-start an infrastructure to support writers, writing, and publishing. Launched in April 2012, CALAG is a small, results-oriented action group of professionals from all areas of the Caribbean literary sector. Within this group small task forces will oversee the development and implementation of a number of initiatives aimed at supporting the infrastructure for literary publishing within the region. For 2012-13 CALAG will be formalised as a creative and advocacy network to support the publishing industry in the Caribbean.

Closest Short-Term Outcome from Strategic Logic Model

Strengthened ability of CSO networks/alliances to engage in dialogue on participatory governance

Rationale

In response to the small number of Commonwealth Writers' Prize entries from the Caribbean, the Foundation undertook some research into the state of publishing in the region. The results highlighted the current lack of a regional literary publishing industry which is compounded by an absence of training and development opportunities for writers, an absence of technical skills, a lack of exposure and distribution opportunities as well as geographical challenges.

The Caribbean has produced some of the world's greatest contemporary writers, including three Nobel Prize laureates and its literature is one of the region's most celebrated cultural products. However, Caribbean writers continue to migrate to North America and Europe in order to obtain financial support for their work and to achieve the highest level of international recognition.

Literary publishing within the region remains in an embryonic state, and talented writers who choose to stay "at home" often find it difficult to access international publishers, or find opportunities for local publication and promotion. In addition to this there is a lack of funding for creative writing and little government support for the development of the publishing industry.

The work of the CALAG project has the potential to contribute to, and align itself with, the strategic project Developing Dialogue for Engagement in Participatory Governance. It is anticipated that the CALAG model could then be used as a model for Civil Society-government dialogue which can be replicated in other regions.

The expected results of this project are:

- Strengthened networking within the Caribbean literary sector
- Greater recognition amongst government of the potential of publishing within the Caribbean to contribute to local economic development
- Enhanced capacity of writers through skills development/mentoring
- Enhanced capacity of editors through skills development/mentoring
- Greater recognition amongst international markets of Caribbean writers

Strategy

The group will be guided and supported by a Regional Coordinator. It is now working to take forward and realise a number of 'pledges' made in April 2012 in order to achieve its overall aims via the:

- Establishment of crowd-funded writing award
- Establishment of Writers' Mentoring Project
- Establishment of Editors' Mentoring Project
- Inclusion of 5% more Caribbean writers in Peepal Tree Press publications per annum
- Appointment of a Caribbean-based editor for Peepal Tree Press
- Production of a festival anthology for NGC Bocas Lit Fest
- Establishment of Writers' Residency programme at St. George's University, Grenada

The network will also be supported to undertake policy advocacy work with government as part of building the infrastructure needed to support the publishing industry in the Caribbean.

The Regional Coordinator will also oversee the development of a website for CALAG members to discuss and present their achievements.

Continuing Project Commonwealth Writers

Summary

Commonwealth Writers aims to increase opportunities for dialogue and spaces for the free expression of ideas, which in some cases may be controversial in a particular society. It covers all aspects of storytelling, whether it is oral, literary or visual. It also includes ideas which are expressed in a range of formats and mediums, for example prose fiction, scripts for film, TV and radio, poetry, theatre and dance. It does this through a website, prizes, partnerships and communication for development initiatives.

Commonwealth Writers will continue to provide an online community hub for people to share their stories, access opportunities, develop their craft and make their voices heard on an international platform. It will use 2012-13 to grow and consolidate a loyal online membership and to provide members with relevant current content, extend its networks and strategically strengthen the link between the Commonwealth Writers brand and the Foundation in line with the Foundation's re-launch.

Closest Short-Term Outcome from Strategic Logic Model

Enhanced ability of Civil Society networks/alliances to identify and replicate good practices on participatory governance

Greater understanding of and competence in participatory governance among Civil Society and other stakeholders including the wider public

Rationale

Commonwealth Writers contributes to an enabling environment for CSOs by increasing understanding and exchange – of ideas, issues, stories and opinions – as well as awareness of the role of Civil Society. Commonwealth Writers will inform the work of the Foundation and raise awareness of it amongst a wider audience.

Strategy

Commonwealth Writers aims to harness participatory communications in its widest sense, which will in turn contribute to the democratisation of space so that citizens can have their voices heard and become involved in dialogue about the process of participatory governance. The project will work in the following ways:

- **Outreach** – (i) Capacity building and training to enable and develop sustainable local creative industries, (ii) Inspiring people to use their creative resources as a force for social change
- **Ambassadors** – Formalising an alliance of international professionals from the creative industries who share Commonwealth values to act as spokespersons

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- **Website** – Providing an online community hub for people to share their stories, develop their craft, access opportunities and make their voices heard on an international platform
 - **Social Media** – Using Facebook, Twitter and YouTube to reach new audiences, establish the Commonwealth Writers/ Foundation’s brand, increase understanding and dialogue between individuals and institutions
 - **Prizes** – The prizes act as catalysts to target and identify talented writers to lead on-the-ground activity across the Commonwealth, and to create environments where alliances of writers in remote places and those with limited or no publishing infrastructure, can flourish.
 - **Publishing** – Exploring ways in which to negotiate and support an equitable publishing industry across the Commonwealth across the Commonwealth e.g. Caribbean Literature Action Group (CALAG)
 - **Partnerships** – Maintaining current and forging new partnerships to maximise reach, strengthen Commonwealth Writers’ work by association, and to access and align with local needs, knowledge and networks

Continuing Project Commonwealth Book Prize and Commonwealth Short Story Prize

Summary

Within Commonwealth Writers the Commonwealth Book Prize and the Commonwealth Short Story Prize act as catalysts to target and identify talented writers to lead on-the-ground activity across the Commonwealth, and to create environments where alliances of writers in remote places and those with limited or no publishing infrastructure, can flourish.

The Commonwealth Book Prize is open to writers who have had their first novel (full length work of fiction) published between 1 January and 31 December 2012.

The Commonwealth Short Story Prize is awarded for the best piece of unpublished short fiction (2000-5000 words).

Closest Short-Term Outcome from Strategic Logic Model

Strengthened ability of Civil Society networks/alliances to engage in dialogue on participatory governance

Rationale

To mark the 25th anniversary of the Commonwealth Writers' Prize in 2011, the Foundation re-launched its prizes to form part of Commonwealth Writers. The prizes unearth, develop and promote talented writers from different regions who will go on to inspire and inform their local communities. As well as highlighting the best new writing around the Commonwealth, the winners can be strong advocates for social change. Writers are empowered to talk about issues, often from a local perspective, and can also draw attention to the work of the Foundation among the wider public. Prizes can achieve change by influencing public perception, identifying and mobilising new talent, and strengthening communities.

The Prizes are unique in their reach; and there is potential to strengthen their delivery with strategic international partnerships. The Prizes are one of the focal points of the Commonwealth Writers' website. In 2012 the Foundation received first book entries from countries which had never previously entered the old prize, as well as a higher standard of short story. The Prizes not only identify talented writers but also enable us to discover what writers need across the Commonwealth, so giving us the basis on which to pursue ideas which have been discussed over the years, such as translation projects, local language initiatives, and sustainable publishing models.

Strategy

Respected literary practitioners from each region will be identified and brought together as judging panels; an open call will be made via existing and new networks of publishers, writers, literary journals and others, as well as via the Commonwealth Writers and Foundation's websites and others to elicit entries for both prizes. The entries will be judged via an online portal and online discussions; the judging panels will agree on the final winners. The winners will be contracted to undertake development activities on behalf of Commonwealth Writers and the Foundation as agreed.

Continuing Project Commonwealth Lecture

Summary

The Commonwealth Lecture has become one of the most prestigious events in the Commonwealth calendar. It aims to stimulate understanding, discussion and debate on the Commonwealth, its role in world affairs, its institutions and its cultures. Distinguished speakers from around the world have offered their personal observations and thoughts in the Commonwealth Lecture on issues of importance to the global community. By so doing, they have helped to challenge established orthodoxies, advance new ideas, and mobilise the political will needed to deliver real change in the lives of Commonwealth citizens.

Closest Short-Term Outcome from Strategic Logic Model

Greater understanding of and competence in participatory governance among Civil Society and other stakeholders including the wider public

Rationale

The Lecture is a high profile event that will: (i) raise the profile of the Foundation, (ii) provide advocacy support and a valuable networking opportunity for progress across all outcome areas and (iii) contribute to the broader Commonwealth Theme and Commonwealth Week activities.

The expected results of this project are:

- Increased understanding, discussion and debate on the Commonwealth, its role in world affairs, its institutions and its cultures
- Heightened awareness and knowledge sharing of a particular issue
- Improved stakeholder relationships
- Ongoing relationship with the speaker for future advocacy work
- New subscribers for the Foundation's mailing list

Strategy

The key to a successful Commonwealth Lecture comes from careful consideration about the qualities and criteria we should look for in the guest speaker in terms of profile, background, experience and relevance to the theme. The aim is to find someone who is respected for their work in relation to the theme, who can then place this learning in a development context and attract media interest. The Foundation hopes to find a speaker who is interested in building an ongoing relationship with the organisation for future advocacy work. The choice of venue is important in bringing high visibility to the Lecture, serving to attract a diverse audience and media interest as well as the speaker themselves. A conducive networking environment is a valuable addition to the criteria for choice of venue.

A communications strategy will define the key messages, establish target audiences and identify the most effective methods of communication. The communications objectives are: (i) to maximise attendance, (ii) to look for media opportunities to raise awareness of the issues covered, (iii) to develop partnerships to leverage resources for the Lecture, (iv) to capture the Lecture content and develop a dissemination strategy for after the event.

Reaching new audiences relevant to the theme of the Lecture is a specific communications objective. For new audiences, the Lecture aims to dispel some of the myths around Commonwealth and present an event that is international, accessible and relevant to them. The Foundation will encourage them to join our mailing list to receive news and updates about the organisation's work. To maximise the reach of the Lecture beyond those who are able to attend in person, live streaming will be explored as a mechanism to radiate the key messages of the Lecture to other regions. Video capture will also form part of an ongoing dissemination strategy during the year.

Continuing Project

Breaking Point: The Post-2015 MDG Agenda

Summary

This project will revisit 14 case studies published in the 2005 Commonwealth Foundation report *Breaking with Business as Usual*. The aim of the project is to take stock, discuss what the MDGs have achieved and why, and stimulate thinking on the post-MDG architecture, drawing on the 2005 report on 14 countries: Cameroon, Ghana, Grenada, Jamaica, Malawi, New Zealand, Pakistan, Samoa, Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda and Zambia.

With additional support from the UN Millennium Campaign this project has been expanded to include four additional Commonwealth countries: Nigeria, The Gambia, Mozambique and India; and two non-Commonwealth countries: Nepal and Philippines.

In the aftermath of the global crises that have swept the world, the debate around what should succeed the MDGs has gathered momentum and there is an opportunity for Commonwealth governments and Civil Society to influence the discourse on how to move forward post-2015. Where lessons can be learned, these will be documented and compiled, and policy recommendations made. This project is spread over four financial years and will culminate in 2015.

Closest Short-Term Outcome from Strategic Logic Model

This project has strong potential to be integrated into most, if not all, of the projects under the Short-Term Outcomes given its focus on MDG and post-MDG issues and also depending on results that will be captured in the Global Report.

Rationale

It is becoming evident that many countries are unlikely to achieve the targets set out in the MDG framework. The Foundation will re-visit the 14 Commonwealth case studies published in 2005, and add six new country studies to assess progress that has been made with MDG implementation. In the aftermath of the global crises that have swept the world, core concerns of the MDGs - nutrition, health, education - are likely to remain valid after 2015 in some way, so there is an opportunity for the Commonwealth to influence the discourse on how to move forward post-2015. Where lessons can be learned, these will be documented and compiled and policy recommendations made.

Breaking Point builds on previous Foundation Initiatives:

- Its origin dates back to 2002 and the *Commonwealth Plan of Action on the Monterrey Consensus*

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- The Foundation has been gathering data since 2004 to inform debates on the MDGs in the Commonwealth eg. Commonwealth Finance Ministers Meeting (2003 and 2004), *Breaking with Business as Usual* (2005), *Breaking the Taboo* (2008, work on financing for development)
 - This project is therefore a culmination of approximately of 10 years of evidence-based research focusing on a range of social and economic development issues relevant to the Commonwealth. The outputs from the project will contribute to evidence-based policy making and practice throughout the Commonwealth and beyond

The components of the project are:

- National reports of the 14 countries
- National consultations to validate, enhance and finalise the national reports
- A global report that will highlight key emerging issues

Strategy

Given the challenging, complex and unpredictable context in which any post-2015 framework is likely to be negotiated, the Breaking Point project will address the following key questions through extensive consultation and deliberative engagement with its various stakeholders which will include relevant government departments, Civil Society and the private sector:

- i. Are Commonwealth member states on track to achieve the various MDGs by the 2015 target date?
- ii. What are the key points of progress, setback and missed opportunities?
- iii. What are the reasons some countries are continuing to perform poorly or may never satisfactorily meet all the goals?
- iv. How useful and adequate is the MDG framework to Civil Society and how are CSOs relating to the framework?
- v. What if anything, should follow the MDGs? What should the new global framework look like?

Continuing Project Special Events/Programmes

Summary

Individual events and programmes that provide enabling and complementary support to the projects. These may: (i) raise the profile of the Foundation, its work and the results it can demonstrate, (ii) provide a valuable networking opportunity for advancing stakeholder relations, and (iii) contribute to overarching Commonwealth initiatives.

Closest Short-Term Outcome from Strategic Logic Model

Variable, depending on the project

Commonwealth Week

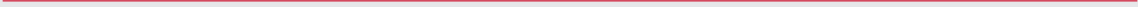
The Commonwealth Theme unifies celebrations taking place on Commonwealth Day and provides a focus for further Commonwealth activities over the year. Commonwealth Day celebrations extend into a week of concentrated activities around the Theme, including the Commonwealth Lecture. A communications strategy will define the key messages of the Theme in relation to the Foundation's work, establish target audiences and identify the most effective methods of communication.

Cultural Events

A high profile cultural event in support of a Commonwealth initiative. Reflecting our specific mandate to work on culture, these events would aim to celebrate the rich culture and creativity the Commonwealth has to offer, at a time when a heightened cultural festival landscape is anticipated. Distinguished and emerging artists would be selected to represent the modern Commonwealth, both in terms of its diversity and youth. A collaborative approach to the programming would demonstrate the opportunity for dialogue among Commonwealth countries where cultural expression is an essential means of identity and exchange.

Diplomats' Induction Programme (conducted jointly with Commonwealth Secretariat)

The Induction Programme for Commonwealth Diplomats plays a key role in enhancing the knowledge of diplomats from Commonwealth countries based in London about the relevance, impact and future potential of the Commonwealth's work both in its member states, and on the international stage. It is an opportunity to raise the profile of the achievements that can be made when Civil Society works with governments on development issues, and to strengthen working relationships between London-based High Commissions and the Foundation.



Published 1 November 2012



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