

# Evaluation of Commonwealth Secretariat Support to Sri Lanka 2007-12

July 2013



The Commonwealth

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# Evaluation of Commonwealth Secretariat Support to Sri Lanka 2007-12

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# Abbreviations and Acronyms

<b>AML/CFT</b>	Anti-Money Laundering and Countering Financing of Terrorism
<b>ARTEMIS</b>	Activity Results Tracking and Expenditure Management Information System
<b>AUSAID</b>	Australian Government Overseas Aids Programme
<b>B2B</b>	Business-to-Business
<b>BDS</b>	Business Development Service
<b>BPST</b>	Bureau of Parliamentary Studies and Training
<b>CAAYE</b>	Commonwealth Asia Alliance of Young Entrepreneurs
<b>CaFFE</b>	Campaign for Free and Fair Elections
<b>CET</b>	Commonwealth Expert Team
<b>CFTC</b>	Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation
<b>CHOGM</b>	Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting
<b>CIDA</b>	Canadian International Development Agency
<b>CMBC</b>	Continental Margin Boundary Committee
<b>CMEV</b>	Centre for Monitoring Election Violence
<b>COMSEC</b>	Commonwealth Secretariat Fund
<b>CS-DRMS</b>	Commonwealth Secretariat Debt Recording and Management System
<b>CWC</b>	Ceylon Workers Congress
<b>CYCI</b>	Commonwealth Youth Credit Initiative
<b>CYMM</b>	Commonwealth Youth Ministers Meeting
<b>CYP</b>	Commonwealth Youth Programme
<b>DEMPA</b>	Debt Management Performance Assessment system
<b>ECS</b>	Extended Continental Shelf
<b>EDB</b>	Export Development Board
<b>EPDP</b>	Eelam People's Democratic Party
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>FCCISL</b>	Federation of Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Sri Lanka
<b>GYDN</b>	Governance, Development and Youth Networks
<b>IDB</b>	Industrial Development Board
<b>IFAD</b>	International Fund for Agricultural Development



<b>IVDP</b>	Integrated Village Development Project (IVDP)
<b>JHU</b>	Jathika Hela Urumaya
<b>JVP</b>	Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna
<b>MDGs</b>	Millennium Development Goals
<b>MfDR</b>	Management for Development Results
<b>MSRI</b>	Ministry of Small and Rural Industries
<b>MTISED</b>	Ministry of Traditional Industries and Small Enterprise Development
<b>MTISED</b>	Ministry of Traditional Industries and Small Enterprise Development
<b>NAM</b>	Non Aligned Movement
<b>NCC</b>	National Crafts Council
<b>NHRIs</b>	National Human Rights Institutions
<b>NPOC</b>	National Polls Observation Centre
<b>PAFFREL</b>	People's Action for Free and Fair Election
<b>PCP</b>	Primary Contact Point
<b>PDMO</b>	Public Debt Management Office
<b>PIMS</b>	Project Information Management System
<b>POC</b>	Points of Contact
<b>SAARC</b>	The South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation
<b>SHRM</b>	Strategic Human Resources Management
<b>SLECIC</b>	Sri Lanka Export Credit Insurance Corporation
<b>SLFP</b>	Sri Lanka Freedom Party
<b>SLIDA</b>	Sri Lanka Institute for Development Administration
<b>SLMC</b>	Sri Lanka Muslim Congress
<b>SME</b>	Small and Medium-size Enterprises
<b>TULF</b>	Tamil United Liberation Front
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UNP</b>	United National Party
<b>UPR</b>	Universal Periodic Review Processes
<b>USAID</b>	United States Agency for International Development
<b>YESL</b>	Youth Enterprise and Sustainable Livelihoods
<b>YWET</b>	Youth Work Education and Training





# Executive Summary

This evaluation provides a report on the relevance and impact of Secretariat assistance to Sri Lanka during 2007-2012. The evaluation is one in a series of country evaluations being undertaken by the Secretariat. The choice of Sri Lanka was guided by several factors, which among others included the resources spent through various country, regional and pan-Commonwealth projects and the diversity of the project portfolio implemented in the country.

The evaluation is forward looking and, as well as assessing the impact and effectiveness of past assistance, seeks to identify lessons that can be drawn upon to improve the design and delivery of future Secretariat assistance to its members.

## Methodology and Approach

The evaluation took a phased approach to collect information for this study. The country projects were assessed according to the standard OECD DAC evaluation criteria covering relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. Data was collected using a systemic review of reports and existing evidence. This was supplemented with primary research consisting of semi-structured in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with Secretariat staff, senior officials from various ministries and departments, and key stakeholders and beneficiaries engaged with the Secretariat projects through field visits to Sri Lanka.

## Findings of the Evaluation

Sri Lanka has long-benefited from Secretariat assistance in support of the country's development objectives, and it continues to do so. Assistance is provided by the Secretariat from all three funds-, that is the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation (CFTC),

Commonwealth Secretariat Fund (COMSEC) and Commonwealth Youth Programme (CYP) funds, with projects delivered at national, regional and pan-Commonwealth levels. Assistance is coordinated at the national level in consultation with the country's Primary Contact Point (PCP) and through a network of sectoral Points of Contact (POCs).

Over the five-year period 2007-2012, direct CFTC assistance to Sri Lanka was approximately £544,000 and included capacity building support in: anti-money laundering and countering financing of terrorism (AML/CFT); tourism promotion and development; trade facilitation; labour standards and employment relations; debt management; enterprise development and electoral management, as well as institutional strengthening of the Sri Lanka Institute for Development Administration (SLIDA). In addition to direct assistance, Sri Lanka also benefits from over £300,000 worth of annual CFTC assistance to the Asia region as well as from CFTC's pan-Commonwealth programme, valued at £9 million per annum. Through these programmes, the Secretariat provides institutional strengthening and capacity building assistance, including the training of Sri Lankans in priority areas of need.

As well as a recipient of CFTC, ComSec and CYP assistance, Sri Lanka is a significant source of experts for assistance to other member countries. It also plays a valuable role promoting South-South Cooperation by supporting the development of Commonwealth partnerships between public institutions in the Asia Region and enabling these organisations to access cost effective advice and draw upon each other's experiences.

## Relevance

The evaluation confirmed that the assistance provided by the Secretariat to Sri Lanka within the framework of the Secretariat's Strategic Plan, which presents the overall strategic focus, objectives and expected results, has been and continues to be highly relevant in supporting its country's development priorities.

The majority of the assistance to Sri Lanka during the evaluation period focussed on the Secretariat's development goal, "To support pro-poor policies for economic growth and sustainable development in member countries", especially on the programmes on Economic Development and Public Sector Development. It also received some assistance in the areas of Democracy, Rule of Law, Human Rights and Human Development.

The assistance provided to Sri Lanka under the Commonwealth Youth Programme within the framework of its Youth Enterprise and Sustainable Livelihoods, Governance, Development and Youth Networks and Youth Work Education and Training programmes was found to be highly relevant and supportive of the national development goal to mainstream young people in every sphere of growth and development.

While recognising the relevance of the assistance to Sri Lanka, it was noted that awareness of what the Secretariat does and the nature of assistance that can be requested from the Secretariat was limited to those senior officials who usually have been the points of contacts of Secretariat Advisers on specific projects. This was clearly visible in departments/ ministries where there has been considerable staff turnaround. During many group meetings, stakeholders showed keen interest in knowing about the Secretariat and its work.

## Effectiveness

Most of the projects reviewed under this evaluation, barring those that have started recently, did meet their output objectives to some extent and were found effective. This was acknowledged by most of the stakeholders during the evaluation, who appreciated the assistance from the Secretariat. However, it was difficult to show a direct correlation between the outputs and the project purpose (outcomes) as described in the project documentation. Much of this can be attributed to the smaller size and short term nature of the Secretariat's intervention, which placed more emphasis on project activities and outputs rather than short and longer term outcomes.

The evaluation found that in almost all cases the project purpose (outcomes) and in some cases even the project outputs were too ambitious, making them unrealistic, immeasurable and unattainable within the duration of the project. This was clearly identified as a design issue that the Secretariat must address through more rigorous training for staff on Results Based Management and the results chain in general, to improve the quality of logical frameworks with clear, measurable, realistic and time bound outcomes and indicators.

The coordination of the Secretariat's assistance to the country through the Primary Contact Point (PCP) and the Points of Contact (POC) continues to be another critical issue that has a bearing on the effectiveness of Secretariat's assistance. Despite clear recommendation on coordination of all assistance through the office of the Primary Contact Point (PCP), the Secretariat still approaches the line ministries directly without providing any information to the PCP. It was suggested that any new assistance should be initiated through the office of the PCP, since all external assistance to the country is routed through this office. The PCP's office can play a critical role in aligning assistance with national development priorities and identifying niche areas where the Secretariat's assistance can play the value added role. This also avoids duplication of efforts.

## Efficiency

Given the small size of projects implemented in Sri Lanka and the absence of integrated project monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, it was very difficult to assess the quality and quantity of inputs and outcomes required to assess the actual efficiency of projects. However, based on observations and discussions, one can infer that the Secretariat could have received better value for money, should it have adopted a much more coordinated approach and in some instances implemented larger and longer time projects that addressed the root causes of the problem. This would have prevented multiple project scoping missions, the implementation of multiple projects over years with similar end goals, and prevented holding routine workshops every year resulting in similar outcomes and recommendations.

The evaluation also noted that the Secretariat barely works in partnership with any of the many development players operational in Sri Lanka- some prominent ones include Australian Government Overseas Aids Programme (AUSAID), Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), European Commission, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and United States Agency for International Development (USAID). All of these are working towards similar goals of advancing economic growth and good governance in Sri Lanka. Partnerships with them would not only complement each other's efforts, but also help to optimise resources and expertise in order to have a greater impact.

## Impact and Sustainability

Determining the impact of projects (with clear attribution) can be challenging, owing to the complex political, social and economic nature of the development. This was further exacerbated by the size of short term small fragmented projects implemented by the Secretariat, which usually tend to limit their scope to activities and outputs, rarely extending to outcomes. The evaluation, however, did find that some of the Secretariat's work has indeed made some

difference, especially in the area of Rural SME development, professionalisation of youth work, maritime boundary delimitation, institutional strengthening and capacity development, and it was noted that some of this impact has been due to the Commonwealth name being associated with outputs and recommendations emerging from these projects.

Several recommendations from the Secretariat's Rural SME policy framework report have been adopted by the Ministry of Traditional Industries and Small Enterprise Development (MTISED). The Industrial Development Board (IDB) has since been restructured and its operations are now decentralised, resulting in increased support for MSME activities in the rural areas. While more work is needed towards the development of a robust SME policy for Sri Lanka, recommendations from various Secretariat supported projects have from time to time fed into Cabinet Papers, Ministries Strategic Plan and Framework documents.

The Secretariat's investment in the CYP Diploma has led to a significant increase in the number of academic institutions offering academic training in youth work. Advocacy on the professionalisation of youth work has led the Public Service Commissions to recognise youth workers as professionals in the government system. The CYP Diploma is now also recognised for salary increments at the National Youth Services Council, Sri Lanka.

The Secretariat's legal and technical assistance on the extended continental shelf (ECS) submission to the United Nations enabled Sri Lanka to prepare and lodge a claim for over 800,000 square km of additional seabed area in the Bay of Bengal region. The ECS submission is in a queue awaiting formal examination, which is likely to commence in 2015.

On institutional strengthening and public sector development, the Secretariat's projects have helped establish partnerships between the Administrative Staff College of India and SLIDA, who now work together to build new ideas into the course curriculum for Permanent Secretaries.

The evaluation noted several examples of how the learning from the Permanent Secretaries orientation programme is being customised to the Sri Lankan situation. These included, among others, the use of leadership qualities to restructure the programmes; the introduction of meditation programmes to improve ethical conduct, integrity and morale in the office environment; and using lessons from the Public Private Partnership models and innovations in India to improve the effectiveness of Sri Lankan programmes. Lessons from the Kerala model on the social audit of rural development programmes have led to proposals for policy change to develop a system which encourages people to comment, criticise, investigate and influence any rural development programme under the Ministry of Economic Development.

In other examples, the Ministry of Social Services is using the knowledge gained to improve social protection and security for underprivileged groups of society for their social and economic uplifting. The E-governance lessons from the 'AROGYA SIRI' experience have been proposed for submission of training requirements with the Human Resources Development Secretariat. One of the participants from the Customs Department has successfully replaced the manual system of managing annual asset declaration forms with a computerised online system, while another participant has successfully empowered the villagers in 'Iranawila Diyawara Gammana' to maintain the village road network.

The Parliamentary Internship Programme designed and implemented with Secretariat support has been published as a good practice in the Yearbook on Good Governance 2011. New systems for interpretation, research and documentation have been introduced in the parliament. It was mentioned that with the increased capacity, the Sri Lanka parliament has now opened doors for the Maldivian Majlis parliamentarians to build their capacity. Furthermore, with assistance from the UNDP, the office of the Secretary General to the Parliament is now helping Afghanistan in establishing its

Parliamentary System, all very good examples of south-south cooperation. Transfer of knowledge on democratic systems is being actively promoted through education centres and youth parliament as well as by setting up a women's caucus in the parliament.

The evaluation noted that the impact and sustainability of the Secretariat's efforts could increase significantly if it was to harmonise its efforts with other development partners in Sri Lanka, adopt a coordinated approach in strict compliance with results based management and design larger and longer term projects based on a sound analysis of the problems supported by strong monitoring and evaluation framework.

## Recommendations

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**Recommendation 1:** The Secretariat, in order to be relevant to a wider group of stakeholders, must identify opportunities and invest in raising the visibility and awareness of the Commonwealth, its values, comparative advantages and work.

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**Recommendation 2:** The Secretariat should invest more time and resources in building capacity of staff on results based management, especially in designing projects that have clear, realistic, measurable and time bound outcomes and indicators supported by an integral project monitoring and evaluation plan. This should be further supported by a strong quality assurance mechanism that not only focuses on relevance and compliance but also on the quality of project design and results.

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**Recommendation 3:** The Secretariat should take a more coordinated approach in project design and implementation, based on sound problem analysis and taking into account the theory of change. Investment should be made in bigger and longer term projects that seek to address the root cause of the problem (and not just the symptoms) and have a lasting impact.

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**Recommendation 4:** The Secretariat should improve communication and coordination across the Secretariat divisions, within divisions, between advisers and Primary Contact Points and Points of Contacts in Capitals. This will prevent any lost opportunities for collaboration and cost sharing as well as duplication of activities and promote a more coordinated approach to country assistance that demonstrates impact.

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**Recommendation 5:** The Secretariat should explore strategic partnerships with other international development partners active in Sri Lanka to harmonise resources, and build on each other's comparative advantages in order to obtain the maximum value for money. Possible partners include- AUSAID, CIDA, UNDP and the European Commission.

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**Recommendation 6:** The Secretariat should move away from short term one off activities to bigger and longer term projects in strict compliance with the results based management principles with clearly defined pre and post project support. Where possible, this support should be provided under the umbrella of Country Technical Cooperation Frameworks so as to mutually align the support with the national development priorities and the Secretariat's Strategic Plan.

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Background

Evaluations in the Commonwealth Secretariat are designed to fulfil a number of key functions. As an instrument of accountability to member governments, they provide an objective assessment of the effectiveness in delivering results, the efficiency of implementation and the impact of Secretariat projects and programmes in member countries; at the management level, they assist the management in making policy and planning decisions; at the programme level they guide decisions related to design and implementation of projects and activities; and finally they provide an opportunity to build on experiences to establish corporate lessons that can guide the future work of the Secretariat.

Over the years, greater focus of the evaluations in the Secretariat has been on thematic and regional reviews of programmes. Whilst these evaluations have proven to be most valuable and will continue to be undertaken by the Secretariat, the Management in 2012 approved a series of country evaluations to assess the relevance and impact of Secretariat assistance in a selection of member countries. The idea is to assess the performance of the entire (as far as possible) Secretariat's portfolio of assistance in a particular country, across several sectors and programme areas over a given period of time.

This evaluation provides a report on the relevance and impact of Secretariat assistance to Sri Lanka during 2007-12. The evaluation is one in a series of country evaluations being undertaken by the Secretariat. The choice of Sri Lanka was guided by several factors, which among others included, the resources spent through various country, regional and pan-Commonwealth Projects and the diversity of project portfolio implemented in the country. Sri Lanka remains one of the founding members of the Commonwealth and

will be the host to the next Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM). In addition, Sri Lanka is also one of the countries which has piloted the implementation of the Technical Cooperation Frameworks.

The evaluation is forward looking and, as well as assessing the impact and effectiveness of past assistance, seeks to identify lessons that can be drawn upon to improve the design and delivery of future Secretariat assistance to its members. The study will recommend any strategic and operational changes that may be required by the Secretariat to make the delivery more focussed, relevant and sustainable, specifically in light of the member country's national development priorities.

## 1.2 Methodology and Approach

The evaluation took a phased approach to collect information for this study. The country projects were assessed according to the standard OECD DAC evaluation criteria covering relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. Data was collected using a systemic review of reports and existing evidence. This included rigorous analysis of project documents, which included the project design and planning documents (from Project Information Management System PIMS and Activity Results Tracking and Expenditure Management Information System (ARTEMIS), project completion reports, back to office reports, consultant reports from projects, where applicable, and a review of recently concluded evaluation studies.

This was supplemented with primary research consisting of semi-structured in-depth interviews with the Secretariat staff involved with project operations in Sri Lanka. The findings of the evaluation were triangulated and validated by field

visit to Sri Lanka to assess the results/ impact of the Secretariat's interventions in Sri Lanka. During the field visit, semi-structured and focus group discussions were held with the Primary Contact Point (PCP) in the Ministry of Finance and Planning, Points of Contact (POCs) in various Ministries and Departments and key stakeholders and beneficiaries engaged with the Secretariat projects.

The focus of the evaluation was to look at- **Process and Relevance** (how the intervention was delivered and its relevance to country needs); **Effectiveness and Efficiency** (whether the projects achieved their set objectives and whether the benefits justify the costs); **Impact and Sustainability** (what the projects achieved that would not otherwise have been achieved and to what extent that is sustainable.)



## 2. Country Context

### 2.0 General<sup>1</sup>

Area: 65,610 sq km

Population: 21.4 million (July 2012 CIA Fact Book)

Capital city: Colombo (population 681,000 (2009 CIA Fact book))

People: 73.94% Sinhalese, 12.7% Tamil, 7.1% Muslim, 5.5% Hill Tamil, and 1.5% other

Languages: Sinhalese, Tamil, English

Religion(s): Buddhist (69.3%); Hindu (15.5%); Muslim (7.5%); Christianity (6.9%), other (0.8%)

Major political parties: Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) (President's party and largest government party), United National Party (UNP) (main opposition party), Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) (left wing, Sinhala nationalist), Tamil National Alliance (a coalition of Tamil parties), Sri Lanka Muslim Congress (SLMC), Jathika Hela Urumaya (JHU) (Sinhala nationalist Buddhist party led by monks and coalition partner of the Government), Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) (member of the TNA), Eelam People's Democratic Party (EPDP) (a government-aligned Tamil party), Ceylon Workers Congress (CWC) (represents Hill Tamils also aligned to the Government)

Government: Unicameral Parliament with Executive Presidency

Membership of international groupings/ organisations: Commonwealth, The South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC), United Nations (UN), Non Aligned Movement (NAM), Group of 77 at the United Nations (G77)



Source: Oxford Cartographers

### 2.1 Development Context<sup>2</sup>

Sri Lanka is a fast emerging Middle Income Country in Asia. With per capita income of USD 2,800, the country has enjoyed recent impressive economic growth, particularly since the end of unrest in the North and East of the country, in 2009. This momentum in economic growth, which reached 8% in 2010 and the first half of 2011, is expected to be continued through 2012.

<sup>1</sup> www.fco.gov.uk

<sup>2</sup> CFTC Technical Cooperation Framework- Sri Lanka, 2011-13



The country's export income is dominated by tea (16.6%), textile and garments (42.2%) and gems (0.9%), while the country also receives a significant level of remittance income from Sri Lankans working overseas. Sri Lanka also benefits from a growing reputation as one of the world's best tourist destinations.

Sri Lanka has near universal literacy and has made good progress with a number of social indicators, including maternal and infant mortality, placing it on track to achieve some of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). A recent decline in poverty levels, from 15.2% in 2006/07 to 8.9% in 2009/10, is associated with a strong government programme on poverty reduction and the expansion of economic and social infrastructure.

Large scale investment projects remain the dominant form of foreign financing, of which Sri Lanka received USD 2.96 billion in 2010. Some of the main development partners operating in the country are highlighted in Annex 1.

## 2.2 Government Development Strategy<sup>3</sup>

At the outset of his first governing period, 2005-2010, His Excellency Mahinda Rajapaksha, President of Sri Lanka, launched a ten-year policy document for the country- *Mahinda Chintana - Vision Towards a New Sri Lanka*.

Building on a number of existing sectoral strategies, *Mahinda Chintana* presents the Government's strategy for achieving heightened levels of economic growth that will propel the country to upper-middle-income status by 2016. Furthermore, the vision sets a goal of ensuring that the benefits of growth are shared across all segments of the population and that regional inequity, social exclusion and adverse environmental repercussions are avoided. In order to achieve this transformation, *Mahinda Chintana* envisages a restructuring of the economy to a modern, environmentally friendly and well connected rural-urban economy that

creates better-remunerated employment opportunities for Sri Lankan citizens.

Between 2006 and 2010, government strategies saw investment in 'major' infrastructure projects (known as the *Mahinda Randora*) amount to almost USD1 billion annually, equivalent to about 3 percent of the GDP. Over the same period per capita income doubled to more than USD2,000.

The Mahinda Chintana vision, which was updated in 2010 as *MahindaChintana – Vision for the Future*<sup>4</sup>, outlines the Government's aspirations for a Sri Lanka that:

- Has an economy with a green environment and rapid development;
- Aspires to be a stable society with a high quality of life for all of its people, and with access to decent living, electricity, water, schooling and health facilities;
- Maintains the best of Sri Lankan culture, traditions and long-standing global identity;
- Aims to consolidate as an emerging market economy, integrated into the global economy and is competitive internationally, and;
- Intends to have the characteristics of a middle-income economy with a knowledge-based society.

In particular, *Mahinda Chintana – Vision for the Future* underlines the Government's commitment to maintaining a continuous economic growth rate of 8% per annum, which would see per capita income rise to over USD 4,000 by 2016. It also identifies two main economic challenges facing the country; i) ensuring that growing economic prosperity effectively filters down through society, and; ii) the imperative to lay the foundations for long term sustainable development.

3 CFTC Technical Cooperation Framework- Sri Lanka, 2011-13

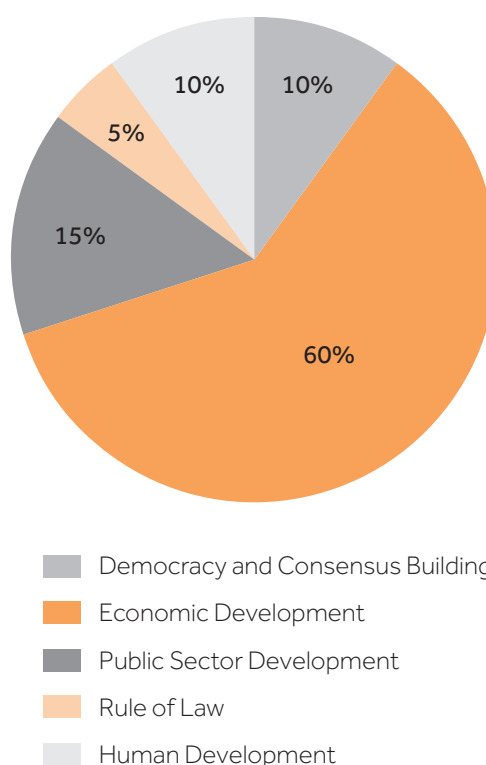
4 <http://www.treasury.gov.lk/EPPRM/npd/pdfdocs/mahindaChintan-vision-2010/ENGLISH/mahindaChintanaVision-2010full-eng.pdf>

### 3. Overview of Secretariat's Assistance to Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka has long-benefited from and continues to benefit from Secretariat assistance in support of the country's development objective. Assistance is coordinated at the national level in consultation with the country's Primary Contact Point (PCP) and through a network of sectoral Points of Contact (POCs).

Over the five-year period 2007-2012, direct CFTC assistance to Sri Lanka was valued at approximately £544,000 and included capacity building support in: anti-money laundering and countering financing of terrorism (AML/CFT); tourism promotion and development; maritime boundaries delimitation; trade facilitation; labour standards and employment relations; debt management; enterprise development and electoral management, as well as institutional strengthening of the Sri Lanka Institute for Development Administration (SLIDA). In addition to direct assistance, Sri Lanka also benefits from over £300,000 worth of annual CFTC assistance to the Asia region as well as from CFTC's pan-Commonwealth programme, valued at £9 million per annum. Through these programmes the CFTC provides institutional strengthening and capacity building assistance, including the training of Sri Lankans in priority areas of need. Examples include capacity and competitiveness development for enterprise development; strengthening public sector institutions and building capacity; and advocacy and capacity building to combat HIV/AIDS, improve maternal health and to promote best practices in the management of health workers through the implementation of the Commonwealth Code of Practice on International Recruitment of Health Workers.

**Figure 1: Thematic Distribution of the Secretariat's Assistance to Sri Lanka**



It is noteworthy that almost 60% of Secretariat's assistance has been provided under the Economic Development Programme followed by the support on Capacity Development and Institutional Strengthening, which constituted 15% of total support. An overview of the ongoing and planned CFTC programme of assistance to Sri Lanka is provided later in the report.

As well as a recipient of CFTC assistance, Sri Lanka is a significant source of experts for assistance to other member countries. It also plays a valuable role promoting South-South Cooperation by supporting the development of Commonwealth partnerships between public institutions in the Asia region and enabling these organisations to access cost effective advice and draw upon each other's experiences.

### 3.1 Ongoing and Planned Assistance to Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka benefits from a broad programme of assistance from the CFTC, ComSec as well as CYP funds, with projects delivered at the national, regional and pan-Commonwealth levels. This section gives an overview of the ongoing and planned assistance to Sri Lanka.

- Improving debt recording and management.** Commonwealth Secretariat Debt Recording and Management System CS-DRMS2000+ is used by the Central Bank and the Ministry of Finance and Planning to assist with the sustainable management of the country's external debt portfolio. Sri Lanka continues to benefit from ComSec support and training. Sri Lanka has participated in several regional and other workshops. In May 2011, participants at a CS-DRMS 2000+ review mission also discussed data requirements for CS-DRMS to develop a public debt database. Further activities in Sri Lanka will include (i) the completion of the implementation of the link for interfacing domestic debt data with CS-DRMS; (ii) considering Sri Lanka as a pilot site for the Public Debt Analytical Tool to be released soon; (iii) providing policy advice on debt market development and cash management and (iv) organising a regional training on debt management policy issues.
- Maritime Boundary Delimitation.** Assistance was being provided to enable the preparation and submission of Sri Lanka's extended Continental Shelf claim to confirm its outer offshore maritime limits to the UN Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf. Assistance was also provided to acquire 'Promax' seismic analysis software that will aid the country to defend the submission before the UN and to build capacity in relation to the development of the country's seabed resources.
- Promoting trade facilitation and export competitiveness.** The overall goal of this programme is to enhance the export competitiveness of Sri Lanka through improvements to their trade logistics systems and processes. The symposium will provide a platform to the relevant actors in the trade facilitation field to discuss issues pertaining to implementing trading facilitation reforms in Sri Lanka.
- Development of leather and footwear industry competitiveness.** Support is being provided through the Industrial Development Board to develop competitiveness in Sri Lanka's leather and footwear sector. The support includes a situation analysis of the sector, designing sector policy, strategy and action plan and designing and delivering a capacity building programme for business development service providers in the sector.
- Strengthening the capacity of Sri Lankan garment exporters.** Assistance is being provided to carry out a market study on garment exports to the UK to identify market access constraints and areas where market access capacity can be improved.
- Strengthening capacity of the Sri Lankan Civil Service.** The capacity of permanent secretaries at the Sri Lanka Institute of Development Administration is being strengthened through customised annual training at the Indian Administrative Staff College, Hyderabad, India.
- Strengthening capacity of parliamentary officials.** In conjunction with the Governments of India and Sri Lanka, CFTC co-finances an annual orientation and training programme for a small group of Sri Lankan parliamentarians at the Bureau of Parliamentary Studies and Training (BPST) in New Delhi, India.
- Strengthening Sri Lanka's Public Sector Human Resource Management.** A 24-month project that aims to improve Sri Lanka's public sector human resource management through the development of a policy to guide its reform and through the provision of support and capacity development to officials from the Sri Lanka Institute for Development Administration (SLIDA)- the organisation responsible for addressing public sector capacity in Sri Lanka.

- **Training for public sector development.**  
Sri Lanka nationals continue to be trained through in-country, regional and pan-Commonwealth programmes in priority areas of need. In the last five years, 196 Sri Lankan nationals have participated in such training.
- **Capacity Building of the Presidential Secretariat.** Assistance is planned to build capacity of the Presidential Secretariat through the placement of a short-term expert in International Development.
- **Youth Training and Enterprise Development.**  
Several young entrepreneurs have benefitted from participating in the various regional consultations and the India-Commonwealth Small Business Competitiveness programmes. Assistance is also being planned that will extend entrepreneurship and skill-specific technical training to youth from the Northern and Eastern Provinces of Sri Lanka, with a focus on enterprise creation.  
  
In addition, a significant proportion of CFTC assistance is pan-Commonwealth in orientation and Sri Lanka continues to benefit from a variety of such projects.

## 4. Evaluation Findings

This section discusses the findings of the evaluation by looking at the different projects implemented by the Secretariat in Sri Lanka during 2007-2012. This includes the projects implemented by the projects in the past as well as projects currently operational in the country.

### 4.1 Improving Public Debt Management

The Debt Management Section of the Secretariat has worked closely with the Government of Sri Lanka since 1985 when Sri Lanka subscribed to the Commonwealth Secretariat Debt Recording and Management System (CS-DRMS) to enable Sri Lanka to build and maintain an up-to-date external debt database. Sri Lanka was the first country to subscribe to the software. The country has continued to use the CS-DRMS effectively for debt recording and management and has since extended use of the application to recording domestic debt.

In 2003 the Government of Sri Lanka made a request to the Secretariat for assistance to establish the Public Debt Management Office (PDMO), working in close cooperation with the Government and other international technical assistance providers. Following the request, in 2004 the Secretariat undertook a review of the institutional framework for debt management in the country and confirmed that public debt management functions were dispersed among a number of departments and institutions. A set of recommendations were made to reorganise institutional arrangements for debt management and to strengthen technical capacity for the effective use of CS-DRMS. Due to changes in government, the PDMO in Sri Lanka could not be implemented and debt management continues to be split between the Ministry of Finance and the Central Bank of Sri Lanka. However,

necessary institutional building has taken place in the meanwhile across both agencies to adopt prudent debt management practices.

The Secretariat has continued to assist Sri Lanka in building capacity for the effective use of the CS-DRMS for public debt management by inviting Debt Managers from Sri Lanka to regional/ London based CS-DRMS training workshops and Pan-Commonwealth training activities on public debt management. A number of country visits have also been undertaken to assist with computerisation of domestic debt data and to provide on the job training for this activity. The CS-DRMS 2000+ review mission also discussed data requirements regarding the upload of auctioning data into CS-DRMS to develop a public debt database.

The evaluation found that CS-DRMS has been a useful tool for Sri Lanka in recording the public debt. The trainings provided by the Secretariat both in person as well as through the e-learning module and the participation in the debt analysis and sustainability fora have been highly appreciated and have been beneficial in the use of CS-DRMS for debt recording. However, concerns were raised on the changing needs of the country, which is now a middle income country, and the ability of the system to capture and process them in CS-DRMS. Examples were given of the change in payment conditions to donors, export credit conditions, accounting of rebates and refunds, etc. and the system's limitation to address these. It was repeatedly highlighted that as CS-DRMS is the key debt recording system used by the country, and all the cash flow, accounting and forecasts are based on the system, it needs to be upgraded immediately to allow for accurate forecasts and debt sustainability analysis. Comparison was made with the World Banks Debt Management

Performance Assessment system (DEMPA) which uses 15 different indicators to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of public debt and a suggestion was made for the Secretariat to improve CS-DRMS to include other aspects as well. The limitations of CS-DRMS to analyse data with regards to debt management such as risk analysis, development of debt strategy, and debt sustainability analysis for prudent debt management, were raised as other major concerns.

It was also acknowledged that the Secretariat has indeed occasionally made modifications to the tool to address the needs of member countries, such as the recent release of an upgraded Service Pack 2. However, this has not been supported by the required training on the management module, limiting the effectiveness of the upgrade.

It was highlighted that Sri Lanka has continuously worked to reduce its Debt to GDP ratio which has fallen from 103% in 2004 to 78% in 2011 and the country was aiming at reducing it to 70% by the end of 2012 and further down to about 40% over the next five years. This would require management capabilities and a strong system capable of recording, managing, analysing and forecasting public debt so that appropriate debt policies and strategies can be put in place. The suggestion was made for advisory and system support from the Secretariat to address the specific country needs of Sri Lanka.

## 4.2 Maritime Boundary Delimitation

The Secretariat, on the request of the Government of Sri Lanka in 2008, provided legal and technical assistance to support the preparation and lodgement on 8 May 2009 of a Submission by Sri Lanka to the United Nations in which it claimed an area of Extended Continental Shelf (ECS) covering over 800,000 square km of additional seabed in the Bay of Bengal region. This assistance was delivered by an advisory team assembled by the Economic and Legal Section, which collaborated with the Continental Margin Boundary Committee (CMBC) tasked by

the Government to prepare the ECS Submission. The ECS Submission is in a queue awaiting formal examination, which is likely to commence in 2015. Assistance was also provided to acquire 'Promax' seismic analysis software to aid the country to defend the submission before the UN and to build capacity in relation to the development of the country's seabed resources.

## 4.3 Benchmarking Sri Lanka's Trade Facilitation Systems and Processes

In 2008 the Commonwealth Secretariat was approached by the Federation of Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Sri Lanka (FCCISL) through the Ministry of Finance and Planning for assistance to benchmark Sri Lanka's trade facilitation system and processes to assist the Government in assessing its trade facilitation efforts against best practice countries and international standards. This would enhance the competitiveness of Sri Lanka's business environment through improvements to its trade logistics systems and processes.

The Secretariat responded with the provision of technical support through its Trade Advisor and the appointment of consulting firm CrimsonLogic, Singapore, comprising a multidisciplinary team of experts in trade logistics, systems and customs to review and analyse the existing customs and trade facilitation systems and procedures, compare them against international best practices and recommend short, medium and long term strategies that should be put in place to improve the country's trade facilitation systems.

Concluded in 2010, the study identified 13 recommendations within short, medium and long term timespans that Sri Lanka should implement in order to improve its trade facilitation systems and processes. A couple of key recommendations among others, included the establishment of a Presidential Commission Government Business Trade Facilitation Committee at the highest level in the immediate term and the implementation of a "Single Electronic Window" in the longer



term, which allows all parties involved in trade and transport to lodge information and documents with a single entry point to fulfil all import, export and transit regulatory requirements, and as the information is electronic, it avoids multiple submission of information.

It was noted that while some of the reforms to facilitating trade policies, systems and processes were among the Government's agenda the benchmarking study reaffirmed the urgency and the need for the same. It was mentioned that the legal framework for paperless submission of trade documents was further strengthened in the country with the passing of the Computer Crime Act in 2006 and Electronic Transaction Act in 2007. However, the readiness of all concerned government ministries and agencies involved in Single Window operation was still an issue.

Discussions with the officials from the FCCISL revealed how appreciative the Chamber was of the Secretariat for facilitating the study, although to date there has been no significant effort made to implement the recommendations. It was noted that the study has definitely initiated an open dialogue among the involved agencies on how to fast track the efforts in this direction, but it was not clear from the discussions as to how FCCISL would implement the recommendations of the report, given its limited capacity and the range of stakeholders involved in the successful implementation of recommendations.

#### 4.4 Promoting Trade Facilitation and Export Competitiveness

Following the Benchmarking study (mentioned above) initiated by the Secretariat on the request from FCCISL, FCCISL recognised that it was unable to implement the recommendations of the report and was content to pass over the implementation phase to Sri Lanka Export Credit Insurance Corporation (SLECIC), which comes under the direct purview of the Ministry of Finance and Planning- the key institution implementing trade facilitation reforms in the country.

These developments led SLECIC to approach the Secretariat for further assistance to build capacity on trade facilitation in Sri Lanka. It was agreed that SLECIC, which has good leverage with key stakeholders in both private and public sectors, could play a pivotal role in coordination to implement recommendations from the Benchmarking study. As a first step, it was agreed that a symposium would be held to convene all key stakeholders to examine ways to implement trade facilitation reforms in Sri Lanka in order to enhance the export competitiveness through improvements to their trade logistics systems and processes.

The evaluation noted that the symposium, which was held between the 2-4 April 2012 in Colombo, brought together experts and representatives from both the public and private sector. Most of the key organisations such as Sri Lanka Customs, Ports Authority, Ministry of Commerce, Department of Fiscal Policy and Ceylon Shippers Academy, were represented at the symposium. The symposium was also attended by the representatives from the banking sector and private sector export industries in agriculture, textiles, tea and rubber.

Senior officials at SLECIC were highly positive with the outcomes of the symposium and viewed it as a positive step towards facilitating the export competitiveness of Sri Lanka. The symposium reaffirmed the Benchmark study's recommendation to establish a Presidential Level Committee to steer the process supported by institutional leadership from both the public and the private sector that could push the reform agenda and manage change. The need to learn from other country experiences such as those of Bangladesh, Singapore and China, was also reiterated.

The evaluation found that while political will exists in the country, a push is needed to drive the change. It was noted that as a result of infrastructure development and efforts to simplify some of the trade procedures, Sri Lanka's World Bank Logistics Performance Index

rankings have already moved from 137 in 2010 to 81 in 2012, making it 56 percent of the highest performer, which is Singapore.

SELCIC is well positioned to take the leadership role in trade reforms given its unique positioning as a statutory body under the Ministry of Finance and Planning, its role as the sole export credit agency of the Government of Sri Lanka and its commitment to providing attractive and innovative Export Credit Insurance and Guarantee support services for the development of exports in Sri Lanka.

The evaluation was informed that following the April symposium, SELCIC has submitted a proposal to the Ministry of Finance and Planning to enhance trade facilitation efforts, which has been cleared by the Department of National Planning and is pending clearance by the Department of External Resources of Sri Lanka.

#### 4.5 Strengthening the Capacity of Sri Lankan Garment Exporters

The garment sector is the major contributor to Sri Lanka's export earnings, comprising 40% (USD 3.1 billion) of total earnings. The industry generates direct employment opportunity for approximately 340,000 personnel, making it the largest employer in Sri Lanka, whilst indirectly creating employment opportunities for more than 700,000 personnel. The total imports of garments to Europe is around USD 308 billion of which Sri Lankan export constitutes less than 1.2 percent (USD 3.2 billion).

In December 2010, the Sri Lanka Export Development Board (EDB), the apex trade promotion and development body in Sri Lanka operating under the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, launched the "Export Strategic Plan 2010-2015" for the promotion of export products from Sri Lanka. It identified the garment sector as one of the thrust sectors for export promotion and one of the goals is to promote and establish the credibility of Sri Lankan exporters in foreign markets and establish market penetration mechanisms.

The UK has been one of Sri Lanka's priority markets for promoting garments from the inception. In 2011, the EDB approached the Secretariat for assistance to enhance the capacity of garment manufacturers to access the UK market. Assistance was provided by the Secretariat together with experts from the London College of Fashion, which included a Sourcing Consultant, an International Marketing Consultant and a Global Management Expert.

This Business-to-Business (B2B) project was conducted over a period of eight months from October 2011 to May 2012 and managed in three stages. The first stage involved conducting preliminary factory audits, presenting workshops on Full Business Package Models, and becoming export ready through better marketing, design and branding in country. The second stage was dedicated to the selection of Small and Medium-size Enterprises (SME) suppliers that showed signs of being capable of moving from Cut, Make and Trim business to Full Business Package. The final stage focused on the UK Match Making programme based on the buyer meetings with *White Stuff*, *Monsoon*, *Full of Bright Ideas*, *TopShop* and *Animal*, all pre-arranged by the LCF consultant and the Apparel Forum organised with the Commonwealth Business Council.

Senior officials at the EDB were highly appreciative of the Secretariat for the assistance and this innovative model and valued the Commonwealth support very highly, recognising that this would not have been made possible without the Secretariat's support. It was noted that the suppliers have provided very positive feedback on the programme. It was clear from discussions that the EDB is very keen to implement the recommendations of the study and work with the next tier SME suppliers to help them develop a market export development plan that can strategically drive their business objectives. The EDB also indicated their intention to diversify this approach to other sectors. The impact of the matchmaking programme will transpire over the coming months and will indicate progress and the development of orders/relationships.



## 4.6 Development of Rural SME Sector in Sri Lanka

In April 2005, the Government of Sri Lanka established the Ministry of Small and Rural Industries to facilitate the development of Sri Lanka's small rural industries. In May 2005, the Ministry made a formal request for technical assistance from the Commonwealth Secretariat to develop a SME policy framework, strategies and implementation plan based on the Government's new economic policy framework, which laid out its broad areas of focus for reducing poverty, including developing the rural economy and promoting SMEs.

The aim of the assistance was to enhance the operational SME policy environment and enable small rural entrepreneurs to develop viable and competitive enterprises. In addition, the project aimed at increasing the knowledge levels and institutional capacity of the Ministry of Small and Rural Industries and support Institutions to implement the strategies and rural SME support programmes.

The Secretariat assisted the government through the services of Mr Keith Hilyer, President of Redma Consultants Ltd, Canada and Mr Thilakasiri, a Sri Lankan national consultant. While the project was delayed due to Presidential elections in Sri Lanka and the change of management in the new Government, the project was completed by December 2006. The final report of the project, however, was only made available in January 2008. The key outcome of the project was the development of a Policy Framework for SMEs in rural areas for the Ministry and the preparation of guidelines and strategies for successful implementation of these to achieve the targets set by the Government for the Ministry.

Sri Lanka has, since the inception of the project, undergone several rounds of restructuring within the government. The Ministry of Small and Rural Industries (MSRI) was transformed to the Ministry of Rural Industries and Self Employment (MRISE) and is currently restructured as the Ministry of Traditional Industries and Small Enterprise

Development (MTISED). It was evident from the discussions with officials both in the Secretariat and in Sri Lanka that the implementation of the recommendations has been a challenging task. However, discussions with senior officials at the MTISED and Industrial Development Board (IDB) revealed that a number of recommendations from the Secretariat assisted report on the policy framework have been adopted by the current Ministry in various forms.

The report recommended that the IDB decentralise its operations, as currently operations are highly centralised, which makes it difficult for the organisation to effectively deliver appropriate services. It also recommended investing in capacity building and building networks to learn and be exposed to international best practices. It was found that Sri Lanka has since restructured the IDB and its operations are now decentralised, which has led to more support for MSME activities in rural areas as district offices now have more autonomy to deliver assistance to rural enterprises. Project management offices have been established at each Provincial Office and a committee at the Head office representing members from the provincial offices has been assigned for rural SME project facilitation, monitoring & evaluation. It has also implemented four new rural SME projects that were formulated during the Secretariat supported technical assistance workshops.

The IDB has also initiated a number of capacity building programmes from its staff to learn from international best practices. Networks have been established with other development partners like NCC, IVDP and IFAD. It was expressed that while more work is needed towards the development of a robust SME policy for Sri Lanka, different elements from the policy framework document have from time to time fed into Cabinet Papers and Ministries' Strategic Plan and Framework documents. The political will at the highest level and the commitment to promote rural SME sector was clearly reflected during the discussions. MTISED is strongly promoting a Management for Development Results (MfDR) approach and has established

five key performance indicators for the Ministry and the "Promotion of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises and Industries" is one of them. All officials interviewed spoke very positively of the Secretariat's technical support and the value and recognition it has as a Commonwealth brand.

#### 4.7 Development of Leather and Footwear Industry Competitiveness

This is a fairly recent project and is an offshoot of the Rural SME support project to Sri Lanka. The request for assistance came from the Industrial Development Board of Sri Lanka in September 2011 to develop the competitiveness in Sri Lanka's leather and footwear sector, and the project was launched in May 2012.

The Government has identified the Leather and Footwear Sector as having the potential to develop into a lucrative foreign exchange earner and one that will create jobs, especially for youth and women, and has offered many incentives to encourage manufacturers to enhance their businesses. However, for the sector to become competitive and withstand current market competition, especially from imports, the Government has to identify the actual bottlenecks in the value chain, in order to make meaningful interventions. The other issue is that most of the support organisations including business development service providers do not have the prerequisite expertise and capacity to effectively support the industry.

Support is being provided by the Secretariat through the services of an international consultant Mr Peter Racklyeft and the technical expertise at the Secretariat. The support includes a sector wide situation analysis including the review of related policies, strategies, support structures and services that have a significant impact on MSMEs in leather and footwear sector. The second stage of the support involves designing a policy, strategy and action plan in consultation with Government Ministries and Departments, the IDB, Centre for Development of Leather Products and Footwear, Business

Development Service (BDS) providers, training institutions, retailers, suppliers, etc. The final step of the support includes designing a capacity building plan that will address skills gaps identified in the sector in general and in the value chain in particular. A specific training programme for BDS providers will be designed and delivered to prepare them for long-term support of the sector.

As the project has just been launched, it is too early to comment on the output and outcomes. However, discussions with officials at the IDB showed their appreciation for the Secretariat's technical assistance and it was reaffirmed that the support provided was in line with the broader national economic development objectives of Sri Lanka and will contribute to the development of the industry through building the capacity of SMEs to meet the global challenge in the footwear and leather goods market.

#### 4.8 Youth Development Programme

Sri Lanka has been an active participant in a number of regional and pan-Commonwealth activities of the Youth Affairs Programme within the framework of its Youth Enterprise and Sustainable Livelihoods (YESL), Governance, Development and Youth Networks (GYDN) and Youth Work Education and Training (YWET) programmes.

In February 2011, the Commonwealth Youth Programme (CYP) organised a Commonwealth Asia Regional Conference on Investing in Youth Employment in Colombo, Sri Lanka to provide a platform to various stakeholders to discuss regional context, trends, policy commitments and challenges of youth unemployment with a focus on youth entrepreneurship/ enterprise development and decide on practical actions for the promotion of youth enterprises; and explore possibilities for strategic partnership / collaboration with international and national development organisations, banking institutions and the corporate sector for youth enterprise development.

In November 2011, as a follow-up to a pan-Commonwealth consultation on Investing in Youth Employment, a regional visioning workshop on forming a Commonwealth Asia Alliance of Young Entrepreneurs (CAAYE) was organised in India. Twenty young entrepreneurs from member countries of the Asia region, including Sri Lanka, participated in the workshop and formed the CAAYE. A Memorandum of Understanding and a Charter for CAAYE was signed by the youth entrepreneurs from Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, India, Pakistan, Malaysia, the Maldives, Singapore, Sri Lanka and the Commonwealth Asia Centre. CAAYE's accreditation is currently under consideration by the Accreditation Committee of the Commonwealth.

Entrepreneurs from Sri Lanka regularly participated in IX, X, XI and XII India-Commonwealth Small Business Competitiveness programmes facilitated by the CYP Asia centre together with the Special Advisory Services Division of the Secretariat to showcase the work being done on Small and Medium Enterprise Development in India in the member countries of the Commonwealth. These programmes are designed for young entrepreneurs to be able to share their own experiences and also develop market linkages with successful entrepreneurs for future business development.

In February 2012, entrepreneurs from Sri Lanka participated in the First Regional Consultation on Financial Inclusion of Young People, organised in India. The consultation was attended by 34 representatives of Central banks, Public and Private banks, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Small Scale Industries, Ministry of labour, Federation of Commerce, Corporate sector, Microfinance and Training Organisations, national and international development organisations and young entrepreneurs from eight commonwealth countries including Bangladesh, Maldives, Malaysia, Brunei Darussalam, Singapore and India.

Following the report of the Commonwealth Commission on Respect and Understanding in 2007, "Civil Paths to Peace" the Commonwealth Youth Ministers Meeting (CYMM) in Colombo

in April, 2008 mandated the Commonwealth Youth Programme to work towards greater engagement of young people in peace building. To this effect a situation analysis on "Youth and Peace-building" was undertaken in selected Commonwealth countries and this included Sri Lanka, together with Bangladesh, Pakistan, India and Malaysia. The situation assessment has led to regional peace building training led by stakeholders who now target young people in their programmes.

Sri Lanka was one of the countries selected for the baseline assessment on National Youth Policy and mainstreaming meant to support Ministries and Departments of Youth to improve national youth policy framework and action planning. Through the consultation and workshops during the assessment, Ministries and stakeholders were equipped with the skills and knowledge to mobilise resources to implement, coordinate and monitor national youth action plans.

In order to strengthen the enabling environment in member countries to support youth development and empowerment with increased numbers of professionally trained youth workers, the Secretariat has contributed to improvements in the knowledge, skill and attitudes in youth development through the delivery of youth development diploma and other training; publication of youth development journal; supporting the development of youth work competency; and occupational standards and support for youth work associations. As a part of this initiative A Diploma in Youth Development is offered in Sri Lanka in collaboration with the Open University of Sri Lanka. 73 students have so far completed the Diploma successfully and 180 students have been registered for the 2012 programme, which is a clear indicator of the awareness, recognition and demand of youth work in mainstream development.

Now the Commonwealth's focus is on developing broader systems and mechanisms to support the professionalisation of youth work, and the Secretariat has collaborated with the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Skills Development on such efforts in Sri Lanka. A national consultation on

youth work was held in 2011 and three regional consultations were conducted in the North-East, South and Central Provinces in 2012, to broaden the professionalisation process. As a result of these consultations a Youth Work Action Committee has been formed, and with the Commonwealth's financial and technical support is now in the process of drafting the Constitution for a National Youth Workers Association. The consultations also determined that further qualifications are needed for youth service organisations, and these are being advocated for. Sri Lanka will also be represented, with Commonwealth support, at the upcoming Commonwealth Conference on the Education and Training of Youth Workers, where they will share civil society efforts towards the professionalisation of youth work.

Assistance is also being planned that will extend entrepreneurship and skill-specific technical training to youth from the Northern and Eastern Provinces of Sri Lanka, with a focus on enterprise creation.

Sri Lanka has also been a beneficiary of the Commonwealth Youth Credit Initiative (CYCI) and has had a total allocation of SLR 4,635,782 of which SLR 848,974 has been disbursed to young entrepreneurs so far. However the programme was abandoned after the 2004 Tsunami.

Discussions with the officials at the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Skills Development and the FCCISL gave a clear indication of the value and importance that has been accredited to the Commonwealth support to Youth initiatives in Sri Lanka. It was evident from the discussions that the youth development work has definitely enhanced awareness around issues facing young people, their engagement, participation, mainstreaming and inclusion in all spheres of decision making.

Efforts and strong political will was clear to strengthen skills and mainstream youth policy issues across all sectors. Strategic collaboration has been established for the inclusion of young people in the economic development of the country. The CAAYE chapter in Sri Lanka has

developed a work plan towards achieving CAAYE's objectives of aligning with G20 Young Entrepreneurs Alliance for future lobbying and networking on youth enterprise.

The evaluation noted that the work of CYP in piloting and investing in youth diploma training has seen a significant increase in the number of academic institutions offering academic training in youth work. As a result of the advocacy and promotion of youth work as a profession, public service commissions are now more willing to identify youth workers as professionals in the government system. The CYP Diploma is now recognised for salary increments at the National Youth Services Council, Sri Lanka.

## 4.9 Election Observation: Sri Lanka Presidential Elections

In 2009, following an invitation from the Commissioner of Elections to observe the Presidential Elections, the Secretary General decided to constitute a Commonwealth Expert Team (CET) to observe the elections and present a report of their findings including conclusions and recommendations. The team was led by Mr KD Knight, former Foreign Minister of Jamaica, and comprised five persons in total including Ms Cynthia Barrow-Giles (St Lucia), a lecturer in political science at the Cave Hill Campus, University of West Indies, Barbados; Dr I V Subba Rao (India), a member of the Indian Administrative Service; Mr Tim Neale (United Kingdom), associated with the BBC on coverage of elections from 1956; Ms Jane Michuki (Kenya), a lawyer and an elections expert as well as an advocate of the High Court of Kenya. The Expert Team was supported by a four-member staff team from the Commonwealth Secretariat.

In order to ensure that the democratic arrangements meet the Commonwealth and internationally accepted standards, the purpose of the CET was to assess the overall conduct of the electoral process and the environment in which the election is conducted. The Team, acting impartially and independently with no executive role, observed and assessed the

process as a whole and formed its judgement and submitted its report<sup>5</sup> to the Commonwealth Secretary-General, who forwarded it to the Government of Sri Lanka, the Commissioner of Elections, political parties and to all Commonwealth Governments.

Discussions at the Office of the Commissioner of Elections only reaffirmed the value the member Governments place on the Commonwealth Election Observation Teams. It was noted that while the Sri Lankan Presidential Elections were observed by a number of other international and national observer groups, which among others included the European Union (EU), People's Action for Free and Fair Election (PAFFREL), The Centre for Monitoring Election Violence (CMEV), Campaign for Free and Fair Elections (CaFFE), and the National Polls Observation Centre (NPOC), the respect and value that was accorded to the CET observation and recommendations is unparalleled. One of the main reasons quoted was the diversity and experience the CET brings from all Commonwealth regions which leaves very little room for the observation report to be biased. It was also mentioned that a number of recommendations from the 2009 CET report have already been implemented. It was recommended that the Secretariat should continue to provide this valued support to strengthen democratic processes, institutions and culture in Commonwealth countries.

#### 4.10 Promoting Human Rights Standards and Capacity Building

In order to protect and promote human rights in the Commonwealth, in the period under review the Secretariat has assisted member countries to improve the ratification and implementation of international human rights instruments; strengthen the capacity of key institutions to monitor and protect human rights; adopt and apply best practices, specifically on the development of integrated and comprehensive

approaches to human rights; promote awareness of human rights and human rights dimensions of current issues; participate effectively in the UN Human Rights Council's Universal Periodic Review (UPR); and participate in and strengthen the Commonwealth Forum of National Human Rights Institutions (CFNHRI) and regional networks of human rights institutions.

Sri Lanka has participated in activities supporting preparation and follow-up for the UPR. A seminar on preparation for the Review was held in London in March 2008. The purpose of the seminar was to share technical knowledge about the procedure and modalities of the UPR process and to build the capacity and confidence of states to engage and maximise the outcomes of their engagement in the process. A representative from Sri Lanka was in attendance, and Sri Lanka's national report was submitted in May 2008 following the seminar.

Representatives from the Government of Sri Lanka, the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka (HRCSL) and civil society participated in a regional follow-up and implementation seminar on UPR (Bangladesh, February 2011). The purpose of the seminar was to encourage and support Commonwealth states and stakeholders (NHRIs, NGOs) to remain engaged with the UPR following the 1st cycle review in Geneva, and to support Commonwealth states to implement/act on the accepted UPR recommendations. The seminar fostered cross-sector collaboration between various stakeholders and was a useful platform for enabling constructive dialogue amongst them. In late 2011, Sri Lanka adopted its five year National Action Plan in line with a pledge made during the first cycle of the UPR. The Plan is being implemented by different ministries and institutions, while an inter-ministerial committee monitors the progress. The creation of an inter-ministerial steering group is identified by the Commonwealth as good practice with regard to implementing UPR recommendations. Sri Lanka submitted its national report for the 2nd UPR cycle in November 2011.

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.thecommonwealth.org/files/220094/FileName/FINALREPORT-CET2010PrintVersion.pdf>



Sri Lanka has also participated in meetings of the Commonwealth Forum of National Human Rights Institutions (CFNHRI). In February 2007, Sri Lanka participated in the London conference which agreed to establish the CFNHRI to strengthen cooperation and share best practices with NHRIs in the Commonwealth. Sri Lanka attended the inaugural meeting of the CFNHRI in Kampala, Uganda in 2007, as well as CFNHRI meetings in 2008 and 2009. Outcomes of the CFNHRI meetings include transfer of experiences and good practices in monitoring, protecting and advocating human rights among NHRIs, as well as shared examination of constraints and challenges faced by them; increased awareness on key themes in human rights, such as the impact of climate change and non-discrimination; and increased peer-to-peer exchanges on strategies to monitor and protect human rights. Sri Lanka has not been represented at subsequent meetings through 2013.

Following two visits of the Secretary-General to Sri Lanka (September 2012 and February 2013), the Chair and the Commissioners of the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka showed great interest in the ways in which the Secretariat could support the Commission. Those visits provided the necessary framework for the Secretariat's recent engagement with Sri Lanka on capacity-building and technical cooperation in the field of human rights. The Human Rights Unit (HRU) is currently focusing on strengthening the capacity of the HRCSL in order to enhance its independence and authority with the objective of regaining its "A" status at the International Coordinating Committee for National Human Rights Institutions (ICC). As part of the collaborative roadmap identified for this purpose, the HRU has already delivered two capacity development interventions. The first was in July 2013 on the conduct of national inquiries in compliance with international standards. The second, on the role of the HRCSL in the national reconciliation process, was held in September 2013. One of the envisaged outcomes for the capacity development of the HRCSL is strengthened, profiled and reported functional independence. As a result of these

two interventions, the HRCSL has agreed to conduct its first national inquiry on the thematic area of torture, and to formulate its own work plan on reconciliation, which it is expected to take forward in early 2014 with Secretariat support and assistance.

Sri Lanka's High Commissioner to London, representatives from the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka, and the Head of the Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Taskforce participated in the Commonwealth Roundtable on Reconciliation in London in May 2013. The high level roundtable convened speakers from member countries that have initiated best or promising practices in the area of reconciliation and accountability and are progressing well in their efforts. The Roundtable provided an opportunity to celebrate Commonwealth success stories and identify transferable knowledge, good practice and workable models. Outcomes included increased awareness among key target countries of best and promising practice in transitional justice processes that encompass accountability, truth-seeking, reparation and institutional reform.

The Asia regional workshop to train youth trainers was deployed in India in March 2013, with three Sri Lankan representatives in attendance. The project furthers the mandate of the Commonwealth Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment (PAYE 2007-2015, specifically PAYE 7: 'promote peaceful and democratic environments in which human rights flourish') and Civil Paths to Peace outcomes on education. Envisioned workshop outcomes include the monitoring of public examples of the impact of the training; the monitoring against agreed indicators after 6 months, and then again after a year. Evaluation from the training workshop revealed that more than 90% of participants rated the training and the training manual excellent or very good.

### 4.11 Institutional Capacity and Public Sector Development Programme

Under this programme, the public sector development assistance is provided to Sri Lanka mainly through two regional projects and the public sector development work carried out in partnership with the Presidential Secretariat.

#### Enhancing Public Sector Development in Asia:

This regional programme supports the institutional capacity development of the public sector institutions in member countries. The strategic thrust is to address the key skills gaps and provide core public administration and management skills. Two key elements of this programme include strengthening the capacity of the Sri Lankan civil service and of parliamentary officials. Through this programme the capacity of permanent secretaries at the Sri Lanka Institute of Development Administration is being strengthened through customised annual training at the Indian Administrative Staff College, Hyderabad, India. Regarding parliamentary officials, in conjunction with the Governments of India and Sri Lanka, CFTC co-finances an annual orientation and training programme for a small group of Sri Lankan parliamentarians at BPST in New Delhi, India. The Indian parliamentary system is historically and culturally relevant to Sri Lanka.

Sri Lankan nationals continue to be trained through in-country, regional and pan-Commonwealth programmes in priority areas of need. Some of these include: Advanced Certificate in Quality and Productivity Management, Singapore; Regional Programme in Project Management at the Indian Institute of Public Administration, New Delhi, India; Strengthening Negotiation Capacity at the National Institute of Public Administration (INTAN), Malaysia, and through in-country training; Commonwealth Diplomatic Training Programme at the Institute of Diplomacy and Foreign Relations, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia; and Commonwealth / Grameen International Poverty Dialogue Program at Grameen Bank, Dhaka, Bangladesh. In the last five years, 196 Sri Lankan

nationals have participated in such training programmes. In addition, a significant proportion of CFTC assistance is pan-Commonwealth in orientation and Sri Lanka continues to benefit from a variety of such projects. Examples include building public private partnerships and promoting good practice policies in local government in South Asia.

Discussions with senior officials at the Ministry of Public Administration & Home Affairs, Sri Lanka Institute of Development Administration (SLIDA) and the Office of the Secretary General, Parliament of Sri Lanka highlighted that some of these programmes have been highly informative and extremely useful in expanding the knowledge of the Sri Lankan officials especially with regard to the what other countries are doing and international best practices. It was mentioned that the programme has received positive feedback from the participants. Many of the Additional Secretaries who attended the Permanent Secretaries orientation programme have now been promoted to Permanent Secretaries. The programmes have also helped build networks between the Administrative Staff College of India and the SLIDA, who now work together to build new and innovative ideas into the course curriculum.

Several examples were given on how the learning from the Permanent Secretaries orientation programme is being customised to the Sri Lankan context. These include a series of meditation programmes which have been started for batches of employees with the aim of improving their ethical conduct, integrity and morale in the office environment. Participants from the Ministry of State Resources and Enterprise Development have used the leadership qualities gathered from the programme to restructure their programmes. Lessons from the Public Private Partnerships and innovations in Public Systems are being utilised to improve the effectiveness of programmes. Lessons from the Kerala model on the social audit of rural development programmes have led to proposals for policy change to develop a system which encourages people to comment, criticise,

investigate and influence any rural development programme under the Ministry of Economic Development.

In other examples, the Ministry of Social Services is using the knowledge gained to improve social protection and security for underprivileged groups of society for their social and economic improvement. The E-governance lessons from the 'AROGYA SIRI' experience have been proposed for submission of training requirements with the HRD Secretariat. One of the participants from the Customs Department has successfully replaced the manual system of managing annual asset declaration forms with a computerised online system and also introduced the meditation programme among the employees while another participant has successfully empowered the villagers in 'Iranawila Diyawara Gammana' to maintain the village road network.

The Parliamentary Internship programme also received praise from the officials. Between 2008 and 2011 some 25 participants have benefitted from the financial assistance from CFTC under this programme. The programme is aimed at the middle managers level and has been published as a good practice in the Yearbook on Good Governance 2011. Examples were quoted of how this has led to the introduction of new systems for interpretation, research and documentation in the parliament. The newly appointed Assistant Secretary General in Parliament herself spoke about benefiting from the Parliamentary Internship and the Legislative Drafting course organised by the Secretariat. A noteworthy achievement of the programme has been that with the increased capacity, the Sri Lankan parliament has now opened doors for the Maldivian Majlis parliamentarians to build their capacity. Furthermore, with the assistance from the UNDP, the office of the Secretary General to the Parliament has helped Afghanistan to establish its Parliamentary System, all very good examples of the 'Commonwealth way' of south-south cooperation without any serious resource allocation. This has not only led to parliamentary capacity development, but also enabled Sri Lanka to share its experiences with

neighbouring Maldives and attracted the UNDP to bring in its financial resources to use this as a model of excellence and link it to the democratic development of Afghanistan.

It was mentioned that to promote and transfer knowledge on democratic systems, education centres and youth parliament are actively being promoted including the implementation of a women's caucus in the parliament.

**Strengthening Sri Lanka's Public Sector Human Resource Management:** This project aims to improve Sri Lanka's public sector human resource management through the development of a policy framework to guide its reform and through the provision of support and capacity development to officials from the Sri Lanka Institute for Development Administration (SLIDA), the organisation responsible for addressing public sector capacity in Sri Lanka.

To this effect, the Secretariat has organised a number of workshops in Sri Lanka since 2010 to review the existing situation, identify policies and practices on Human Resources Management, and generate a wider debate around the issue to develop effective strategies to support the Government in formulating a Human Resource Policy for the Public sector. Discussions during the Secretariat missions have also identified the intervention strategies and the need for the placement of a long term expert to support the development of the framework and build capacity of the Sri Lanka Institute of Public Administration.

During the discussions with senior officials from SLIDA it was very clear that development of a Strategic Human Resources Management (SHRM) Policy Framework has been and remains one of the key priority areas for the country and there exists a strong commitment from the government to take this forward. This was once again reiterated at a recent Secretariat organised symposium on Leadership for Public Service Excellence which was attended by around 120 very senior officials from about 32 ministries including some Cabinet Ministers and Secretaries and followed up by a Senior Leaders Forum. Among other outcomes of the Symposium, the



development of a SHRM framework and capacity building of SLIDA once again came out as top priority, something that was identified as a need in 2010 and impressed upon by the Sri Lankan officials in each of the Secretariat's subsequent missions.

Discussions highlighted that while the government appreciated the support from the Secretariat in generating a debate around the issue, emphasis should be put on the need for a carefully thought through, systematic and holistic approach adopted by the Secretariat to support the Government, rather than adhoc support through routine workshops, seminars and symposiums.

## 5. Conclusion and Recommendations

This section analyses the findings of the evaluation from the systematic literature review, interviews with the Secretariat staff and the in-country stakeholders during the evaluation. It summarises the discussion against key evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability and makes recommendations for the future work of the Secretariat.

### 5.1 Relevance

Relevance, with respect to this evaluation, is the extent to which the assistance provided by the Secretariat suits the needs, priorities and policies of Sri Lanka to address its national issues.

At the pan-Commonwealth level, the 2008 Evaluation of the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation (CFTC) confirmed that the CFTC has made a positive contribution to members' development, noting that it *'continues to have a substantive role to play, occupying a unique niche, both in terms of its size and philosophy.'*

This was supported by the Government of Sri Lanka in 2009 in its response to a CFTC questionnaire, which sought member countries' feedback. It noted, inter-alia, that the Commonwealth Secretariat's speed of response to CFTC assistance requests compares favourably to that of other development partners and that the CFTC had been able to respond to requests that could not be met by other development partners.

The evaluation reaffirmed that the assistance provided by the Secretariat to Sri Lanka within the framework of the Secretariat's Strategic Plan and the Sri Lanka Technical Cooperation Framework (TCF), which presents the overall strategic focus,

objectives and expected results, has been and continues to be highly relevant in supporting its country's development priorities.

The majority of the assistance to Sri Lanka during the evaluation period focussed on the Secretariat's Development Goal, *'To support pro-poor policies for economic growth and sustainable development in member countries,'* especially on the programmes on Economic Development and Public Sector Development. It also received some assistance in the areas of Democracy, Rule of Law, Human Rights and Human Development.

Assistance in the area of Economic Development to support inclusive and sustainable growth, especially support in the area of international trade and regional co-operation, export competitiveness, enterprise development, debt management, rural SME policy development and maritime boundary delimitation has been highly relevant in the Sri Lankan context and contributes to its national development objective, *'To achieve rapid economic growth by restructuring the economy to a modern, environmental friendly and well-connected rural-urban economy that can create better remunerated employment opportunities.'*

Assistance in the area of Public Sector Development to advance good governance, particularly in the area of building public service capacity, human resource management and building institutional capacity to enhance public sector leadership and delivery of effective citizen-centred public services were also found to be resonating extremely with the national development objective of *'Promoting effective governance structures, improve public sector productivity and elevate Sri Lanka's public services to the highest level, ensuring that they are people-friendly and result-oriented.'*

The evaluation further confirmed that the assistance provided under the auspices of the Commonwealth Youth Programme within the framework of its Youth Enterprise and Sustainable Livelihoods, Governance, Development and Youth Networks and Youth Work Education and Training programmes has been extremely relevant and very much supports the national development goal to mainstream young people in every sphere of growth and development.

Overall, the evaluation found that most of the projects that have been implemented in Sri Lanka were highly relevant to the country needs and development priorities and were highly valued. The evaluation also noted that while relevant, awareness of what the Secretariat does and the nature of assistance that can be requested from the Secretariat was limited to those senior officials who have usually been the points of contacts of Secretariat Advisers on specific projects. This was clearly visible in departments/ Ministries where there has been considerable staff turnaround. During many group meetings, stakeholders showed keen interest in knowing about the Secretariat and its work.

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**Recommendation 1: The Secretariat, in order to be relevant to a wider group of stakeholders, must identify opportunities and invest in raising the visibility and awareness of the Commonwealth, its values, comparative advantages and work.**

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## 5.2 Effectiveness

Effectiveness is the extent to which the projects achieve their stated outputs and outcomes. Most of the projects, barring the ones which have started recently, reviewed under this evaluation did meet their output objectives to some extent and were found effective. As discussed in the previous section, this was acknowledged by most of the stakeholders during the evaluation, who appreciated the support and the outputs resulting from the Secretariat's projects. However, it was difficult to show a direct correlation between the outputs and the project

purpose (outcomes) as described in the project documentation. This can be greatly attributed to the smaller size and short term nature of Secretariat intervention, which place greater emphasis on project activities and outputs rather than on short and longer term outcomes.

It was also noted that in almost all cases the project purpose (outcomes) and in some cases even the project outputs were too ambitious (pitched too high) in the project documentation making them unrealistic, immeasurable and unattainable within the duration of the project. This was clearly identified as a design issue that the Secretariat must address through more rigorous training for staff on Results Based Management, the results chain in general and the quality of logical frameworks in particular supported by clear, measurable, realistic and time bound outcomes and indicators.

The evaluation also noted that the effectiveness of Secretariat's efforts was in many instances compromised by the large number of small and fragmented projects implemented over years with a different set of stakeholders each time, all aiming to contribute to a similar end goal. For example the Secretariat's efforts to improve export competitiveness and trade facilitation in Sri Lanka were implemented through four different projects in three years; in another example, the efforts to develop SME sector in Sri Lanka has been undertaken by the Secretariat over the past five years through three different projects. The fact worth noting here is that almost in all instances the Secretariat has worked with a different Ministry/Organisation. It was also interesting to note that some of these projects with similar goals were implemented by two sections of one division and at other times by two Secretariat Divisions, a clear example of poor coordination and communication within and across Secretariat divisions. This should be improved, if it is deemed important to optimise our resources and demonstrate better results.

Coordination of the Secretariat's assistance to the country through the Primary Contact Point (PCP) and the Point of Contacts (POC) continues to be another critical issue that has a bearing

on the effectiveness of Secretariat assistance. While Model 1 proposed at the PCP meeting in London in July 2009, has been a preferred option for Sri Lanka, with all coordination of assistance to the country directed through the office of the Primary Contact Point (PCP), the Secretariat still approaches the line ministries directly without any information to the PCP. It was suggested that any new assistance be initiated through the office of the PCP, as all external assistance to the country is routed through this office. The PCP's office can play a critical role in aligning assistance with the national development priorities and identifying niche areas where Secretariat assistance can play the value added role. This also avoids duplication of efforts.

Another issue that was raised prominently during the evaluation is the country nominations for Commonwealth Secretariat training events, workshops and conferences. It was highlighted that at times the requests for nominations reach the office of the PCP, while at times the Secretariat also approaches the Line Ministries directly. This can become counterproductive as the best candidates, who can use the new knowledge and skills at work, are not sent for training. It was also mentioned that on occasion as a result of this approach, the same people continue to attend the majority of the Secretariat organised events. There have been instances when the nominations suggested by the office of the PCP were totally ignored and candidates were chosen directly in consultation with the Line Ministries. This limits the effectiveness of the assistance. It was suggested that all nominations should be made in consultation with and with the engagement of the PCP, the External Resources Department, and the Government of Sri Lanka.

In relation to some of the regional workshops and seminars, it was mentioned that usually the resources persons and experts are chosen locally. While using local expertise was regarded positively, it was suggested that these events could benefit further if external expertise and knowledge was also invited to them. This would be more effective in building local capacity and would facilitate cross learning and exchange.

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**Recommendation 2:** The Secretariat should invest more time and resources in building capacity of staff on results based management, especially in designing projects that have clear, realistic, measurable and time bound outcomes and indicators supported by an integral project monitoring and evaluation plan. This should be further supported by a strong quality assurance mechanism that not only focuses on the relevance and compliance but also on the quality of project design and results.

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**Recommendation 3:** The Secretariat should take a more coordinated approach in project design and implementation, based on sound problem analysis and taking into account the theory of change. Investment should be made in bigger and longer term projects that seek to address the root cause of the problem (and not just the symptoms) and have a lasting impact.

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**Recommendation 4:** The Secretariat should improve communication and coordination across the Secretariat divisions, within divisions, between advisers and Primary Contact Points and Points of Contacts in Capitals. This will prevent any lost opportunities for collaboration and cost sharing as well as duplication of activities and promote a more coordinated approach to country assistance that demonstrates impact.

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### 5.3 Efficiency

Efficiency is the measure of outputs in relation to the inputs. Given the small size of projects implemented in Sri Lanka and the absence of integral project monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, it was very difficult to assess the quality and quantity of inputs and outcomes required to assess the actual efficiency of projects. However, based on observations and discussions, one can infer that the Secretariat could have received better value for money, should it have adopted a much coordinated

approach and implemented a larger and longer term project that addressed the root causes of the problem. This would have prevented multiple project scoping missions, the implementation of projects with similar end goals and prevented holding similar workshops every year resulting in similar outcomes and recommendations. A good example of this is the Secretariat's work in supporting Sri Lanka in the development of a Strategic Human Resources Management policy framework, the need for which was first identified in 2010 as per the documentation provided, and since then has been re-emphasised in several Secretariat missions and workshops, most recently at the '*Symposium on Leadership for Public Service Excellence*' in May 2012.

The evaluation also noted that the Secretariat barely works in a strategic partnership with any of the many development players operational in Sri Lanka (Annex 1). To name a few, these include, AUSAID, CIDA, European Commission, UNDP and USAID, all of which are working towards similar goals of advancing economic growth and good governance in Sri Lanka. Partnerships with them would not only complement each other's efforts, but also help optimise resources and expertise in order to have a greater impact.

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**Recommendation 5: The Secretariat should explore strategic partnerships with other international development partners active in Sri Lanka to harmonise resources, and to build on each other's comparative advantages to get obtain maximum value for money. Possible partners include AUSAID, CIDA and the European Commission.**

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## 5.4 Impact and Sustainability

Impact is the extent to which the project has affected change- positive or negative- directly or indirectly, intended or unintended as a result of the project. While determining the impact of projects (with clear attribution) can be a challenge owing to the complex political, social and economic nature of the development, it is further exacerbated by the number of short term small

projects implemented by the Secretariat, which usually tend to limit their scope to the activities and outputs, rarely extending to outcomes. Having said that, the evaluation did find that some of the Secretariat's work has indeed made some difference, especially in the area of rural SME development, professionalization of youth work, maritime boundary delimitation and institutional strengthening and capacity development, and it was noted that some of this impact has been due to the Commonwealth name associated with it.

Several recommendations from the Secretariat's rural SME policy framework report have been adopted by the Ministry of Traditional Industries and Small Enterprise Development (MTISED). The recommendations on the decentralisation of the Industrial Development Board (IDB) have led to the restructuring of the IDB. Its operations are now decentralised and this has resulted in more support for MSME activities in rural areas as the district offices now have more autonomy to deliver assistance to rural enterprises. Project management offices have been established at each Provincial Office, and at the Head office a committee representing members from the provincial offices has been assigned for rural SME project facilitation, monitoring & evaluation. It has also implemented four new rural SME projects that were formulated during the Secretariat supported technical assistance workshops.

The IDB has also initiated a number of capacity building programmes for its staff to learn from international best practices. Networks have been established with other development partners such as NCC, IVDP and IFAD. It was expressed that while more work is needed towards development of a robust SME policy for Sri Lanka, different elements from the policy framework document have at times fed into Cabinet Papers and Ministries' Strategic Plan and Framework documents.

The Secretariat's investment in the CYP Diploma has led to a significant increase in the number of academic institutions offering academic training in youth work. Advocacy on the professionalization of youth work has led the Public Service Commissions to recognise youth

workers as professionals in the government system. The CYP Diploma is now also recognized for salary increments at the National Youth Services Council, Sri Lanka.

Under the Secretariat's Maritime Boundary Delimitation programme, the Secretariat's legal and technical assistance on the extended continental shelf (ECS) submission to the United Nations enabled Sri Lanka to prepare and lodge a claim for over 800,000 square km of additional seabed area in the Bay of Bengal region. The ECS submission is in a queue awaiting formal examination, which is likely to commence in 2015.

On the institutional strengthening and public sector development front, the evaluation found that many of the Additional Secretaries who had attended the Permanent Secretaries orientation programme have now been promoted to Permanent Secretaries. The programmes have also helped build networks between the Administrative Staff College of India and the SLIDA, who now work together to build new ideas into the course curriculum.

The evaluation noted several examples of how the learning from the Permanent Secretaries orientation programme is being customised to the Sri Lankan situation. These include a series of meditation programmes which have been started for batches of employees with the aim of improving their ethical conduct, integrity and morale in the office environment. Participants from the Ministry of State Resources and Enterprise Development have used the leadership qualities gathered from the programme to restructure their programmes. Lessons from the Public Private Partnerships and innovations in Public Systems are being utilised to improve the effectiveness of programmes. Lessons from the Kerala model on the social audit of rural development programmes have led to proposals for policy change to develop a system which encourages people to comment, criticise, investigate and influence any rural development programme under the Ministry of Economic Development.

In other examples, the Ministry of Social Services

is using the knowledge gained to improve the social protection and security for underprivileged groups of society for their social and economic uplifting. The E-governance lessons from the 'AROGYA SIRI' experience have been proposed for submission of training requirements with the HRD Secretariat. One of the participants from the Customs Department has successfully replaced the manual system of managing annual asset declaration forms with a computerised online system and also introduced the meditation programme among employees while another participant has successfully empowered the villagers in 'Iranawila Diyawara Gammana' to maintain the village road network.

The Parliamentary Internship programme also received praise from the officials. Between 2008 and 2011 some 25 participants have benefitted from the financial assistance from CFTC under this programme. The programme is aimed at the middle managers level and has been published as a good practice in the Yearbook on Good Governance 2011. Examples were quoted of how this has led to the introduction of new systems for interpretation, research and documentation in the parliament. The newly appointed Assistant Secretary General in Parliament herself spoke about benefiting from the Parliamentary Internship and the Legislative Drafting course organised by the Secretariat. It was mentioned that with the increased capacity, the Sri Lanka parliament has now opened doors for the Maldivian Majlis parliamentarians to build their capacity. Furthermore, with the assistance from the UNDP, the office of the Secretary General to the Parliament has helped Afghanistan to establish its Parliamentary System. These all constitute very good examples of south-south cooperation. It was mentioned that to promote and transfer knowledge on democratic systems, education centres and youth parliament are actively being promoted including setting up a women's caucus in the parliament.

As discussed under the section on effectiveness, the evaluation noted that the impact of the Secretariat's efforts could increase significantly if it was to harmonise its efforts with other

development partners in Sri Lanka. Likewise, it should have a coordinated approach in strict compliance with results based management in project design, monitoring and evaluation. As emphasised earlier, all the projects should be based on a sound analysis of the problems and include both pre and post project support, if they are to have a sustainable impact.

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**Recommendation 6:** The Secretariat should move away from short term one off activities to bigger and longer term projects in strict compliance with the results based management principles with clearly defined pre and post project support. Where possible, this support should be provided under the umbrella of Country Technical Cooperation Frameworks so as to mutually align the support with the national development priorities and the Secretariat's strategic plan.

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# Appendices

Appendix 1: Key Development Partners

Appendix 2: People Interviewed

Appendix 3: Evaluation Framework

Appendix 4: Evaluation Questionnaires

Appendix 5: References



# Appendix 1<sup>6</sup>: Key Development Partners

A number of international development partners are active in Sri Lanka and these include:

## Australian Agency for International Development (AUSAID)

The overarching goal for Australia's aid programme to Sri Lanka is more inclusive development, focused on greater inclusion of lagging regions and vulnerable people in economic and social development. The key priority areas are: economic recovery and infrastructure development, including rehabilitation of conflict-affected areas; livelihoods and income generation, and social protection for excluded and vulnerable people. In 2011, the Government of Australia also provided 27 scholarships to Sri Lankan officials to study in universities in Australia.

## Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)

The objective of CIDA's Program in Sri Lanka is to continue to promote equitable and sustainable economic growth in a post-conflict environment, while also emphasizing the important role of human rights in reducing poverty. CIDA's support has two areas of focus: Economic growth and Democratic governance.

## European Commission (EC)

The EC's development assistance programme to Sri Lanka is mapped out in the present Country Strategy Paper (CSP). Its priorities for 2007-13 are support to the peace process and poverty reduction in the North and East through

sustainable integrated district development of one to two Districts. In addition, the CSP includes smaller allocations of support to two non-focal sectors: Trade and Good Governance (electoral reform, human rights and conflict resolution).

## Government of China

China has emerged as one of Sri Lanka's key development partners and as a significant provider of concessional financing. Since economic co-operation between China and Sri Lanka began in 1971, GoSL has received grant assistance of USD 135 million and loan assistance of USD 3,932 million, used to implement a wide range of social and economic development projects. China annually provides grant assistance of USD 10-15 million to support the construction of culturally and historically important landmark buildings, as well as to develop socially viable infrastructure and to undertake the repair or modernisation of buildings. In addition, Sri Lankan public officials continue to benefit from training, particularly in agriculture, finance and economic development.

## Government of India

India is one of Sri Lanka's key development partners, supporting reconstruction in the North and East of the country, as well as being a significant provider of concessional financing, typically for large-scale infrastructure projects. Since development co-operation between Sri Lanka and India began in 1973, India has contributed loan assistance of USD 947 million and grants totalling USD 54.52 million. In addition, India annually provides 40 training opportunities for Sri Lankan officials under the Indian Technical Assistance Scheme and the India-Colombo Plan Technical Assistance Scheme.

6 CFTC Technical Cooperation Framework- Sri Lanka, 2011-13

## Government of Japan

The Government of Japan has been one of Sri Lanka's major development partners since the 1950s. Annual Yen loan commitments, in the range of USD \$350-400 million, are targeted towards the following priority development areas: Transport Development; Power and Energy; Water Supply, Ports and Aviation and Small and Micro Industries. Japan annually provides about 200 foreign training opportunities, as well as implementing a volunteer service programme in Sri Lanka.

## Government of Korea

The Government of the Republic of Korea is a significant development partner for Sri Lanka, providing grant assistance through the Korean International Co-operation Agency (KOICA) to support infrastructure development. Sri Lanka also annually receives around 60 short-term foreign training opportunities, besides the implementation of a volunteer service programme in the country.

## United States Agency for International Development (USAID)

USAID's support to Sri Lanka includes: implementation of the new 2008-2012 strategy to assist the positive transformation of conflict-affected areas through connecting regional economies and supporting regional governance; completion of a USD 134 million Tsunami Reconstruction Program; and the completion of programmes under the 2003-2008 strategy, including Democracy and Governance, Economic Growth, Humanitarian Assistance, and Peace Building.

## Asian Development Bank (ADB)

Sri Lanka is a founding member of the Asian Development Bank, established in 1966, and has since borrowed USD 5.14 billion, through 115 sovereign loans, and received USD 353 million

in grant assistance for development projects. ADB's current operations in Sri Lanka are guided by the Country Operations Business Plan, 2010-2012, which focuses on infrastructure development, with much of the work in the North and East of the country. In addition, Sri Lanka annually receives about 50 short-term training opportunities from ADB for Sri Lankan Senior officials. A new country partnership strategy, being formulated in 2011, is expected to include non-sovereign and private sector operations, including PPPs.

## Colombo Plan

The Colombo Plan, established in Sri Lanka in 1951, provides training programmes to member countries in the field of public administration, environment, private sector development and drug advisory programmes. During the period 2005 to 2010, around 450 training opportunities were provided to Sri Lanka.

## United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

UNDP's overarching goal is to support the country in the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals and the reduction of poverty. UNDP works through the following programmatic areas: Poverty Reduction and the MDGs; Energy, Environment and Disaster Risk Management, Governance; and Peace and Recovery.

## World Bank

Since 1954, the World Bank has provided around USD 4.2 billion to Sri Lanka. Its current Country Assistance Strategy (CAS) for Sri Lanka, which covers the period July 2008 to June 2012, aligns its support with the Government's Ten-year Development Framework and is focused on the following key areas: supporting inclusive and equitable development; improving the investment climate; and strengthening service delivery.

## Appendix 2: People Interviewed

### Stakeholders interviewed during the country visit

Name	Ministry/Department
<b>M P D U K Mapa Pathirana</b> Director General	Department of External Resources, Ministry of Finance and Planning, General Treasury, Colombo (PCP)
<b>Mahesh Gunawardana</b> Assistant Director	Human Resources Development Division, Department of External Resources, Ministry of Finance and Planning, Colombo
<b>Deepika Jayasekara</b> Director	Youth Development, Ministry of Youth Affairs & Skills Development, Colombo
<b>Wipula Jayasekara</b> Assistant Director	Youth Development, Ministry of Youth Affairs & Skills Development, Colombo
<b>Kumar Mallimaratchi</b> President	Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry of Sri Lanka, Colombo
<b>Kulatenga Perera</b> Head	Research and Policy Advocacy Unit, Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry of Sri Lanka, Colombo
<b>Krishantha Wisenthige</b> Head	Membership, Projects and Services, Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry of Sri Lanka, Colombo
<b>Rohan Suriyapperuma</b> Head of Training	Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry of Sri Lanka, Colombo
<b>D P Mendis, PC</b> Chairman and Managing Director	Sri Lanka Export Credit Insurance Corporation (SLECIC), DHPL Building, Colombo
<b>Dilruk Ranasinghe</b> General Manager	Sri Lanka Export Credit Insurance Corporation (SLECIC), DHPL Building, Colombo
<b>Janaka Ratnyake</b> Chairman and Chief Executive	Sri Lanka Export Development Board, Nawam Mawtha, Colombo
<b>Sujatha Weerakoon</b> Director General	Sri Lanka Export Development Board, Nawam Mawtha, Colombo
<b>Jeevani Siriwardena</b> Director	Market Development, Sri Lanka Export Development Board, Nawam Mawtha, Colombo
<b>Sepalika Jayawardhana</b> Deputy Director	Industrial Products, Sri Lanka Export Development Board, Nawam Mawtha, Colombo
<b>Prasanna Jayasinghe</b> Deputy Director	Export Market Promotion- Europe, Sri Lanka Export Development Board, Nawam Mawtha, Colombo

Name	Ministry/Department
<b>A M P M B Atapattu</b> Director	Department of External Resources, Ministry of Finance and Planning, Colombo
<b>Prabhash D Jayalath</b> Assistant Director	Department of External Resources, Ministry of Finance and Planning, Colombo
<b>Udayasri Kariyawasam</b> Chairman	Industrial Development Board of Ceylon, Galle Road, Moratuwa, Sri Lanka
<b>Vaidehi Anushyanthan</b> Assistant Director	Industrial Development Board of Ceylon, Galle Road, Moratuwa, Sri Lanka
<b>V Sivagnanasothy</b> Secretary	Ministry of Traditional Industries and Small Enterprise Development, Mardana Road, Colombo
<b>K R Samarasingha</b> Additional Secretary	Ministry of Traditional Industries and Small Enterprise Development, Mardana Road, Colombo
<b>A M Y Jasim Mannapperuma</b> General Manager	Ministry of Traditional Industries and Small Enterprise Development, Mardana Road, Colombo
<b>Jinasiri Dadallage</b> Additional Secretary	Home Affairs, Ministry of Public Administration & Home Affairs, Independence Square, Colombo
<b>B Wijayaratne</b> Director	Sri Lanka Institute of Development Administration (SLIDA), Ministry of Public Administration & Home Affairs, Malalasekara Mawatha, Colombo
<b>Neil Iddawala</b> Deputy Secretary General	Parliament of Sri Lanka, Sri Jayewardenepura Kotte, Sri Lanka
<b>Kushani Rohanadeera</b> Assistant Secretary General	Parliament of Sri Lanka, Sri Jayewardenepura Kotte, Sri Lanka
<b>Mahinda Deshapriya</b> Commissioner of Elections	Elections Secretariat, Rajagiriya, Colombo
<b>Rizan Hameed</b> Coordinating Secretary to the Commissioner of Elections	Elections Secretariat, Rajagiriya, Colombo
<b>W I Tissera</b> Additional Director General	Department of Foreign Aid and Budget Monitoring, Ministry of Finance and Planning, Central Bank Building, Colombo
<b>H G Sumanasinghe</b> Director	Department of Project Management and Monitoring, Ministry of Finance and Planning, Central Bank Building, Colombo
<b>Sagarika Bogahawatta</b> Director	Department of Project Management and Monitoring, Ministry of Finance and Planning, Central Bank Building, Colombo
<b>Justice Priyantha R P Perera</b> Chairman	Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka, Colombo

Name	Ministry/Department
<b>T E Anandarajah</b> Commissioner	Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka, Colombo
<b>Dr Pratibha Mahanamahewa</b> Commissioner	Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka, Colombo
<b>Jezima Ismail</b> Commissioner	Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka, Colombo

### Commonwealth Secretariat Staff Interviewed in London

Name	Division
<b>Joan Imhoff-Nwasike</b>	Governance and Institutional Development
<b>Colin McDonald</b>	Governance and Institutional Development
<b>Tim Newman</b>	Governance and Institutional Development
<b>Pauline Campbell</b>	Governance and Institutional Development
<b>Elroy Turner</b>	Office of the Deputy Secretary-General
<b>Jarvis Matiya</b>	Legal and Constitutional Affairs
<b>Mark Guthrie</b>	Legal and Constitutional Affairs
<b>Mark Stevens</b>	Political Affairs
<b>Zippy Ojago</b>	Political Affairs
<b>Meena Shivdas</b>	Social Transformation Programmes
<b>Daniel Dumas</b>	Special Advisory Services
<b>Joshua Brien</b>	Special Advisory Services
<b>Derrick Akintade</b>	Special Advisory Services
<b>Watipaso Mkandawire</b>	Special Advisory Services
<b>Walton Gilpin</b>	Special Advisory Services
<b>Karen McKenzie</b>	Human Rights Unit
<b>Amna Jatoi</b>	Human Rights Unit



## Appendix 3: Evaluation Framework

Evaluation Criteria/Issues	Questions	Information Sources and Methods/Tools
<b>Relevance</b>		
The extent to which the assistance was suited to the priorities and policies of the target group.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What are the objectives of the programmes/ projects being implemented by Divisions and are they relevant to the needs and priorities of member countries? What is the relevance of the assistance against the Secretariat's Strategic Plan, as well as the development policy of the member country? Did the Secretariat 'do the right things?' To what extent have member countries/partners been involved in shaping project activities to meet their needs?</li> <li>Are other agencies providing similar services adequate enough to cover member countries? In which areas does/ might the Secretariat have a comparative advantage?</li> </ul>	Project documents Secretariat staff Secretariat Strategic Plan Country Plans of selected countries Country visits Stakeholder interviews
<b>Effectiveness</b>		
A measure of the extent to which an activity attains its objectives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To what extent have Secretariat projects achieved their objectives?</li> <li>What were the factors that hindered or facilitated realisation and achievement of these objectives?</li> <li>What could have been done differently to improve implementation?</li> <li>How effective has the relationship between Secretariat divisions been in the delivery of programme results?</li> </ul>	Analysis of project documents Country visits Stakeholder interviews Interviews within ComSec
<b>Efficiency</b>		
Efficiency measures the outputs - qualitative and quantitative - in relation to the inputs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Were objectives achieved on time?</li> <li>Were actual expenditure levels in line with planned expenditure? Were there any significant changes or delays?</li> </ul>	Project documents Country visits Stakeholder interviews

Evaluation Criteria/Issues	Questions	Information Sources and Methods/Tools
<b>Efficiency</b> <i>continued...</i>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has the assistance been delivered in ways that avoided and minimized duplication, bureaucracy and complexity?</li> <li>How well has the Secretariat collaborated with partner agencies? Are there other possible collaborations which it should have considered?</li> </ul>	Interviews within ComSec
<b>Outcomes/Impact</b>		
The positive and negative changes produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has Secretariat assistance made a difference and has there been any identifiable change? What has happened as a result of the programme or project and what is the evidence of this change?</li> <li>What would have happened without the Secretariat's involvement?</li> <li>To what extent has Secretariat assistance contributed towards capacity development, strengthening of institutions and poverty reduction?</li> <li>What positive and negative effects are resulting from Secretariat assistance? Is it demonstrable that the positive effects will outweigh the negative ones?</li> </ul>	Project documents Country visits Stakeholder interviews Interviews within ComSec
<b>Approach to cross-cutting themes</b>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Were issues relating to gender, human rights and youth integrated in the design and delivery of Secretariat's efforts? What difference has this made?</li> </ul>	Project documents Secretariat staff and other stakeholder interviews Country visits
<b>Sustainability</b>		
Sustainability is concerned with measuring whether the benefits of an activity are likely to continue after funding has ceased.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To what extent did the benefits accruing from Secretariat interventions continued after the funding ceased?</li> <li>What were the major factors which influenced the achievement or non-achievement of sustainability of the programme or project?</li> </ul>	Project documents Country visits Stakeholder interviews

Evaluation Criteria/Issues	Questions	Information Sources and Methods/Tools
Forward looking analysis		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In future, what should be the focus of the programme of assistance?</li> <li>• How can the Secretariat ensure that its assistance will yield demonstrable results?</li> <li>• What lessons are to be learnt in the design and delivery of future assistance?</li> <li>• Should the Secretariat do things differently to order to be more effective?</li> </ul>	<p>Recommendations based on analysis of 'relevance' issues</p> <p>Country visits and documents</p> <p>Stakeholder interviews</p>

# Appendix 4: Evaluation Questions

## Part A: External Stakeholders

The questions below are set to serve as a guide and will be used as the basis for data collection during external stakeholder interviews and the analysis of information. Supplementary snowball questions will be added as the interview progresses as well to obtain country specific information. The questions do not necessarily need to be asked in the given order. Separate questions will be used for interviews within the Secretariat to look at the coherence of the assistance with the strategic plan objectives.

### Relevance

1. Over the last 5 years, your country has received a diverse range of assistance from the Secretariat on (list the broad area of assistance by category for each country, specify the particular assistance when speaking to specific sectors).
2. How does the Secretariat's work coincide with the national development priorities and visions?
3. How relevant and coherent do you think this assistance has been to the needs and priorities of your country?
4. Were you and your partners engaged in shaping the Secretariat project activities to meet your country needs? What was the nature of this engagement?
5. Are there other agencies providing similar development support to address your country priorities and needs? If yes, who these are and what is the nature of support.
6. Given the nature of assistance provided is very small in size, still there is a huge demand for the assistance from the

Secretariat, what do you think is the reason and how does this add value?

### Effectiveness

7. Coming back to the Secretariat projects, to what extent do you think the Secretariat projects were effective in achieving their project objectives?
8. Was the coordination of Secretariat operations effective or could it have been better focussed and integrated?
9. Has the Secretariat made a distinctive contribution to meeting your country needs by working to its strengths, and did it take the activities of other international organisations into account? Are there other possible collaborations which it should have considered or consider in future?
10. How effective, do you think, were the programme of activities in articulating/ mainstreaming gender, human rights and youth perspectives? Is there any evidence of impact?
11. Do you think the Secretariat can do certain things differently to improve the implementation of its projects in future?

### Efficiency

12. Looking back, and given your experience with the Secretariat projects, how would you rate the efficiency of Secretariat projects- both in terms of timeliness of response and value for money? Do you think this can be improved?

### Outcomes/Impact

13. What difference do you think the Secretariat's assistance has made in addressing the development issues in your country (make this specific to the specific area of assistance when speaking to specific sectoral stakeholders). Has there been any identifiable change? Is there any (qualitative or quantitative) evidence of this change?
14. If trainings/ workshops were the main modes of technical assistance provided by the Secretariat, please use Questions 22-25 to assess the impact.
15. To what extent has Secretariat assistance contributed towards capacity development, strengthening of institutions and policy development? Is there a direct evidence of this change?
16. What do you think would have happened without the Secretariat's involvement?

### Sustainability

17. Do you think the benefits (if any) from the Secretariat's assistance are continuing to yield results even after the completion of the project?
18. Was there any follow-up from the Secretariat to ensure sustainability of efforts? OR did you request any follow-up assistance from the Secretariat to support sustainability? OR did your government put in place any mechanisms to sustain the impact of Secretariat's assistance? (Question as applicable)

### Looking forward

19. What, in your opinion, should be the focus of Secretariat's assistance in future?
20. How can the Secretariat ensure that its assistance will yield demonstrable results?
21. Can the Secretariat do things differently to order to be more effective?

22. Are there any lessons to be learnt?

### Relevance and Impact of training (where workshops/ trainings were the main modes of TA)

23. What was the main reason for your government's decision to approach the Secretariat for training rather than other agencies? (Quick response and flexibility/ specialisation/ sensitivity to government constraints/ no vested interest/ expertise not available locally/ assistance not available from other agencies)
24. How relevant do you think was the training organised by the Secretariat to your country needs (Highly effective/ effective to some extent/ out of context)? Why?
25. How effective do you think the training was in building capacity/ sharing experience/ increasing awareness? Give examples?
26. What, in your opinion, has been the impact of training provided by the Secretariat? Has it made any difference in the ways of working/ contributed to institutional reforms/ led to policy decisions/ any other change? Please explain with examples.

## Part B: Internal Stakeholders (Commonwealth Secretariat Divisions)

The questions below are set to serve as a guide and will be used as the basis for data collection during interviews with ComSec staff and for analysis of information. Supplementary snowball questions will be added as the interview progresses as well to obtain specific country information. The questions do not necessarily follow any given order.

### Relevance

1. Over the last 5 years, your Section/ Division has provided (name the type of assistance) in country (name the country) through

(name the projects). How do you think this assistance conforms to the Secretariat's strategic plan priorities and the national development priorities, country needs and visions?

2. How was this project conceived? Did you receive a request from the member government? What were the steps taken to develop the project? Was a situational analysis undertaken to identify project objectives, outcomes, outputs and indicators? Were you and your partners engaged in shaping the Secretariat project activities to meet their country needs? What was the nature of this engagement?
3. Are there other agencies in (name country) providing similar development support to address their country priorities and needs? If yes, who these are and what is the nature of support they provide? Were they also engaged in the project development stage? What was the nature of their engagement?

### Effectiveness

4. Given the assistance provided to (name country) in (name specific area) to what extent do you think the Secretariat projects were effective in achieving their project objectives?
5. What do you think has been Secretariat's distinctive contribution in meeting the country needs?
6. How effective has the programme of activities been in articulating/ mainstreaming gender, human rights and youth perspectives? Is there any evidence of impact?
7. Do you think the Secretariat can do certain things differently to improve the implementation of its projects in future and be even more effective?

### Efficiency

8. Given that you have implemented these projects from some time now, how would you rate the efficiency of Secretariat projects- both in terms of timeliness of response and value for money? Do you think this can be improved?

### Outcomes/Impact

9. What difference do you think the Secretariat's assistance has made in addressing the problem at hand. Has there been any identifiable change? Is there any (qualitative or quantitative) evidence of this change?
10. To what extent has Secretariat assistance contributed towards capacity development, strengthening of institutions and policy development? Is there a direct evidence of this change?
11. If trainings/workshops were used for the TA, what, in your opinion, has been the impact of trainings provided by the Secretariat? Has it made any difference in the ways of working/ contributed to institutional reforms/ led to policy decisions/ any other change? Please explain with examples.

### Sustainability

12. Do you think the benefits (if any) from the Secretariat's assistance are continuing to yield results even after the completion of the project? Did you undertake any follow-up activities or are in touch with the member country on the progress following the project/ are you aware if the government has put in place any mechanisms to sustain the impact of Secretariat's assistance?

### Looking forward

13. How can the Secretariat ensure that its assistance will yield demonstrable results?

14. Can the Secretariat do things differently to order to be more effective?
15. Are there any lessons to be learnt in the design and delivery of future assistance?



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